



THE JEWISH COMMUNITY FEDERATION (JCF) HOW IS THE JCF MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties (JCF) sustains more than 70 Bay Area Jewish organizations. Financial support to its network of Jewish organizations is one of the many important ways in which JCF is making a difference. The JCF is also the central hub for community research, planning, convening, and other forms of technical and financial support for its vast network of organization. More specifically, the Federation's value-added stems from:

1. **Valuable research** that offers a holistic view of the Jewish community and its greatest needs as well as guidance on best practices from around the country;
2. **Community planning** from Sonoma to the South Peninsula that engages leaders from grassroots communities in defining and addressing the local needs. The JCF's planning work is grounded in proactive collaboration with agencies and congregations. Leadership development is built into this process;
3. **Technical assistance and mentorship** for organizations on program evaluation, strategic planning, board recruitment and development, financial management, capital planning, and security consultation.

The 2004 Jewish Community Study reported that this Jewish community's population has doubled since 1986; is highly geographically dispersed; and has great diversity in how people identify as Jews. The research poignantly revealed urgent needs. The JCF quickly convened the community to begin responding. Below are examples of how we are making a direct impact.

Caring for the Vulnerable

As Jews, we are responsible for taking care of the most vulnerable members of our community. JCF dollars go towards research, planning and funding high impact programs that:

Ensure the Welfare of the Elderly. With more than 2/3 of today's Jewish seniors receiving their services from Jewish organizations, and the senior population expected to double in the next 25 years, supporting our Jewish community services for the elderly is critical. JCF dollars support high quality Jewish senior

housing, social and educational programs that keep seniors connected; transportation to Jewish community events, doctor's appointments and everyday activities for those who would otherwise be homebound; and direct financial assistance for poor seniors-- including Holocaust survivors.

Enable Economic Security. In our local community, 1 out of 10 Jewish families and 1 out of 5 Jewish children in a single-parent home lives in poverty. JCF dollars support job training that increases earning potential so families can move out of poverty; subsidies for food, rent, medical care, and other basic needs; comprehensive help for low income single parents, and scholarships that make it possible for low income families to participate in Jewish life.

Provide Children with Special Needs Opportunities to Participate in Jewish Life. An estimated 7,500 children in our community have learning or developmental disabilities. Yet today our community lacks the needed programs to enable these children and their families to participate fully in Jewish life. The JCF supports organizations that deliver critical social services to special needs kids, training that helps our day schools and religious schools include children with special needs, and Jewish education and social programs for special needs children and teens.

End the cycle of abuse. Research shows that 20–30% of Jewish families are impacted by domestic violence, the same rate as in the general population. 50% of children in these homes are also victims of abuse and neglect. Jewish women stay in abuse relationships 5-7 years *longer* than average, silenced by shame and the myth that domestic violence doesn't happen in Jewish homes. JCF dollars support critical counseling and emergency financial assistance for battered women and their children, enabling women and their children to escape abuse.

Times of Crisis. Our community seeks to provide a safety net of caring and connection for members facing difficult times. JCF dollars support counseling services, Jewish chaplains and volunteers in our hospitals, grief support, and one-one-one outreach and holistic help to those in difficult times—whether facing a health crisis, loss of a job, death of a loved one, or mental health issues.

Educating and Engaging our Diverse Jewish Community

JCF dollars support a strong network of Jewish organizations in the Bay Area that welcome and engage those unconnected to Jewish community; provide Jewish education to children and teens; and create vibrant Jewish communities across our region. Through our research, planning, grant-making, advocacy and programming, the JCF:

Engages teens in Jewish life. Jewish education past the age of bar/bat mitzvah is predictive of very strong adult Jewish identification; but the post-bar/bat mitzvah dropout rate from Jewish education in our community is extremely high.

JCF dollars support high-impact Israel travel, youth groups, service learning, and leadership development programs that inspire teens to deepen their Jewish identity and make an enduring commitment to Jewish life.

Engages families with young children. Numerous studies have shown that participation in a Jewish preschool significantly boosts families' later enrollment in formal Jewish education, especially in interfaith families. JCF dollars go toward a number of successful programs that increase participation in and strengthen our Jewish preschools and leverage this opportunity to connect young families to Jewish life.

Provides quality Jewish education. Jewish education is an investment in the Jewish future: studies have shown again and again that the more Jewish education children receive, the stronger their adult Jewish identities will be. JCF dollars support core operations of all of our regions day schools, and fund a variety of capacity building and professional development programs that improve the quality of our day and religious schools.

Engages those unconnected to our community. Interfaith couples—who make up 56% of couples in our community—are far less connected to Jewish community than their non-intermarried counterparts. Their children receive fewer years of Jewish education. With interfaith marriage increasing, nearly half of young Jewish adults and more than half of today's Jewish children have only one Jewish parent. JCF dollars support outreach programs engage interfaith families in Jewish life, train clergy to be more welcoming, work with young interfaith couples on college campuses, and provide Jewish camping for children of interfaith families. JCF dollars also support outreach programs tailored for specific target populations such as Russian speakers, Israelis, LGBT individuals and young adults.

In addition, the Bay Area enjoys tremendous diversity within the Jewish community. JCF dollars support outreach programs tailored for specific target populations such as Russians, Israelis, LGBT individuals and young adults.

Deepening connections between the Bay Area community and Israel.

Importantly, the JCF creates opportunities for the Bay Area community to discover, experience and study Israel. JCF facilitates content-rich travel to Israel by Bay Area residents and builds platforms ("living bridges") to enable members of the Bay Area community to develop personal, professional and institutional relationships with our growing network in Israel.



The Israel Center of the Jewish Community Federation

The Israel Center of the Jewish Community Federation was founded in 1996. Its mission is to strengthen Jewish identity in our community through engagement with Israel. This is done in three main areas:

1) **Presenting Israel Beyond the Conflict**: by bringing cutting-edge Israeli arts and culture to the Bay Area, and Israeli speakers on social, political and cultural issues of interest, the Israel Center presents an Israel that is alive and relevant. These activities are divided according to the following:

- **Campus** – the Israel Center organizes and produces events and activities that present Israel beyond the conflict on seven Bay Area campuses. These activities include music concerts and speakers of interest.
- **Tzavta Young Adults** – the Israel Center’s young adult community caters mostly to Israel program returnees (e.g. birthright, Otzma, other long-term programs and more) and young Israelis currently living in the Bay Area. Programs geared for this age group (loosely defined as 25-40) include the Israeli film series “*Israel in Motion*,” the easy conversational Hebrew social encounters “*Café ve’Ivrit*” and Tzavta’s now famous parties “*Mesiba b’Tzavta*.”
- **General Community Programming** – the Israel Center partners with other community agencies to bring Israeli arts and culture and Israeli speakers to the Bay Area. Today, hardly a week goes by without some Israeli artist or celebrity appearing somewhere in our community.
- **Outreach to Israelis**: in partnership with the Albert L. Schultz JCC of Palo Alto, the Israel Center this year has launched a program seeking to connect the Israeli population of the south peninsula to our Jewish community. Activities planned this year include the “Gvanim in the Bay” program, a community leadership program focusing on Jewish identity, Jewish pluralism and the local Jewish community; and a lecture series on 60 Years of Israeli Art.
- **Outreach to the Russian-speaking community**: the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) has assigned a *shlichah* (emissary) in our community to work with the Russian community. Research shows that engagement with Israel is the best way to reach out to this community, for Israel is a subject that most community members

feel passionate about. Recognizing the Israel Center's experience and expertise in the field of Israel engagement, JAFI has requested that the *shlich*a become a part of the Israel Center staff.

- **Israel in the Gardens** – the largest annual Jewish community gathering in Northern California, Israel in the Gardens attracts between 15,000 - 20,000 participants each year. It is one of the only events of the year that brings out every component of our Bay Area Jewish Community.

2) Israel Education: The Israel Education Initiative (IEI) – a joint project of the Israel Center, the Bureau of Jewish Education and the Jewish Agency for Israel – seeks to make Israel a central component of Bay Area Jewish educational institutions, formal and informal. The Initiative's core assumption is that through association with Israel students gain a positive, enduring sense of their identity as Jews. Since its inception four years ago, IEI has focused on the following projects:

- **School Visioning and Mapping** – The process of School Mapping, Visioning and Planning allowed each school to revisit and define (or revise) its mission statement regarding Israel and develop its approach to Israel education accordingly, including goals and measurable objectives.
- **School Twinning** – The School Twinning Project seeks to twin each Jewish school in the Bay Area with a school in Israel. Until now this effort has been limited to the four day schools in our federated area. The goals in San Francisco include "bringing Israel to life," and to deepen, expand and intensify relationships between Israeli and American Jews, based on reciprocity and person-to-person connections. The goals in Israel include increasing knowledge about Jewish culture and Jewish pluralism, the exploration of an Israeli Jewish identity and a shared Jewish destiny with the Diaspora.
- **Israel Educators' Network** – The network is primarily made up of graduates of the Education Leadership Institute (ELI), *shlichim*, and Israel educators who have been recruited to work in the community. This network meets on a regular basis for enrichment and development activities

3) Israel Travel: Research shows that travel to Israel has a transformative and long-term impact on Jewish identity. The impact of the "Israel experience" spans beyond the realm of the individual's identity to a much deeper understanding of what Jewish Peoplehood means and the notion of joint Jewish responsibility. Recognizing the importance of Israel Travel and its impact on Jewish identity, JCF adopted the Israel Travel Initiative in 2006 and again in 2007. Its stated goal is to create and launch an Israel Travel Center, which will plan, develop, implement and support Bay Area Israel travel which will lead to a stronger, more engaged and committed Jewish community. Within this context, the Israel Center this year is implementing the **Israel @ 60 Mission**.