

# **BBYO Impact Study**

**Analysis of Surveys Conducted with Current BBYO Members,  
College-Age and Young Adult Alumni, and Non-Alumni**

**April 2011**

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## Executive Summary

### Overview

As BBYO assesses its impact and considers strategic decisions facing the organization, the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation commissioned Groeneman Research & Consulting and Gerstein | Agne Strategic Communications to conduct a comprehensive research study. This study entailed over 3,000 interviews across four separate surveys during December 2010-January 2011, including extensive interviews with high school juniors and seniors who currently participate in BBYO activities, BBYO alumni ages 18-23 (“College Age Alumni”), BBYO alumni ages 24-35 (“Young Adult Alumni”), and a national comparison group of American Jews ages 18-35 who have never participated in BBYO activities.

The surveys covered an array of topics that are central to BBYO’s mission, ranging from Jewish identity and raising Jewish families to leadership skills and commitment to service. *Analysis of the survey data reveals that BBYO is having a remarkably positive impact and achieving success across many of its priorities.*

While BBYO participants are overwhelmingly pleased with their BBYO experience and young BBYO alumni believe the organization has played a significant role in their lives, the powerful impact of BBYO is even more evident when comparing BBYO alumni with Jews who are the same age but did not participate in BBYO. This comparison demonstrates that the BBYO experience results in young adults who are more inclined to have Jewish friends, believe that being Jewish plays an important role in their lives, and hold leadership roles in their community. In fact, this study’s findings provide BBYO with compelling evidence that it is largely succeeding within its existing network when it comes to key aspects of the organization’s mission.

The data also raise an opportunity for the organization to consider as it grows and seeks broader impact. Namely, the research shows significant differences between the families who send their kids to BBYO and the families that do not. Compared to other Jews, BBYO families tend to be more connected to the Jewish community, enroll their kids more in Jewish education, and place a higher priority on Jewish identity. While the organization currently reaches *some* of the less engaged Jewish youth, this audience is clearly under-represented in BBYO. But it is critical to understand that BBYO’s impact is strong across all its participants – including individuals from less Jewishly engaged backgrounds – and the organization appears capable of achieving its desired impact with the large “market” of Jewish teens who are less connected to the Jewish world.

This executive summary highlights the primary takeaways from the study and addresses key themes that emerge throughout the data, including attitudes toward the BBYO experience, BBYO’s impact, effect of BBYO involvement and tenure, role of individual programs, background differences between BBYO alumni and non-alumni, and strategic considerations. A full and highly detailed analysis of the data follows the executive summary with chapters dedicated to each of the four individual surveys.

## The Positive BBYO Experience

BBYO participants and alumni express highly favorable opinions about their BBYO experience. Whether it is someone in high school who is currently involved in BBYO or an alum who finished BBYO activities as much as 17 years ago, large majorities of BBYOers say that BBYO has had very positive impact on their life. Notably, hardly any respondents felt that BBYO had no impact or a negative impact.

When asked to use their own words to describe the impact that BBYO has played in their life, the responses tend to be very positive and reveal a deep appreciation for BBYO. Current participants and alumni consistently write about the self-confidence and leadership skills the experience instilled in them, the friendships that were created during BBYO, and how their participation strengthened their Jewish identity. As one high schooler put it, “BBYO has changed my life. I’ve gained confidence, learned about myself and learned about my Jewish identity. Not to mention I’ve made all of my best friends in BBYO.” This sentiment continues into their young adult lives as noted by the following statement which is reflective of several others in the young adult alumni survey, *“BBYO fundamentally changed my life: it taught me more about my identity than any other single experience in my life to date. I have yet to find a group of friends and a community that is as deeply embedded in my life as my BBYO friends.”*

## Strongest BBYO Impact: Jewish Friends, Leadership, Jewish Identity

In addition to asking respondents to write about the impact of their BBYO experience, the study employed multiple indicators to measure the range of BBYO’s effect. The areas of strongest impact are clearly Jewish friendships, leadership skills, and Jewish identity. Across each age cohort, these three areas stand out and large majorities (usually in the 60-65% range) directly credit BBYO for making a big difference in developing their leadership skills, having Jewish friends, and wanting to be a part of the Jewish people. Other measures also reveal the BBYO effect as respondents report that very high numbers of their closest friends are Jewish (and many of these friendships were formed through BBYO), they hold leadership positions in their communities, and they remain involved with the Jewish world.

Beyond the measures based on self-reporting and self-assessments in the three surveys of BBYO participants and alumni, the results in the study’s comparison sample demonstrate the real and enduring impact that BBYO makes into young adulthood (defined in this study as 18-35 years-old). After statistically adjusting the comparison sample to resemble BBYO alumni on key Jewish background characteristics (in order to reduce the possibility that differences in those factors might account for the observed differences), the contrasts are impressive and once again most pronounced in areas of Jewish friendships, leadership, and Jewish identity:

- ***Jewish friendships.*** Asked how many of their six best friends are Jewish, 61% of BBYO alumni responded that over half of them are Jewish, compared to 23% of non-BBYO young adults. At the other extreme, 20% in the comparison sample reported that none of their six best friends are Jewish, and only 4% of former BBYOers said that none of their six best friends are Jewish.

- **Leadership.** While 88% of alumni say that BBYO strengthened their interest in being a leader in their school or community (including 62% who report BBYO had a *major* impact in this regard), this translates into real results when compared to young Jewish adults who did not participate in BBYO. By a 20-point margin (79% to 59%), BBYO alumni say that “being a leader in my community” plays an important role in their lives, compared to non-BBYO young adults.
- **Jewish identity.** On the most basic Jewish identity question of “how important is being Jewish in your life,” the BBYO effect cannot be clearer – 67% of BBYO alumni say it is very important while 42% of non-BBYO Jews say it is very important. This trend carries over to connectedness to the Jewish community, and also indicates “stickiness” as people get older. That is, large majorities of BBYO alumni say that being a part of the Jewish people plays a very important role in their life, and this holds from their college years to post-college years at a much higher rate than among non-alumni.
- **Raising Jewish families.** Among BBYO alumni who have kids, the enduring impact of BBYO is clear. Nearly all of these BBYOers-turned-parents report that they are raising their kids Jewish, and many alumni send – or plan to send – their kids to Hebrew school (62%) and Sunday school (58%). These results reflect a commitment to raising Jewish families that considerably exceeds the commitment of Jews who do not participate in BBYO (29% of non-BBYO alumni send – or plan to send – their kids to Hebrew school and 35% to Sunday school.)

### **Additional Areas of Impact: Service, Israel, Jewish Peoplehood, Activism**

While the data show that Jewish friendships, leadership, and Jewish identity are BBYO’s strongest areas of impact, the BBYO experience does have impact in other areas as well. Observed impacts in these other areas are not as strong or pronounced as in the top tier categories, but they are still notable for the range of impact that comes with the BBYO experience.

A second tier of impact consists of community service and volunteerism, sense of responsibility to Jews worldwide, connecting with Israel, and social and political activism. BBYO participants and alumni report that their BBYO experience considerably increased their involvement in these areas. It is particularly interesting that these results are rather consistent across age groups. That is, these areas rank in the second tier for BBYO high school juniors and seniors, BBYO college age alumni, and BBYO young alumni. Compared to non-alumni of the same age, we see greater commitment among BBYOers in the areas of connecting with Israel and community service, though not nearly as clear-cut as the impact that takes place in the top tier areas of Jewish friendship, leadership, and Jewish identity.

There is also a third tier of impact which includes interest in Jewish learning, participation in Jewish activities such as attending Jewish lectures or concerts, and religious

observance. BBYO's impact on these third tier categories is not insignificant, though it is worth noting that, BBYO alumni participation in these areas is lower than participation among other Jewish young adults.

Finally, open-ended responses revealed an additional and very noteworthy impact of the BBYO experience that could not be captured in the structured survey questions. When asked to write about the things that most impacted them, many people cited BBYO's pluralistic culture. These respondents referred to the organization's openness to, and tolerance of, all strands of Judaism including beliefs and behaviors which are far from traditional. It was not uncommon to read how exposure to Jewish youth religiously different from themselves served to expand their understanding and appreciation of the variety of customs and levels of observance in Jewish life. Similarly, another common theme emanating from the open-ended responses is how BBYO provides a protective, non-threatening environment to "be yourself" around other Jewish teens who are unlikely to be critical or religiously judgmental. This was especially pertinent for BBYOers living in areas of low Jewish density or who otherwise feel socially isolated.

### **BBYO Involvement and Tenure: More is Better**

The study examined the effect that amount of involvement in BBYO (meetings, programs, and activities) and tenure in BBYO (years of affiliation) has on different impact measures, and the data show that higher involvement and longer tenure both lead to greater impact. Statistically significant patterns were found at least 85% of the time between greater involvement in BBYO and the values, motivations, and behaviors the organization seeks to promote. The correlation between tenure and impact is less than the correlation between involvement and impact, but it is still statistically significant well over 50% of the time.

This is not necessarily surprising because, as noted earlier, BBYO participation does have a clear impact on several of the organization's desired outcomes. That is, one would expect involvement and affiliation to be correlated with these results. Moreover, because years of affiliation and amount of participation are themselves inter-correlated, they are not pure measures of their underlying constructs. In particular, the tenure measure is no doubt capturing amount of participation to some extent in addition to sheer years of affiliation. Notwithstanding this overlap, the analysis indicates that more and longer exposure to BBYO are both connected with many of the intended outcomes.

The most noteworthy finding on this question of involvement and tenure centers on the impact that BBYO has on participants who have less Jewish education and come from families which place less emphasis on Jewish identity or are less involved in the Jewish world. For these "less engaged" Jews, BBYO tenure exhibits a more consistent impact among current BBYO participants. This unanticipated finding has important implications for BBYO as the organization seeks to reach Jews who are less connected with the Jewish community. Getting these less engaged Jews in the door is only a first step. The analysis shows that significant additional gains are especially achievable for this segment when they remain affiliated for a longer period of time.

## Effectiveness of Individual Programs

Twelve BBYO programs were evaluated among high school juniors and seniors by examining whether program participants scored higher than non-participants on 16 outcome measures representing a sampling of content domains.

Based on the number of participant vs. non-participant contrasts in the outcome measures that held up after controlling for total BBYO involvement and strength of Jewish background, *the Israel Advocacy Program turns out to be the most effective of the programs evaluated. J-Serve, International Kallah, and Teen Connection also show evidence of impact on multiple indicators.* With the exception of Local Athletics/Sports programs, the analysis produced evidence supporting effectiveness on *some* items for each of the other programs examined. Because indicators capturing the respective program's primary purpose generally produced significant contrasts (for example, those who traveled to Israel on a BBYO program are more likely than those who did not to answer that traveling/connecting with Israel plays an important role in their life), there is reason to believe that these programs are meeting their objectives, at least to the extent possible from the questions asked in the survey.

Linking observed differences on the outcome measures to participation in a specific program is especially difficult because of the correlations in participation across programs and between participation in any one program and total BBYO participation. Due to this special challenge of isolating effects of individual programs and because no questions about specific programs were asked in the survey except whether respondents were involved in them, this evaluation of programs should be regarded as provisional.

## The BBYO Reach: Participant and Alumni Demographics

BBYO alumni have a rather different Jewish background from most American Jews of the same age. Compared to our survey of non-BBYO alumni, people who participated in BBYO exhibit large differences in terms of religious denomination, Jewish education, and the role that being Jewish played in their own family growing up. While we did not have a comparison sample of high school juniors and seniors, the BBYO high schoolers showed remarkable demographic similarities to the alumni, and it is reasonable to expect that these differences carry over to high school aged Jews as well.

The key distinction between BBYOers and non-BBYOers lies in the connection that BBYOers had to the Jewish world *prior* to their participation in the organization. BBYO participants and alumni were raised in families that place a much greater emphasis on the importance of being Jewish, and they were exposed to Jewish education in dramatically higher numbers. Given this dynamic, it is not surprising that 93% of BBYO alumni (and 94% of current BBYO high school juniors and seniors) had a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, compared to 68% of young Jewish adults who never participated in BBYO.

The other core difference exhibited by BBYOers centers on religious denomination. While most BBYO alumni identify themselves as Conservative (39%) or Reform (32%) and few

say they are Orthodox (3%), this diverges sharply from non-BBYO alumni who are less likely to be Conservative (23%) and more likely to be Orthodox (16%). The non-BBYO alumni also include a somewhat greater number of Jews who are not affiliated with any denomination (28%, compared to 18% of BBYO alumni).

These differences in religious denomination and Jewish identity are evident in many “Jewish practices” in these young adults’ current lives. That is, BBYO alumni are more likely than other Jews of the same age to participate in activities with family or cultural connotations – such as attending a Passover seder or lighting Hanukkah candles – but they are less likely to attend Shabbat services.

### **Strategic Considerations**

As BBYO thinks about its strategic direction and overall purpose, the issue of *who* it is reaching is a key consideration. That is, how much focus should be paid to the “lower hanging fruit” that is consistent with its existing audience and how much should be invested in the harder-to-reach audience of Jewish teens who are less involved in the Jewish world? Regardless of who BBYO decides to prioritize, participants’ explanations of *why* they like BBYO and the responses among non-BBYO alumni who provided their general impressions of BBYO suggest that BBYO’s next steps should take into account the same specific considerations.

First, BBYO needs to convey inclusiveness. Participants often cited BBYO’s inclusiveness and the sense that they could be themselves as real positive aspect of their BBYO experience. This is an essential ingredient in communicating to prospective BBYOers who are clearly looking for a Jewish experience that is welcoming of all people, regardless of their denomination or “Jewishness.”

Second, BBYO should consider reaching into geographic areas with lower Jewish density. While this would likely consist mostly of people who are less engaged with the Jewish community, several BBYO participants and alumni commented that BBYO provided them with a valued Jewish community because they grew up in areas where there were few Jews. This clearly warrants more investigation, but the point they are making should be well-taken. That is, Jews who do not live near other Jews are seeking community and want to find Jewish friends and share enjoyable activities with them. There may be practical challenges in establishing AZA/BBG chapters in lower density areas, though the benefits could be considerable.

Third, BBYO ought to have confidence in its programs, which are not in need of a major overhaul. Certainly, it is important to update programs and appropriately respond to participants’ feedback. But as changes are considered, it is important to keep in mind that the overall BBYO experience is producing the desired outcomes, and there are associations between specific programs and these outcomes.

## **Methodological Considerations**

When considering the findings in this study, it is important to recognize its inherent limitations. First, membership surveys sometimes over-represent people who had a favorable experience with the organization – which can inflate the positivity of some findings. Second, there are other factors (in addition to BBYO involvement) which conceivably might account for participants’ behaviors and attitudes that cannot be conclusively ruled out because not all factors could be controlled for in the data analysis. However, the consistency found across the BBYO surveys combined with the magnitude of the contrasts between the BBYO and comparison samples adds confidence to our conclusions.

## **A. Introduction**

### **1. Background**

B'nai B'rith Youth Organization (BBYO) is the premier organization offering meaningful Jewish content and experiences to teenagers in North America and throughout the world. For 85 years, BBYO has brought leadership and community service and advocacy opportunities, Jewish education, and connection to Israel to thousands of Jewish teens. More than one-quarter million BBYO alumni have participated in the organization's various programs.

BBYO delivers these experiences through AZA/BBG membership, Leadership Council participation, world travel opportunities, specialized service and learning programs, college initiatives, religious and spiritual growth activities, and attendance at international convocations. Formerly part of the broader B'nai B'rith International, BBYO's independent status since 2002 has given it freedom to pursue a new direction with potentially even more creativity, appeal, and effectiveness. In 2009, the PANIM Institute for Jewish Leadership and Values joined BBYO to expand the range of civic action, service, and learning programs offered under the BBYO umbrella, further enriching leadership training and positive identity building opportunities for Jewish youth.

The Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation has been a long-time proponent of pluralistic programs and initiatives that empower Jewish youth, help young Jews embrace Judaism, and which contribute to the growth of inclusive Jewish communities. As an organization that embodies these values and goals, BBYO has been the recipient of special attention and support from the Foundation.

As part of a new strategic planning process to identify the organization's desired impact on Jewish communal life as well as the goals, priorities, and tactics that will achieve that impact over the next five years, the Foundation initiated this assessment of the impact of teens' involvement in BBYO. The research should inform BBYO's core priorities: ensuring continuity of the Jewish experience, creating a community of leaders, impacting the attitudes and behaviors of Jewish teens, elevating the field of Jewish teen work, and diversifying revenue streams.

The planned research comes at a critical time, as much evidence documents a decline in interest and participation by Millennial Generation Jews in Jewish youth organizations and activities. The decline is both generational and occurs throughout the teenage years. Participation has been linked to parental attachment/involvement with Judaism and Jewish organizations, and to intermarriage (negatively). De-motivating experiences with formal Jewish education, poor quality programs or leadership, social and academic pressures, and the increasing influence of secular society have all been put forth as reasons for the trend.<sup>1</sup>

As young American Jews confront questions related to community and their own Jewish identity, BBYO has the potential of significantly influencing how the Millennial Generation of American Jews will impact the direction of American Jewry. As these young

Jews become further removed from defining events such as the Holocaust and the establishment of Israel, which left an imprint on Jewish identity of previous generations, today's challenges have their own unique dynamics.

With these unique challenges, also come unique opportunities. While the internet and social networking sites have exposed young Jews to extensive social and ethnic diversity, these resources have also paved the way for connecting and forging communities with people of common backgrounds. Jewish Millennials are more tolerant and rooted in multiple communities than older generations, while also seeking connection and identification with people of their own background. The way that the Jewish community reaches out to current and future cohorts of Jewish youth will have tremendous impact on American Jewish identity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **2. Objectives**

The goals of the study are to generate data and analysis that will help determine the impacts of BBYO membership and programming on Jewish relevant identities, attitudes, and practices—both for current participants (those in high school) and, over the longer term, for college-age BBYO alumni and older young adult alumni. The types of Jewish youth who become involved in BBYO is an additional issue to be addressed; in particular, how many young people otherwise under-engaged in Jewish life are being served.

Specific questions the research will address include the following:

- What is the impact of different quantities of BBYO involvement?
- What is the impact of different durations of BBYO involvement?
- What are the longer-term impacts of membership among college-age Jewish youth and among young adults? Above all, are they likely to be more Jewishly involved than non-BBYOers?
- What do participants regard about their BBYO experience as having had the greatest impact?
- To what extent have BBYOers developed enduring friendships with each other?
- Are those who were involved in BBYO as teens more likely to connect “Jewishly” in college compared to those who were not involved in BBYO?
- How effective are different types of BBYO programs?
- What are the Jewish background characteristics of BBYO participants?

## **3. The Research Team**

The research was developed and carried out collaboratively by Sid Groeneman of Groeneman Research & Consulting (Bethesda, Maryland) and Jim Gerstein of Gerstein | Agne Strategic Communications (Washington, DC). Both have had extensive experience designing, conducting, and interpreting research for Jewish organizations on issues of interest to the Jewish community. The two principals did their work under the guidance of Wendy Rosov of

Rosov Consulting (Berkeley, California), who managed the project on behalf of the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation. Foundation staff also reviewed and commented on the research design. Matt Grossman, Executive Director of BBYO, contributed to the study by offering suggestions, responding to questions about the organization and its programs, and providing name and address lists of current and former BBYOers from which three of the survey samples were selected.

**4. Research Methods**

This evaluation focuses on three groups of current and former BBYO participants segmented by age: (1) Current high school BBYO seniors and juniors, virtually all of whom are AZA or BBG members; (2) College-Age Alumni 18-23 years old who are former BBYO participants; and (3) Young Adult Alumni 24-35 years old who are former BBYO participants. The research collected data from each of these groups via three online (web-based) surveys conducted in late 2010 and early 2011:

	Current HS juniors/seniors	18-23 year-old alumni	24-35 year-old alumni	Comparison sample (18-35)
Survey field period	Nov. 29 - Dec. 30	Dec. 9 – Jan. 25	Jan. 5 – Feb. 8	Feb. 3 – Feb. 10
Number of survey questions	110	91	105	79

A sample of non-BBYOers 18-35 years of age was queried in a fourth online survey (“Comparison Group” sample) to allow comparisons with the college-age and young adult BBYO survey results.

**4.1 Samples and Data Collection Procedures**

Current and former BBYOers were selected for the survey from computerized name and address lists provided by the headquarters office of BBYO. All listings containing what appeared to be a valid email address were contacted and asked to take the online survey, and some were contacted by postal mail as well. At least two follow-up “reminders” were sent by email to everyone selected to participate for whom an email address was available.

Recipients of these mailings were offered the incentive of participating in a lottery drawing for a chance to win one of several cash prizes. The high school student survey lottery offered three \$100 prizes; the college-age survey lottery offered three \$200 prizes; the young adult lottery offered four \$400 prizes. To prevent persons from taking the survey more than once—either intentionally in order to boost their chances of winning a lottery prize, or unintentionally because they had forgotten having taken the survey earlier—each invitation contained a unique ID that had to be entered before the respondent was allowed to proceed.

The Comparison Group Survey was conducted using a sample of pre-identified Jewish members from Mountain West Research’s nationwide panel who had signed up to participate in online consumer research, social research, and public opinion surveys about a variety of topics. This method was deemed the best approach to generating a non-BBYO comparison sample within the available budget.

The size of the starting samples and methods of contact are shown in Table A-1:

**Table A-1**  
**Starting Samples and Contact Procedures**

	Total	By Email Only	By 1st-Class Mail Only	By both Email and 1 <sup>st</sup> -Class Mail
High School	5,718	1,218	—	4,500
College-Age	20,368	20,368	—	—
Young Adult	17,647	13,647	4,000	—
Comparison Group	5,177	5,177	—	—

#### 4.2 Survey Response

The surveys produced 1,061 usable responses from current high school BBYOers, 722 from college-age alumni, 1,036 from young adult alumni, and a total of 500 in the comparison group (145 who were 18-23 and 355 who were 24-35). Additional survey responses were received but rejected—not included in the final sample—since they were substantially incomplete because the respondent had quit in mid-survey.<sup>ii</sup> To increase the number of cases for the data analysis from BBYOers, additional requests to take the survey were placed on the national BBYO Facebook group page and on some of the local BBYO Facebook group pages.<sup>iii</sup>

The numbers of usable responses received from each contact procedure and in total are shown in Table A-2.

**Table A-2**  
**Survey Responses**

	Total	From Mailed/Emailed Invitations	From Facebook
High School	1,061	952	109
College-Age	722	606	116
Young Adult	1,036	955	81
Comparison Group	500	500	—

### 4.3 Weighting Adjustments

Post-hoc weighting of survey responses is commonly used to ensure that the obtained sample are proportionately representative of its population with regard to selected demographic characteristics—a form of adjustment called post-stratification weighting. The high school BBYO sample was weighted based on gender and geographic region of the country (using a 4-region breakdown) so that within each of eight region-by-gender cells (East male, East female, Midwest male, etc.) the weighted percentage distribution of the sample is made equivalent to the percentage distribution of its population (as calculated from the name and address data supplied by BBYO). This procedure guarantees that the adjusted sample is representative with respect to gender, region, and gender by region.

The college-age sample of BBYO alumni was weighted by region and gender, using the same approach. According to BBYO staff, the address listings provided for selecting this sample largely correspond to alumni’s address when in high school, so the geographic weighting reflects respondent’s state (and thus region) during their BBYO years.<sup>iv</sup>

The young adult sample of BBYO alumni also used region by gender weighting, but for this group, the BBYO-supplied address information is believed to correspond more to this group’s current address than their address when in high school. So the geographic weighting of the young adult alumni sample is based on state of current residence.

The comparison sample was treated in two different manners. For the comparison analysis on the demographic and Jewish background differences between BBYO alumni and Jewish young adults who did not participate in BBYO, no weighting was applied to the comparison sample. All data citations in this part of the analysis will refer to the “unweighted sample.”

For the comparison analysis on the impact of BBYO, the comparison data was weighted to Jewish background measures in the BBYO college age and young adult samples. This weighting was applied in order to reduce the possibility that differences in Jewish background could account for the differences in the measures which were being used to address whether BBYO was having an impact. The sample was weighted by denomination (Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Reconstructionist, Just Jewish, and other), gender, age, region, Jewish spouse or partner (young adults sample, if married or living with a partner) and a Jewish involvement scale based on several measures (whether parents expect him/her to live an actively Jewish life, frequency of attending religious services, whether s/he keeps kosher, frequency of attending a Seder during Passover, frequency of lighting candles during Hanukkah, frequency of attending High Holiday services, frequency of attending Shabbat services, frequency of fasting on Yom Kippur, and frequency of doing anything to observe Shabbat.) All data citations in this part of the analysis will refer to the “weighted sample.”

### 4.4 Focus of the Evaluation (Content of the Criterion Measures)

The evaluation presented in this report focuses on a broad range of Jewish-relevant identities, attitudes, and behaviors which BBYO seeks to instill in its members and participants. These include an understanding and appreciation of what it means to be Jewish as well as personal expression of Jewish identity and pride; religious practice and holiday celebration; positive orientations vis-a-vis Jewish study, the local Jewish community, Israel, and worldwide Jewry (*klal yisrael*); active participation in communal life—in Jewish social, recreational, cultural, service, educational, and religious organizations and activities—and manifestation of behaviors many would regard as influenced by Jewish values—leadership, voluntarism, philanthropy (*tzedaka*), and a desire to “repair the world” (*tikkun olam*).

#### **4.4 The Logic of the Impact Evaluation Analysis and Limitations of Causal Inference**

There are at least five distinct ways of measuring impact in survey analysis. One common approach, which will be used most often, is to ask respondents for their opinion. Although self-assessment is probably the weakest way to measure impact because respondents’ opinions might be inaccurate or influenced by how they think they “should” answer, it is most easily obtained and, in some cases, the only feasible approach. A second procedure examines whether various outcome measures are associated with the quantity or intensity of BBYO involvement, the implicit hypothesis being that more (or more intense) involvement (“dosage”) should be related to desired outcomes. A third way to measure impact is by relating desired identities, attitudes, and behaviors to length of BBYO involvement (“duration”). The logic is similar: the longer the period of involvement, the more likely (or the stronger) the desired impacts. A fourth method relates impacts to specific *types* of BBYO experience, such as engagement in certain kinds of BBYO programs or activities. While logical theoretically, this approach will be applied less often due to the practical difficulty of disentangling the effects of specific program experiences from total participation and other factors which are statistically associated with those experiences. The analysis of BBYO participants currently in high school will employ these four approaches.

A fifth method—typically the strongest analytically—involves comparing BBYO alumni on the outcome measures with samples of Jews of similar age and also, to the extent possible, of similar other background factors. The use of comparison groups will be possible only for analysis of the college-age and young adult samples, since there was not possible to obtain a representative comparison sample of non-BBYO high school juniors and seniors that would not have been cost prohibitive. The college-age and young adult survey analyses will also use self-assessment (respondents’ opinions), dosage, and duration to measure impact.

Any data analysis that seeks to make conclusions about cause, including program evaluations such as this one, must attempt to rule out extraneous factors as alternative explanations. Controlling for other possible causes is limited here by the inability to use an experimental design—as it is in virtually all survey-based studies.<sup>v</sup> It is also by circumscribed by sample size, making it impossible in many cases to carve the sample into statistically reliable segments to test for, and ideally rule out, other causal factors. In this regard, readers are reminded that statistical correlation does not necessarily imply causation. When possible, this analysis will attempt to control for plausible alternative interpretations, most notably, for

strength of Jewish background. The purpose is to seek to eliminate, or at least cast doubt upon, such other factors being the cause of observed differences on the impact measures and thereby lend support to the influence of BBYO experience and participation.

Another caveat to bear in mind is the possibility that samples are not representative. Because reduced response is not uncommon in organizational membership surveys among those for whom the topic or content of the survey is less salient,<sup>vi</sup> it is possible that those more favorable to BBYO might have responded to the survey disproportionately, which can lead to overly positive results and conclusions.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>i</sup> Michael Whitehead-Bust, “Current Trends in Jewish Teen Participation with Out-of-School Activities,” a literature summary prepared for the Rose Community Foundation, (February, 2010).

<sup>ii</sup> Completion rates in online surveys will always under-estimate the true level of respondent cooperation because some, sometimes a substantial number of, mailed and/or emailed invitations to take the survey never reach the intended respondent due to addresses which are out of date or otherwise incorrect.

<sup>iii</sup> Those responding to the Facebook page request were offered the same lottery drawing incentive as the those who were mailed or emailed invitations to participate, but the incentive offer was not mentioned until the respondent accessed the online instrument to take the survey. It was not referenced on Facebook to avoid tempting people taking the survey multiple times. In addition, those responding to the Facebook survey request had to enter their name so that it could be checked to identify and eliminate any who intentionally or mistakenly tried to take the survey more than once. There was no way to prevent cheaters wanting to increase their chances of winning a lottery prize by entering bogus names and taking the survey more than once, but this was regarded as unlikely and, in any event, could be checked against BBYO records.

<sup>iv</sup> Both state of current residence and state when participating in BBYO in high school were asked in the survey.

<sup>v</sup> In his study of participation in Young Judaea, Steven M. Cohen acknowledges the methodological problems plaguing the ability to estimate impact: “... even in the best of circumstances, we cannot fully control for antecedent and confounding factors.” (“Building a Jewish Identity: A Study of Young Judaea,” 1998, available for download at the Berman Jewish Policy Archive: <http://www.bjpa.org/Publications>).

<sup>vi</sup> Many examples could be cited for the relationship between topic saliency or interest and survey cooperation. See, for example, Robert M. Groves and Mick P. Couper, *Nonresponse in Household Interview Surveys*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. (New York, 1998); p. 286 and passim. Also, Roger Tourangeau, Lance J. Rips, and Kenneth Rasinski, *The Psychology of Survey Response*. Cambridge University Press (New York, 2000); p. 261.

## **B. Current BBYO Participants**

### **0. Summary of the Survey of High School Juniors and Seniors**

The national survey of 1,061 BBYO juniors and seniors contains much evidence that current participants have a more highly developed understanding and sense of what it means to be Jewish, manifest more positive Jewish-relevant attitudes and behaviors, have stronger leadership skills and motivations, and greater commitment to community service and “improving the world” as a consequence of their BBYO involvement. To a lesser degree, they are also more interested in Jewish learning and more engaged in Jewish culture and religious practices.

The data analysis identifies many examples of outcomes consistent with the interpretation that participation in BBYO programs and activities are producing the intended effects:

- Nearly all rate BBYO as having had an overall positive impact on their life, most rating the impact as very positive;
- Large proportions credit BBYO for enhancing their understanding and appreciation of being Jewish;
- Over half express their Jewishness more since becoming involved with BBYO through the clothing/accessories they wear, and most recognize the organization as responsible for that change;
- Many attribute to their BBYO experience an increased sense of connectedness to, and responsibility for, worldwide Jewry;
- Over half now feel it is a lot more important to have Jewish friends; in fact, a large proportion of high schoolers’ current best friendships originated through BBYO;
- About three-quarters believe BBYO has been responsible for increasing their understanding of and sense of attachment to Israel;
- Three-quarters or more believe their commitment to community service and social/political causes has increased due to BBYO;
- More than half feel the organization has had a positive impact on their philanthropic and/or volunteer attitudes and behavior;
- Two-thirds to three-quarters feel that BBYO has very much improved their leadership skills and their self-confidence;
- Over half give a lot of credit to BBYO for motivating them to be leaders in their school or community; and
- About three-quarters believe their involvement in BBYO has improved their chances of getting into their preferred college.

Further evidence of impact derives from the often found connection between amount of total BBYO participation (“dosage”) and the outcome measures. Additionally, on fewer but still a large number of the measures, the desired outcomes are related to years of affiliation. Duration is more often related to intended outcomes for BBYOers with relatively weaker Jewish backgrounds, indicating that years spent in the organization—

not just extent of active participation—might be compensating for their fainter non-BBYO Jewish life experience.

Other indicators exhibit somewhat less, or less consistent, evidence of positive impact:

- Measures of participants’ Jewish knowledge and interest in continuing their learning, for which moderate effects are discernable;
- Measures of Jewish holiday celebration, for which the effects are also moderate;
- Students’ engagement in cultural activities—Jewish reading, films, music, theatre, attending lectures; and especially
- Religious service attendance and prayer.

Although youth with relatively weaker Jewish backgrounds sometimes score lower on desired attitudes, motivations, and behaviors, they typically do as well, if not better, on measures of BBYO impact. This implies that the organization is having a positive effect not only on high schoolers from more extensive Jewish backgrounds—at least within what might be a confined range of Jewish backgrounds or environments among BBYOers. It also lends credence to, though does not prove, an interpretation of organizational impact to explain observed differences on the outcome measures by reducing the likelihood that it is merely stronger Jewish backgrounds among BBYOers that account for the positive findings.

The sample appears to exhibit background characteristics which are stronger or more extensive than average and probably do not reflect the full range among American Jewish teens. It is impossible to know whether this applies to the BBYO population as a whole or whether the obtained sample over-represents attributes such as years of Jewish education, the number living in synagogue member families or with in-married parents, and the Jewish make-up of respondents’ schools. If it is the population, this would warrant concluding that relatively few under-engaged Jewish youth—those living on the periphery of Jewish life—are currently being attracted to BBYO programs and activities.

## **1. Profile of the High School Sample**

Table B-1 presents some basic attributes of the high school sample of 1,061 juniors and seniors:

Gender:	Male	49
	Female	51
Region:	East	27
	Midwest	20
	South	38
	West	15
School type:	Public high school	86
	Jewish private high school	6
	Other private high school	8
School year:	Senior year in school	42
	Junior year in school	58

The weighting that was applied assures that the proportions of males and females, and the proportion in each of the four geographic regions are the same as in the total BBYO population (U.S.).<sup>i</sup> As the table shows, a large preponderance of BBYOers attend a public high school. More of them are in their junior year than in their senior year.<sup>ii</sup>

The Jewish characteristics of the sample are shown in Table B-2:

Years of Jewish education during grades 1-8:	6-8 years	78
	4-5 years	12
	2-3 years	4
	1 year or less	6
Had a Bar/Bat-Mitzvah:		94
Family belongs to a synagogue or temple:		84
Denominational identification:	Orthodox	2
	Conservative	43
	Reform	38
	Reconstructionist	3
	Just Jewish – no particular denomination	12
	Other	3
Are both parents Jewish?	Yes	83
	No, inter-married	15
	One parent no longer living	2
Attend a school in which at least half of the students are Jewish:		31

An unusually large proportion of the high school sample (78%) had 6-8 years of Jewish education during their elementary school years—which can include Hebrew school, Sunday school, Jewish day school, and private tutoring—while only 6% had one year or less (Table B-2). The same applies to the proportion living in families that belong to a synagogue or temple, which is almost double the percent found in other research<sup>iii</sup>. Although we do not have comparable figures for the proportion who have had a Bar/Bat-Mitzvah, that number (84%) also seems high. Only about one-third as many as found in other research<sup>iv</sup> reside in intermarried households.<sup>v</sup> One additional telling statistic: Nearly one-third (31%) attend a school where the respondent estimates that half or more of the students are Jewish. Although we are unaware of any benchmark statistic, this seems well above the national norm.

This summary profile of Jewish characteristics portrays current BBYOers as more Jewishly encompassed than what most informed observers would regard as average or typical for this age group (except for the under-representation of Orthodox youth). It appears that few BBYO juniors and seniors live on the periphery of the Jewish world, as indicated by what are admittedly imprecise measures.

However, there is an alternative explanation: It is possible that Jewish youth farther away from the center of Jewish life are under-represented in the *sample* rather than in the BBYO population.<sup>vi</sup> Less engaged BBYOers, who are likely not as connected Jewishly, might have been less motivated to take the survey. Without comparison data for the *population* of current BBYO juniors and seniors, it is not possible to choose between these competing interpretations. Subsequent analyses of the high school data will remain cognizant of the possibility that the sample of participants is a more Jewishly oriented group—or, at least, a group with a more substantial Jewish background or environment—than their BBYO population counterparts. Even if the sample does, in fact, over-represent those with a more substantial Jewish background/environment, that would not necessarily imply disproportionately strong Jewish identity or active engagement on most of the types of indicators of interest to BBYO, as presented in the following sections.

## 2. Participation in BBYO Programs and Activities

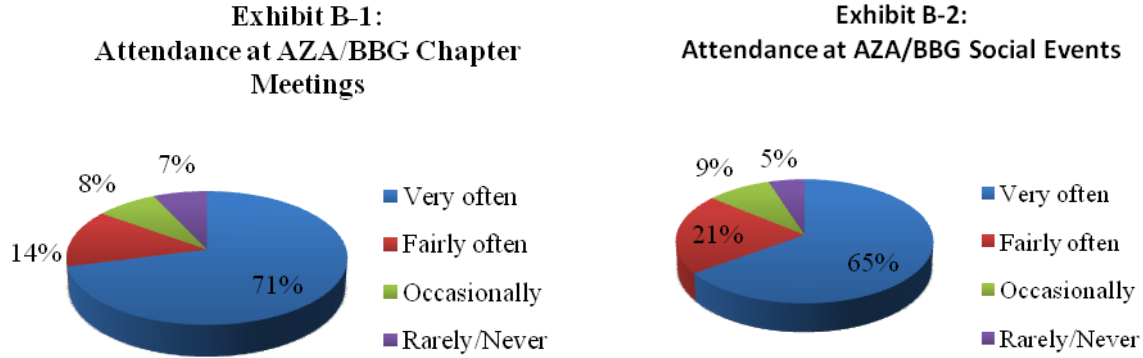
Virtually all respondents (99%) are current AZA or BBG members.<sup>vii</sup> As a group, high school juniors and seniors have had a lot of experience in the organization. Nearly three-quarters of participants (74%) have been involved for at least three years (Table B2A). Only one in eight (12%) have been affiliated for one year or less.

**Table B2A**  
**Years of Involvement in BBYO**

Number of years involved in BBYO*:	4+ years	32
	3 years	42
	2 years	14
	1 year or less	12

\* How long have you been involved with BBYO – either as member or as a participant?

Attendance at AZA/BBG chapter meetings and at AZA/BBG social events is strong among these members (Exhibits B-1 and B-2).



As shown, more than 7 in every 10 members say they attend chapter meetings very often, and nearly two-thirds attend AZA/BBG social events very often. At the opposite extreme, only 7% and 5% report that they rarely or never attend chapter meetings and social events, respectively.

Most BBYO youth have occupied a leadership position in chapter or local affairs, often for more than one year, as shown in the following table:

**Table B-3:**  
**Years in Leadership Positions**

	<u>On AZA/BBG Board*</u>	<u>Chaired BBYO Event/Committee**</u>
4+ years	9	5
3 years	23	9
2 years	24	16
1 year	23	26
Never	21	43

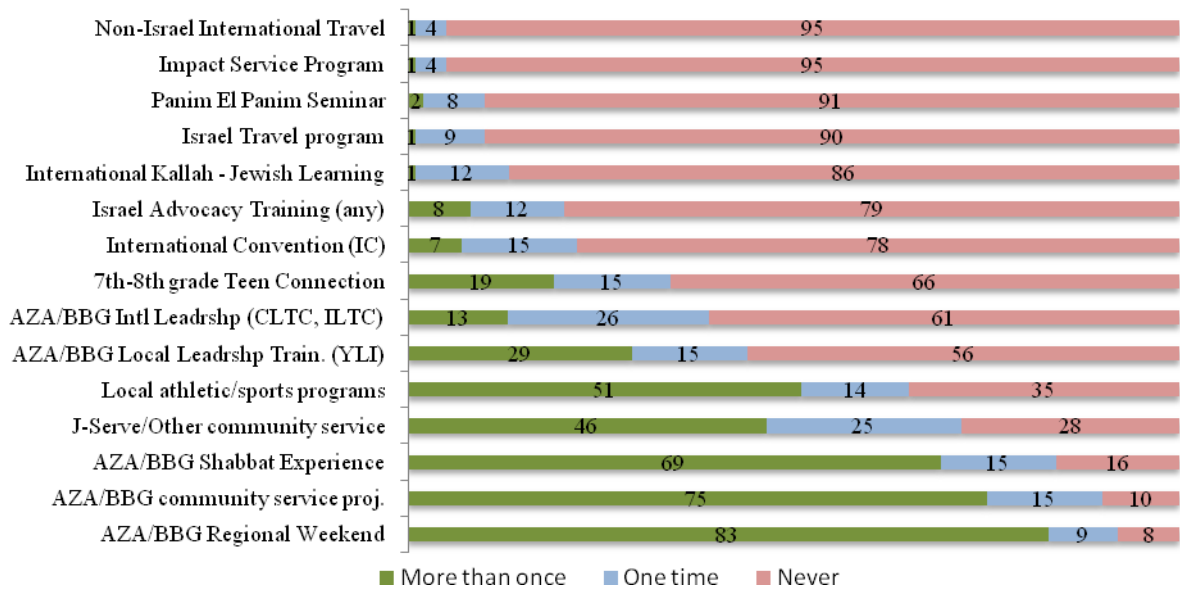
\*During how many years, if ever, were you on an AZA/BBG Chapter, Regional or International Board?

\*\* During how many years, if ever, were you a Chair of a BBYO event or committee?

Fewer than one in every six BBYO juniors and seniors (16%) has neither held a Board position nor chaired a committee or event since becoming involved with the organization. Given that more than one-quarter of these teens have been in BBYO two years or less, this level of leadership activity is quite remarkable.

Exhibit B-3 depicts participation in 15 BBYO programs and activities:

**Exhibit B-3:**  
**Participation in BBYO Programs (%)**



The chart shows wide variation in involvement across programs. Some programs elicit widespread participation (such as Regional Weekends, chapter community service projects, Shabbat Experiences) and others (such as international programs, Panim El Panim seminars Israel Advocacy Training) attract relatively few BBYOers. It is understandable why some of the latter generate low participation, as several require extensive commitments of time away from home, are sometimes expensive, or because they are offered less often than programs with broader involvement.

About one-quarter of the respondents (26%) have participated at least once in eight or more of the different programs, while only 16% have participated in fewer than four. Youth who manifest more involvement generally in BBYO are much more likely to participate in the less commonly experienced programs. Those participating in relatively few programs/activities are very unlikely to become involved in the statistically rarer types.

Program involvement is closely related to tenure in BBYO: For each of the 15 programs, teens who have been active longer in the organization are more likely to have tried the program at least once. For eleven of the programs/activities, it is also moderately associated with having a relatively strong Jewish background, that is, stronger than other BBYO youth.<sup>viii</sup> The following programs are exceptions, in which strength of Jewish background does not appear to affect participation:

- AZA/BBG community service projects
- International Convention
- Panim El Panim
- Non-Israel International Travel

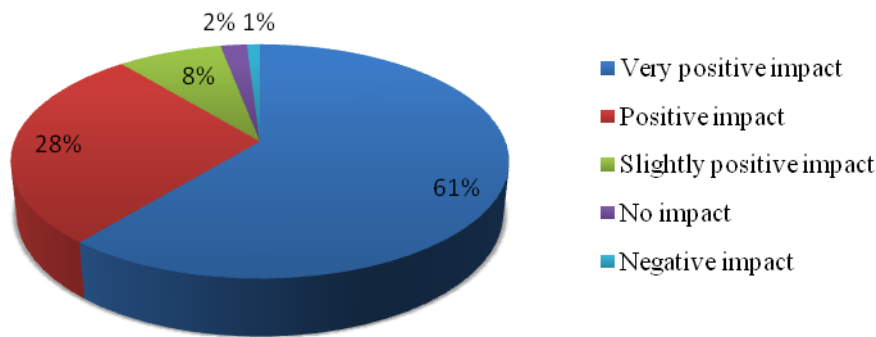
In a separate question asking about overall involvement, nearly three-quarters (74%) answered that they are extremely involved in BBYO, and 16% said they are very involved, leaving only one-tenth of the sample responding that they are only somewhat involved or less.

The final section of the high school survey analysis will assess the effectiveness of BBYO programs.

### 3. Reported Overall Impact of the BBYO Experience and Volunteered Comments

BBYO receives high marks from current teens on the overall impact it has had on their life: Fully 61% rate the impact that BBYO has had on their life as very positive, and another 36% report the impact as positive or slightly positive, while a mere 3% described it as having had no impact or negative impact (Exhibit B-4):

**Exhibit B-4:  
Impact of BBYO on My Life**



Rating of BBYO’s overall impact varies with level of involvement<sup>ix</sup> in its programs and activities. Virtually all youth in the very highest segment of involvement rated the impact as very positive (92%) or positive (7%). For those in the next highest involvement group (medium high), the comparable ratings are 78% very positive and 18% positive. Moving down the segments in order, 50% of the medium low involvement group rated BBYO’s impact as very positive, and 39% rated it as positive. Ratings among youth in the very lowest involvement segment were lower—16% very positive and 44% positive. Even among those with the least participation, only 14% gave BBYO a unfavorable rating of “no impact” (12%) or “negative impact” (2%); the rest rated the organization as having had a slightly positive impact on them. There are no significant contrasts on perceived impact by gender or by region of the country.

Reinforcing the finding relating overall impact to level of involvement, for the 35 respondents giving BBYO a “no impact” or negative impact” rating, over half of them (n=19) score very low (bottom eighth) on the involvement scale and fully 84% of them fall in the lower half. Nearly half rarely or never attended AZA/BBG meetings, and over half

rarely or never attended AZA/BBG social events. This small group is at least equally strong in Jewish background as BBYOers who rated overall impact as positive.

While it is tempting to conclude that greater involvement in BBYO produces a more strongly positive impact, it is also possible that those teens who perceive that BBYO is having a greater impact tend to participate more. Most likely the causation is bi-directional.

Perceived overall impact of BBYO among current participants does not vary by strength of Jewish background. Teens with strongest, medium weak, and weakest Jewish backgrounds give nearly identical ratings: of 61-62% very positive and 27-30% positive, constituting evidence that the organization’s programs are equally effective—at least from the point of view of these current “consumers”—for youth with different levels of “Jewishness.”

The survey also asked respondents to describe “...what about BBYO has had the biggest impact on you.” The following examples of answers reveal the richness of the experience for many participants, as well as the variety of meaningful types of impact. Some examples:

*A female from New Jersey: Learning to be a leader - both in school, in BBYO and in the world.*

*A male from Maryland: I was raised interfaith, and always felt a slightly stronger connection to the Jewish side of my family. Since joining BBYO, I have ultimately identified myself as Jewish, and it has helped me place myself in the world as ... a Jewish individual.*

*A female from Massachusetts: The sisterhood and people in BBYO have had the biggest impact on me. Hearing other people's experiences, and knowing they are just like me, makes me not feel alone. I am part of something!*

*A male from Arizona: BBYO has helped me develop social and leadership skills, and has increased my passion for Judaism. I have never seen an organization that is so effective at training teens to be community leaders and helping them find who they really are.*

*A female from Pennsylvania: I think one of the reasons I came to love BBYO was so much because other people saw potential in me that I had repeatedly doubted. BBYO was given me the tools to be able to talk to people without feeling awkward.*

*A male from Florida: I entered BBYO as a shy 8th grader and will emerge as a strong and confident leader. It has taught me that being Jewish isn't something to be embarrassed about.*

A female from California: *I've made so many amazing friends and found a place where I belong. It is the first time I've connected at all to my Jewish roots and it makes me feel a lot more grounded.*

A male from New York: *BBYO helped me understand what Jewish means and what brotherhood means.*

A female from New York: *...how important it is to give back to the community and to be thankful for what you have and who you are...*

A male from North Carolina: *meeting other Jews.*

One explicit BBYO program objective not addressed in the quantitative part of this research is development of an appreciation of pluralism and tolerance of others from different strands of Judaism. This theme came through in a number of respondents' comments, as in a response from a female from Texas:

*After being in a Jewish day school all my life, it was interesting to receive a broader horizon and interact with people who had not been surrounded only by Judaism for so long.*

Another, from Maryland, wrote in a similarly positive vein:

*I attend a Modern Orthodox Jewish school with others who are similar in belief and tradition to me. In BBYO, everyone I know is either Reform or Conservative and this has provided me with the realization that it is important to connect with everyone within the Jewish community.*

A male from California described the biggest impact of BBYO for him is:

*Having positive role models within my chapter and region, as well as the opportunity to grow into a Jewish adult in a pluralistic environment.*

Not all of the comments about biggest impact of BBYO were flattering:

*I now fully understand the meaning of jap. (Ohio female)*

*Its given me a lot of self doubt. Girls in BBYO are nasty—always keep that in mind . . . Very often BBYO is a popularity contest more so then anything else. (North Carolina male)*

The word cloud below (in which the size of different words are proportionate to the frequency that the word is mentioned) demonstrates the frequency that different words were mentioned in the open-ended responses.



#### 4. Ethnic Identity and Related Orientations

A firm ethnic identity is not only important in and of itself to maintain the vitality of the Jewish people, but as Robert Putnam and David Campbell found in their “Faith Matters” survey of the U.S. population, “... those with strong ethnic identity are also less likely to leave the religion of their parents.”<sup>x</sup> This section examines a number of measures related to ethnic Jewish identity:

- Understanding and appreciation of being Jewish
- Pride in being Jewish
- Perpetuation of Jewish life
- Jewish community and peoplehood

This begins a series of examinations, organized by theme, of the impact of the BBYO experience. Impact will be assessed in three ways: (1) self-reports of impact, (2) determination of whether the outcome measures are related to extent of involvement in BBYO programs and activities (“dosage”), and (3) determination of whether the outcome measures are related to tenure—number of years of affiliation with BBYO (“duration”).

*HOW TO READ THE SUBSEQUENT TABLES*

*The tables that follow present results of the impact analysis. Organized thematically to include similar content, most of the tables include different types of survey questions or statements with different formats. It is important to note the wording of the survey item each row as well as the particular response, enclosed in parentheses, that the corresponding percentage in the “%” column represents.*

*Some of the percentages presented are direct indicators of BBYO impact; they are highlighted by being shown in **bold**. No inferences per se can be drawn about impact from the percentages which are not bolded. But even in those rows, the symbols in the “Involve” and “Tenure” cells DO constitute evidence relevant to inferences of impact.*

*The columns headed by “Involve” and “Tenure”—show whether there is a statistically significant relationship between the survey item and total amount of BBYO involvement (Involve column), and between the survey and number of years of involvement in BBYO (Tenure column). Relationships significant in the positive (desired) direction at the 95% confidence level are denoted by a “+”. Non-significant relationships are denoted by “0”. Any relationships inversely significant (in the negative direction) are denoted by “-“. Pluses are evidence of positive BBYO impact. Zeros represent no impact. Minuses, though rare, would be evidence of negative impact—that more participation, or more years of involvement, is associated with an undesired outcome.*

**4.1 Understanding and Appreciation of Being Jewish**

[BBYO’s biggest impact was making] *me realize just how important being a part of the Jewish Community means to me.* (Texas male)

Table B-4 presents research results on this first theme. The bolded percentages reveal that substantial numbers of current high school BBYO participants believe that BBYO has very much strengthened their understanding of being Jewish, their appreciation of problems Jews face, and how living Jewishly can be fulfilling. There is little negative evidence in any of the seven statements, three of which are direct respondent judgments of impact (those shown in bold).

**Table B-4**  
**Indicators of Impact on Understanding/Appreciation Being Jewish**  
 ('+' denotes a positive association; '0' denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved my understanding of what it means to be Jewish. (yes-very much)	<b>52</b>	+	+
The fact that I am Jewish has a lot to do with how I see myself. (strongly agree)	52	+	0
I have a clear sense of what it means to be Jewish. (strongly agree)	44	+	0
Jewish tradition has an impact on the decisions that I make. (strongly agree)	34	+	0
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your appreciation of the problems and issues facing Jews in the U.S. and worldwide. (very much)	<b>41</b>	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your appreciation of how “living Jewishly” can provide a richer, more fulfilling life? (yes-very much,)	<b>44</b>	+	+
How important is being Jewish in your life? (very important)	65	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

For each item, agreement is significantly associated statistically with amount of involvement in BBYO programs and activities, providing evidence of impact. But only four of the measures show a significant relationship with number of years in BBYO (tenure), indicating that affiliation alone is less consistently impactful than degree of active involvement.<sup>xi</sup>

The analysis was repeated for teens with different levels of Jewish background, splitting the sample equally between the stronger half and the half having relatively weaker backgrounds. Although there were few notable differences, tenure—years of affiliation with BBYO—appears to be moderately more impactful for those with weaker Jewish backgrounds than those with stronger backgrounds.

The effect of BBYO on one participant with a weaker background is illustrated by a comment from a New Jersey female:

*I have become more involved in helping the community and understanding Jewish heritage. My mother is Catholic, but I wanted to learn more about my Jewish heritage, especially since my father is not very religious.*

## 4.2 Jewish Pride

One of the goals of BBYO programs is to instill a sense of pride in being Jewish among teens who have not felt proud of their ethno-religious heritage and to deepen those feelings among those who do. As a male from Maryland commented *I never really cared about Judaism until I joined BBYO. This organization has helped me realize how proud I am to be Jewish...* Such feelings can also be exhibited through positive emotional reactions to learning about Jewish accomplishments and, conversely, through discomfort at hearing about Jews behaving badly. It can also be gauged by the public expression of one’s Jewishness through symbolic display. Table B-5 presents results of the research on these indicators of Jewish pride.

**Table B-5**  
**Indicators of Impact on Jewish Pride**  
 (‘+’ denotes a positive association; ‘0’ denotes no association.)

	%	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
I feel especially proud when someone Jewish is publicly cited for a significant achievement. (strongly agree)	58	+	0
I feel ashamed when I hear news reports of Jews behaving illegally or unethically. (strongly agree)	34	0	0
I wear a Jewish star, chai, Jewish t-shirt, or other sign that I am Jewish more often since becoming involved in BBYO. (indicated agreement)	62	+	+
Role BBYO played in contributing to my wearing more often Jewish stars, chais, Jewish t-shirts, or other signs that I am Jewish. (major role) **	<b>64</b>	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**  
 \*\* Base: those answering that they do this more often since becoming involved in BBYO

Nearly all BBYO youth feel proud of Jewish achievements, and most feel ashamed to hear news about negative Jewish behavior. Positive feelings of pride are significantly related to amount of involvement in BBYO activities but not to duration of affiliation with the organization.

*I feel that my outlook on Judaism has changed tremendously, specifically after attending East Coast Kallah and CLTC 6 2010. I am also more confident and proud of my heritage and religion. (New York male)*

Public display of Jewish symbols in clothing and jewelry is associated with both amount of participation and number of years in BBYO. Of the 62% of respondents who affirmed that they more often wear Jewish stars, chais, Jewish t-shirts, or other signs that they are Jewish since becoming involved in BBYO, nearly two-thirds (64%) assign a major role to the organization in contributing to that change, while 27% (not shown in table) perceive the role as minor. Those who have been more active in BBYO and those with longer affiliation are more likely than their counterparts to attribute the increase to BBYO. Only 17% of BBYO participants report rarely or never wearing clothing revealing that they are Jewish.

As above, these analyses were repeated within the two Jewish background segments. Although the incidence of public display of being Jewish is lower for those with weaker Jewish backgrounds, it is, nevertheless, significantly related to amount of participation and to tenure in BBYO for them as well as for their stronger background counterparts.

### 4.3 Perpetuation of Jewish Life

Most BBYO teens recognize the importance of raising their children as Jews and of being involved in Jewish life after high school, as evident from the high percentages of strong disagreement with each statement (Table B-6). Both raising children to be Jewish and remaining active in Jewish life after high school are significantly related to degree of involvement in BBYO as well as in duration of affiliation, consistent with a conclusion of impact.

**Table B-6**  
**Indicators of Perpetuation of Jewish Life**  
 ('+' denotes a positive association; '0' denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
It is <u>not</u> so important to raise any children I might have to be Jewish. strongly disagree)	71	+	+
I do <u>not</u> feel especially motivated to be involved in Jewish life after high school. strongly disagree)	63	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

Not unexpectedly, BBYOers falling in the weaker half on the Jewish background scale were somewhat less likely to disagree with both statements. Interestingly, when the sample is divided by background, the views of the half with weaker backgrounds remain related to their amount of involvement in BBYO and also their years of affiliation—which is not the case for teens with the relatively stronger Jewish backgrounds. On this critical pair of attitudes, BBYO appears to manifest a greater impact on Jewish teens with less intensive Jewish histories.

### 4.4 Connectedness to and Responsibility for Other Jews

Most current BBYO participants express a strong sense of connection to, and responsibility for, other Jews worldwide (Table B-7). Sometimes described as “Jewish peoplehood” or *klal yisrael*, this feeling of attachment is a central component in the maintenance of a unified people, regardless of location. And sense of responsibility derives from felt commonality.

An AZA member from Virginia wrote about connectedness:

*It is the only time when, as a Jew, I'm not a minority. There's something nice about that... being with other Jews just like you.*

And from a fellow from Washington state:

*AZA is such a positive environment. The feeling of having a group of guys to turn to whenever I feel like it is truly awesome. When life gives me lemons my chapter gives me lemonade. Brotherhood has [had] the biggest impact on me.*

Commented a female from New York:

*...the fact that I did not finish Hebrew School and have a Bat Mitzvah used to make me feel disconnected with my religion, but BBYO has served to reconnect me, and inform me on the things I have not yet learned about.*

**Table B-7**  
**Indicators of Impact on Sense of Connectedness to Worldwide Jewry**  
 ('+' denotes a positive association; '0' denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
I do <u>not</u> feel particularly connected to the Jewish people. (strongly disagree)	68	+	+
How important of a role does being part of the Jewish people play in your life? (very important)	74	+	0
After becoming involved in BBYO, how much more important in your life, if at all, has being part of the Jewish people become? (a lot)	<b>57</b>	+	+
I feel a special responsibility to help Jews in need around the world. (strongly agree)	52	+	0
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your feeling of responsibility to Jews worldwide? (yes-very much)	<b>45</b>	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

All five measures are significantly associated with extent of BBYO participation, and three of the five are related to years of affiliation (tenure)—prima facie evidence that BBYO is having a positive impact on members' feelings of Jewish peoplehood and concomitant sense of responsibility to their fellow Jews around the world. The bolded percentages are further support for this conclusion.

According to a female in Illinois: *It [BBYO] has gave me a better understanding of problems around the world that relate to Judaism.*

Teens with weaker Jewish backgrounds express decidedly weaker feelings of peoplehood. They are also somewhat less likely than others to credit BBYO for increasing their feelings of responsibility to Jews worldwide. Nevertheless, on each indicator, youth with weaker backgrounds who participate more in BBYO score higher on these indicators than those who participate less (as is also true for those with stronger Jewish backgrounds). Moreover, on two of the five measures, weaker background youth's responses are significantly

related in the desired direction to the number of years they have spent in BBYO, which is *not* the case for BBYOers with stronger backgrounds on any of the measures. While weaker background junior and seniors unsurprisingly manifest lower connectedness, most of the evidence suggests that BBYO is, nevertheless, having a desired impact on their feelings of attachment to the Jewish world.

## 5. Jewish Friends

*BBYO has had the biggest impact on me by teaching me what it means to be a sister. At first I didn't understand the concept of Jewish Sisterhood, but after my time spent in BBYO I know that it means that your BBG sisters are with you no matter what. (California female)*

While the previous section dealt with the abstraction of Jewish peoplehood, which can seem obscure to some teen-agers, this next analysis focuses on the familiar—respondents’ friends. Sustaining Jewish traditions and perpetuating Jewish life requires that Jews interact socially with other Jews. Social life need not be exclusively Jewish by any means, but without some regular contact with other Jews, the Jewish Community cannot survive. The deeper and more meaningful the relationships the better. The survey inquired about the importance of having Jewish friends, the extent to which BBYOers’ friends are Jewish, and how many “good friends” they met through participation in BBYO.

Well over half (59%) of the high schoolers consider having Jewish friends to be very important, and another 30% regard it as somewhat important (Table B-8). Expressed importance of the role of Jewish friends in their lives as associated with greater involvement in BBYO but not with years of membership. The data support the hypothesis that BBYO participation has enhanced members’ beliefs in the importance of having Jewish friends—both by the percentages who report that as having occurred through BBYO—and by the significant statistical association with amount of participation. Females are a little more likely than males to attribute their increased importance of having Jewish friends to BBYO.

A large percentage of BBYO juniors and seniors (63%) say over half of their six best friends are Jewish. If we relax the criterion to half or more of their best friends—to 3+ rather than 4+ of best friends—the percentage increases to 78%. The average number of Jewish best friends among the top six is 4.1—a figure which does not differ by gender. The proportion of best friends who are Jewish is sharply related to both amount of BBYO participation and to years of affiliation: For BBYOers in the top 50 percentile in participation, 77% say at least four of their six best friends are Jewish; for the lower 50%, the percentage is 49%. For those who have been in BBYO three or more years, 68% say that at least four of their six best friends are Jewish; for those in BBYO less than three years, the number drops to 49%.

These patterns also suggest that many participants are making strong friendships with other BBYOers. The data in the last row in Table B-8 support this conclusion: When asked how many of their good friends they met through BBYO, nearly half (46%) gave the highest answer—six or more. Dropping the criterion to four or more good friends met through BBYO

increases the proportion to 65%. Once again, the results are similar for males and females. Gender does not appear to affect either the number of good friendships made through BBYO or the proportion of one’s six best friends who are Jewish. Predictably, the number of good friends met through BBYO increases with participation and years of affiliation.

As a male from Michigan commented: *A lot of my friends were already Jewish. But this allowed me to meet many more Jews and create more connections.*

**Table B-8**  
**Jewish Friends**

(‘+’ denotes a positive association; ‘0’ denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
How important of a role does having Jewish friends play in your life? (very important)	59	+	0
After becoming involved in BBYO, how much more important, if at all, has having Jewish friends become? (a lot)	<b>54</b>	+	0
How many of your six best friends are Jewish? (% 4 or more)	63	+	+
Of the people you consider to be your good friends, how many did you meet through BBYO? (6 or more)	<b>46</b>	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

BBYOers with weaker Jewish backgrounds regard having Jewish friends as playing a somewhat less important role in their life (although still very important for about half of them), and a somewhat smaller proportion of their best friends are Jewish (58% reported that four or more of their best friends are Jewish, compared to 68% for BBYOers with stronger backgrounds). Yet, nearly as many of them say that the importance of having Jewish friends has increased since joining BBYO. Tellingly, junior and seniors with weaker Jewish backgrounds reported that more of their good friendships were established through BBYO, compared to their counterparts. While the contrast is moderate in magnitude, this implies that the organization is serving the social needs of Jewish youth with fewer opportunities of forming Jewish friendships at least equally well.

While it has always been true anecdotally that BBYO creates many solid friendships, the findings in this section provide substantial quantitative support for the proposition. Many of the volunteered comments referred to the large number of close friendships made through BBYO, for example, from this alumnus from Tennessee:

*Its given me people I can go to for anything. It has created a real sense of brotherhood that I never would have received without BBYO. I grew up with two sisters, so I never had a brother I could talk to. Now I have brother Alephs in 4 other cities...*

Commented a AZA member from Texas:

*The biggest impact it has had on me is really just the Jewish friends I have made. I go to a large school of 3000 people and I would say that about 10 people in the school are Jewish, so being able to meet and make new Jewish friends is important to me.*

## 6. Jewish Learning

The study of Jewish life and religion—including sacred texts, Jewish history and culture—is also an essential ingredient in sustaining the tradition over time. Charles Kadushin and his colleagues have documented the decline in involvement in Jewish education during the high school years.<sup>xiii</sup> In the present survey, only 13% of current BBYO juniors and seniors responded very often and another 12% answered fairly often in response to how much time they spend in classes or study of Jewish history, tradition, or culture. Another 22% do this occasionally.

Table B-9 displays results from the survey’s questions relevant to the evaluation about interest and engagement in Jewish classes and study.

**Table B-9**  
**Indicators of Impact on Interest in Jewish Learning**  
 ('+' denotes a positive association; '0' denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
How important of a role does learning about Jewish history, people, culture, or sacred texts play in your life? (very important)	38	+	0
After becoming involved in BBYO, how much more important, if at all, has learning about Jewish history, people, culture, or sacred texts become? (a lot)	<b>28</b>	+	+
I spend more time in classes or study of Jewish history, people, culture, or sacred texts since becoming involved in BBYO. (indicated agreement)	<b>21</b>	+	0
Role BBYO played in contributing to my greater time spent in classes or study of Jewish history, people, culture, or sacred texts. (major role)**	<b>51</b>	+	0
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased your interest in continuing Jewish learning? (yes-very much)	<b>40</b>	+	0

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

\*\* Base: those answering that they do this more often since becoming involved in BBYO

Despite the fact that a minority of BBYO youth currently participate in Jewish study even occasionally, over four-fifths say it plays a very important (38%) or somewhat important (43%) role in their life. This assessment is significantly related to degree of BBYO involvement but not to tenure in the organization. Since becoming involved in BBYO, 28% feel that Jewish learning has become a lot more important in their life. Those who participate

more in BBYO and those who have spent more years in the organization are more likely to feel that the importance of Jewish learning has increased for them.

*A female from Ohio commented: When I attended International Kallah I learned so much about myself, the world, Judaism, Israel and so much more that I didn't already know about. To learn about all of this was such a great experience.*

About one-fifth of the juniors and seniors (21%) feel that, since becoming involved in BBYO, they now spend more time learning about Jewish history, people, culture, or sacred texts than before—a view that is related to BBYO participation but not to years of affiliation. Of those 21% who feel they now engage in Jewish classes/study more regularly or more often, most credit BBYO with playing a major (51%) or minor (37%) role in that increase. This view too is connected to involvement but not to tenure. Regardless of change in actual participation in Jewish learning, three-quarters of current members believe that BBYO has increased their interest in continuing their Jewish learning at least somewhat.

Not unexpectedly, Jewish learning has a more prominent place in the lives of BBYOers with stronger Jewish backgrounds. However, the change in importance since joining the organization is approximately equal for both the weaker and stronger segments. This also applies to the change in actual participation in classes/study since becoming affiliated and to attributing the change to their BBYO experience. A slightly higher proportion of BBYOers with relatively strong Jewish backgrounds, compared to those with weaker backgrounds, credit BBYO with increasing their interest in continued Jewish learning. It bears noting that increased importance placed on Jewish learning since affiliating with BBYO as well as increased interest in continuing Jewish learning are significantly related to years in the organization for those with weaker backgrounds but not for their counterparts.

These results on the effect of BBYO on Jewish learning, while far from absent, are not as strong as most other findings in the research. It could be that this reflects a continuation of the decline in teenagers' interest in Jewish study, or at least not a reversal of the trend, identified by Kadushin and his Brandeis colleagues a decade ago.

## **7. Israel**

Fostering positive attachments and attitudes toward Israel is an explicit objective of BBYO. It was successfully achieved for this female from Nebraska:

*I went on the BBYO Passport Euro-Israel Journey Central this past summer, and it changed my life. Because of the trip, I have gained several best friends and a huge appreciation for Israel.*

More than half of high school seniors and juniors (58%) have never visited Israel, while 42% have visited Israel at least once: 27% had visited before beginning their participation in BBYO, 17% had visited Israel since affiliating, and 8% had visited Israel on a BBYO

sponsored trip. (The numbers, which are not shown in a table, sum to more than 100% because some respondent visited Israel multiple times on different types of trips.)

Altogether, two-thirds of BBYOers *deny* that they spend little time thinking about Israel. Most either strongly disagree (31%) or somewhat disagree (37%) with this statement. Thinking about Israel is positively related to involvement in BBYO programs and activities, and to years in the organization (Table B-10).

**Table B-10**  
**Orientations Toward Israel**  
(‘+’ denotes a positive association; ‘0’ denotes no association.)

	%	<u>Involvement</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
I do <u>not</u> spend much time thinking about Israel. (strongly disagree)	31	+	+
How important of a role does visiting or connecting with Israel play in your life? (very important)	56	+	+
After becoming involved in BBYO, how much more important, if at all, has connecting with Israel become? (a lot)	<b>43</b>	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your knowledge and understanding about Israel? (yes-very much)	<b>32</b>	+	+

**Note: The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

Consistent with this finding, visiting or connecting with Israel plays an important role in the lives of a large proportion of teens, 56% of them reporting that Israel plays a *very* important role. This response is also associated with greater participation and longer tenure, consistent with a conclusion of BBYO impact. Reinforcing such a conclusion are BBYOers’ assessments that Israel has become a lot more important in their life since becoming involved in the organization (43%) and that their knowledge and understanding of Israel has very much increased/improved (32%). These data support the conclusion that organizational involvement and exposure are helping build attachments and understanding vis-à-vis Israel for significant numbers of members.

Jewish background makes a difference for the first two indicators, as fewer youth with weaker backgrounds spend a lot of time thinking about Israel and fewer judge visiting or connecting with Israel to be very important to them. As the analysis has found several times already, years spent in BBYO is significantly related to more of the indicators in the table for those with weaker backgrounds than for teens with stronger backgrounds.<sup>xiii</sup> This pattern suggests that affiliation alone has some distinctive impact for those with weaker backgrounds—and might be serving a more compensatory function for that segment.

## 8. Jewish Culture

Beyond the domains already reviewed, BBYO also seeks to promote participation of teen-age youth as consumers of Jewish culture. In the present context, “culture” should be

understood broadly to refer to engagement with Jewish content interactively, through various print media, film, television, radio, and via the Internet.

Exhibit B-4 displays the proportions of current BBYO youth who report engaging in five such activities very often or fairly often. Given that all respondents are current participants in at least one Jewish youth group—and, thus, engaged with the Jewish world through that meaningful connection—these levels of engagement seem modest.

**Exhibit B-4:  
Engagement in Jewish Culture (%)**

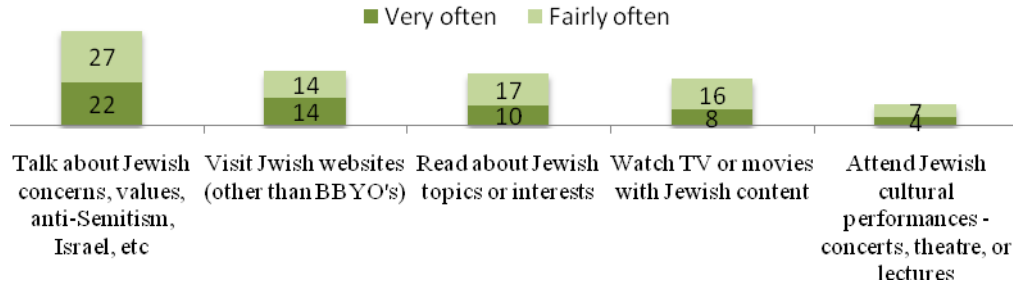
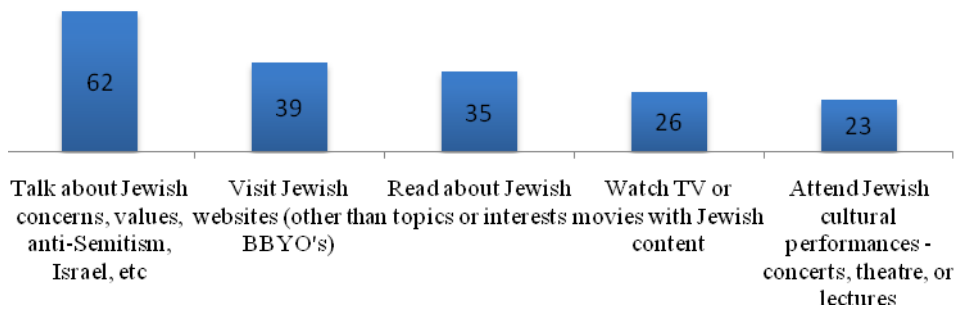


Exhibit B-5 speaks more directly to the question of BBYO’s impact on participation in these activities:

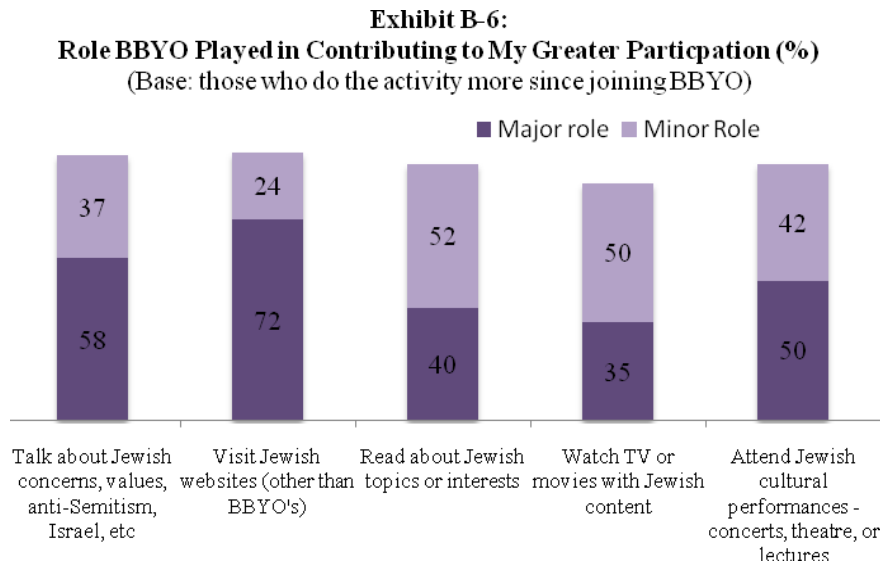
**Exhibit B-5:  
Do More Often Since Becoming Involved in BBYO (%)**



Although Exhibit B-4 suggests that high school BBYOers do not display high levels of engagement in these activities (with the possible exception of talking about Jewish topics), B-5 shows that 23-39% report engaging in four of these activities more often since becoming involved with BBYO, and well over than half (62%) are now *talking more* about Jewish concerns. Similar proportions of youth with stronger and weaker Jewish backgrounds report engaging in the activities more often since joining BBYO. The validity of BBYO’s impact is

supported by the additional finding that the tendency to report greater cultural engagement is positively related for each cultural activity to degree of involvement in BBYO programs.

Exhibit B-6 shows the proportions of those reporting greater engagement in these activities since becoming involved in BBYO *who attribute the change to the organization*. For four of the five activities—all but watching TV/movies—weaker background Jewish youth were more likely than their counterparts to assign a major role to BBYO in contributing to the increase.



Because the numbers in Exhibit B-6 apply only to those minorities of members (except for discussion of Jewish topics) who say they do the activity more since becoming involved in BBYO, their meaningfulness should not be exaggerated (see also summary Exhibit B-11 in section 12). To sum up the results in this domain, except for stimulating discussion about Jewish topics, BBYO's influence on increasing high schoolers' involvement in Jewish cultural activities seems more muted than impacts observed on most other measures.

## 9. Religious Practices and Celebration of Jewish Holidays

### 9.1 Interest in and Importance of Religious Observance / Holiday Celebration

The profile presented earlier portrayed high school youth as exhibiting seemingly high levels of family synagogue membership, Jewish education, and having become Bar/Bat-Mitzvah. Does this translate into strong valuation of religion and high rates of ritual observance? Or, is it more consistent with the Rose Community Foundation's review documenting a declining interest in the religious aspects of Judaism among teenagers.<sup>xiv</sup> More relevant to this evaluation, what is BBYO's role in members' involvement in the religious aspects of Jewish life?

Table B-11 summarizes BBYO youth's assessments of the importance of Jewish religious practices and BBYO's contribution to enhancing it in their lives. As for most Jews, celebration

of Jewish holidays plays a more important role than religious observance in the lives of junior and senior youth (63% very important vs. 24% very important). Similar proportions (about two-thirds in each case) credit BBYO for having increased the salience to them of religious observance and holiday celebration, respectively, but most feel it has done so only somewhat. For both, the current importance and the perceived impact of BBYO are significantly associated with amount of participation in BBYO programs and activities. Consistent with these findings, a separate question asking about BBYO’s role indicates that 65% believe that their involvement in BBYO has heightened their interest in prayer and Jewish ritual performance, but only 27% marked that it increased their interest very much (bottom row of table). This measure is significantly related to both years in BBYO as well as amount of participation.

**Table B-11**  
**Religious Observance and Holiday Celebration**  
 (‘+’ denotes a positive association; ‘0’ denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
How important of a role does Jewish religious observance including praying play in your life? (very important)	24	+	0
After becoming involved in BBYO, how much more important, if at all, has religious observance including praying become? (a lot)	<b>26</b>	+	0
How important of a role does celebrating Jewish holidays play in your life? (very important)	63	+	0
After becoming involved in BBYO, how much more important, if at all, has celebrating Jewish holidays become? (a lot)	<b>31</b>	+	0
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your interest in prayer or performing Jewish rituals? (yes-very much)	<b>27</b>	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

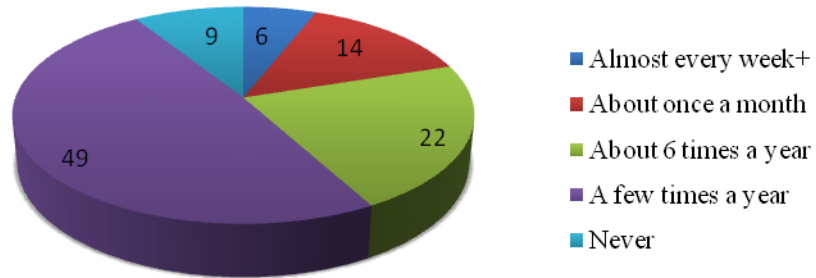
Comparing the two Jewish background segments reveals that religious observance plays a predictably lesser role in the lives of those with weaker backgrounds, but both groups ascribe about the same importance to celebrating Jewish holidays. The weaker background group less often marked that BBYO has enhanced the importance of religious observance, although the assessed impact of the organization on holiday celebration is about the same. Moreover, while the connection of these views to BBYO participation is the same for the two segments—more positive assessments are associated with greater program participation—more years spent in BBYO is associated with more positive assessment on two of the five measures for those with relatively weaker Jewish backgrounds (not the case for the stronger background segment).

*I feel a greater connection to the Jewish religion. Usually I celebrate high holidays and others because I am singing and helping lead the service. Now, I feel a lot more involved with the Jewish community. (Pennsylvania female)*

**9.2 Attendance at Religious Services and Other Religious/Ritual Practices**

Regular attendance at synagogue, temple, or independent *minyan* services is quite modest among BBYO juniors and seniors: Only one in five reports attending services at least monthly (Exhibit B-7).

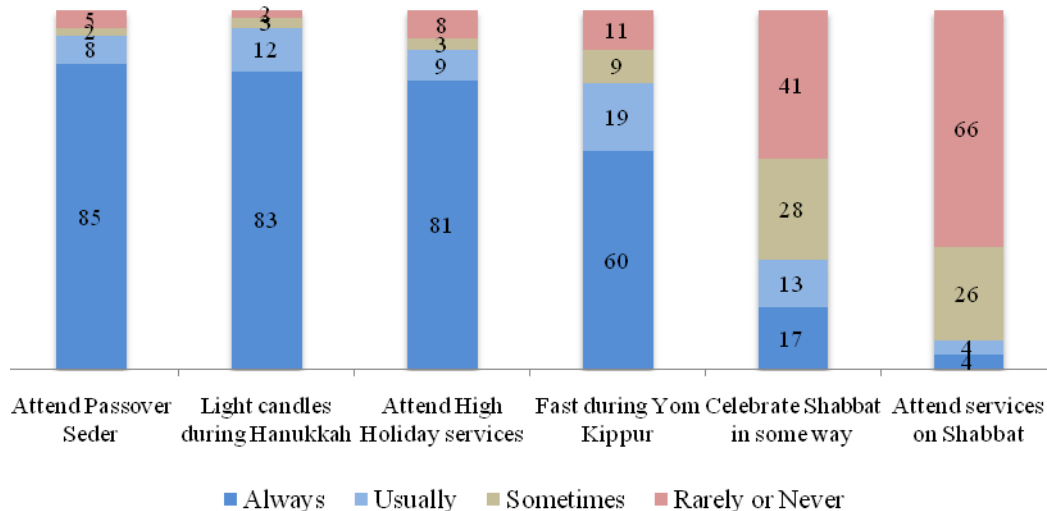
**Exhibit B-7:  
Frequency of Attending Religious Services**



Nearly half attend religious services only a few times a year, probably mostly during the High Holidays, like many other Jews. Attendance at religious services exhibits a weak relationship with BBYO participation<sup>xv</sup> and is unrelated to years of affiliation.

Exhibit B-8 displays the frequency of performance of six traditional practices:

**Exhibit B-8  
Ritual Participation**



As shown, Passover seders, Hanukkah candle lighting, attendance at High Holiday services, and Fasting on Yom Kippur generate high participation among BBYO youth. The two forms of Shabbat participation, especially attending Shabbat services, elicits low participation, consistent with the finding of low synagogue service attendance in general. Not shown in the exhibit, one in every nine BBYOers (11%) reports keeping kosher, with an additional one-third indicating they avoid some non-kosher foods.

As for BBYO impact, the evidence is mixed, displaying no clear patterns. Seder attendance is significantly related to both participation in BBYO programs and years of affiliation, as is fasting on Yom Kippur; lighting of Hanukkah candles is related to neither; celebrating Shabbat and attending Shabbat services is significantly related to BBYO participation; attending High Holiday services and keeping kosher is associated with years in BBYO. More than a few respondents' comments, however, did explicitly reference BBYO's religious impact.

To summarize, although the data suggest that BBYO has had some effect on teens' interest and participation in the religious aspects of Jewish life, the intended effects produced are less consistent and less substantial than for most of the other attitudes and behaviors examined in the research. The fact remains that no more than one-quarter of BBYO juniors and seniors regard "religious observance including praying" as playing a very important role in their life, and relatively few attend worship services or observe/celebrate Shabbat in other ways.

## **10. Community Service, Social Action, and Philanthropy**

The analysis turns next to several value domains which are often promoted within Judaism but do not reflect *uniquely* Jewish prescriptions—the civic practices of community service, social action, and philanthropy (charitably contributions and volunteerism). All are programmatic goals of BBYO. A BBG member from Tennessee commented:

*As Jews it is our responsibility to give and to put others before ourselves. BBYO community service and [the]social action aspect has truly taught just that.*

### **10.1 Community Service and Social Action**

While seeking to inspire youth to lead Jewish lives, an explicit BBYO goal is to develop the skills, character, and motivation that will "make a difference in the world." A female from Colorado described BBYO's biggest impact as [having] ... *enabled me to find myself and has given me opportunities to make a difference in the community and on others' lives.*

Sizable proportions falling short of being majorities of young adult alumni adjudge BBYO to have had a large effect on their commitment to community service and engagement

in social action, working to advance social or political causes (see bolded percentages in Table B-12). Each of the seven items in the table are significantly related to BBYO involvement, and five of the seven are significantly related to years of affiliation.

**Table B-12**  
**Community Service and Social Action**  
 ('+' denotes a positive association; '0' denotes no association.)

	%	Involve	Tenure
I feel a strong responsibility to be involved in community service. (strongly agree)	49	+	0
How important of a role does commitment to community service play in your life? (very important)	51	+	0
After becoming involved in BBYO, how much more important, if at all, has commitment to community service become? (a lot)	<b>40</b>	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased your commitment to social action or community service? (yes-very much)	<b>42</b>	+	+
It is important to me to strive to make the world a better place. (strongly agree)	69	+	+
How important of a role does involvement in social and political causes play in your life? (very important)	43	+	+
After becoming involved in BBYO, how much more important, if at all, has involvement in social or political causes become? (a lot)	<b>37</b>	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

Those with stronger Jewish backgrounds appear to exhibit somewhat stronger norms of service and activism. However, those with weaker backgrounds are almost as likely as their stronger background peers to recognize the impacts of BBYO on these values. Overall, in the domains of community service and social/political action the positive impacts of BBYO are quite strong.

## 10.2 Philanthropy and Voluntarism

One of BBYO’s signature objectives is building norms of altruism—of helping needy and worthwhile causes in the Jewish community as well as generally. In high school, altruism most often takes the form of volunteering one’s time with non-profit organizations as well as one-on-one with direct beneficiaries. BBYO also seeks to instill pro-philanthropy values that will bear fruit down the road, when alumni begin to acquire sufficient resources to contribute financially to worthwhile causes.

Most BBYOers voice a commitment to philanthropy, over half of them strongly agreeing that they feel a strong responsibility to contribute to charities and causes (Table B-13). Evidence for BBYO’s impact on the development of that norm is found in its positive association with involvement in BBYO programs and activities.

**Exhibit B-13:**

**Philanthropy and Voluntarism**

(‘+’ denotes a positive association; ‘0’ denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
I feel a strong responsibility to contribute to charities and causes. (strongly agree)	54	+	0
How often do you do volunteer work for charities or other non-profit organizations? (very often)	23	+	+
Spend more time doing volunteer work since becoming involved in BBYO. (indicated agreement)	<b>57</b>	+	+
Role BBYO played in contributing to my doing more volunteer work for charities or other non-profit organizations. (major role)**	<b>56</b>	+	0

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

\*\* Base: those answering that they do this more often since becoming involved in BBYO

Beyond mere agreement with this socially approved response, almost half engage in volunteer work either a lot (23%) or a little (24%). More relevant to the question of impact, putting the norm of voluntarism into practice is significantly related to both involvement in BBYO and years of affiliation. As further evidence of the organization’s influence, 57% marked that they spend more time doing volunteer work since becoming involved in BBYO. In the areas of philanthropy and volunteerism, which are closely related to community service, the impact of the BBYO experience is strong.

Youth with relatively weaker Jewish backgrounds exhibit the norm of contributing to charities and causes somewhat less intensely than those with stronger backgrounds, but like their stronger background peers, their views are also significantly associated with degree of BBYO involvement. As for actual philanthropic and volunteer *practice*, weaker background youth are equally likely to put those norms to work. Once again, length of BBYO affiliation is associated with philanthropic behavior for the weaker background group but not for BBYOers with strong backgrounds.

**11. Leadership and Related Values**

The last theme to be examined for current participating high schoolers is leadership. BBYO envisions AZA and BBG as “the preeminent leadership training and character development program for the teen audience.”<sup>xvi</sup> A male from Michigan described the biggest BBYO impact on his life as having been:

*the leadership skills is teaches. Being able to plan an event for large amounts of people, manage finances, fundraise. or help market and promote the organization are all skills that will be necessary for my future [work].*

Table B-14 displays evidence of impressive BBYO impacts on these indicators of leadership and related concepts, such as gaining entrance into college. (It hardly needs mentioning that being accepted into a good college or university is an almost universal goal of Jewish teenagers.<sup>xvii</sup>)

**Table B-14**  
**Leadership, Self-Confidence, and Getting into College**  
 ('+' denotes a positive association; '0' denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your leadership skills? (yes-very much)	<b>72</b>	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your self-confidence? (yes-very much)	<b>65</b>	+	+
How important of a role does being a leader in your school or community play in your life? (very important)	64	+	+
After becoming involved in BBYO, how much more important, if at all, has being a leader in your school or community become? (a lot)	<b>56</b>	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved the likelihood of getting into the college or university of your choice? (yes-very much)	<b>45</b>	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

The table shows substantial proportions of juniors and seniors attributing increased/improved leadership skills, self-confidence, and chances of getting into their preferred college to their involvement in BBYO. In every case, assignment of the influence of BBYO is associated with the amount of their involvement and years of affiliation. Nearly two out of every three BBYOers (64%) mark that being a leader in their school or community plays a very important role in their life; nearly all of the rest report that it plays a somewhat important role—an orientation which is also positively correlated with greater BBYO involvement and longer tenure. Strength of Jewish background appears to make no difference in these impact measures, which are similar for both segments.

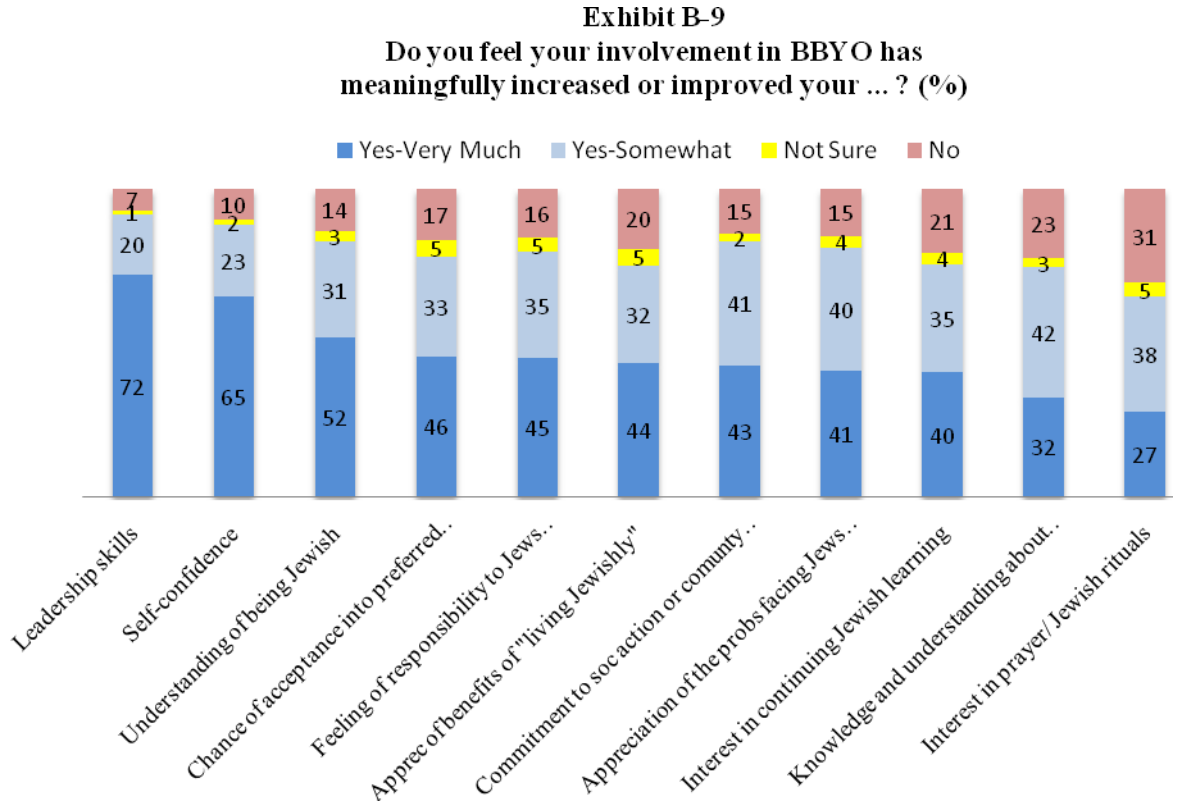
A male from North Carolina described the biggest impact of BBYO:

*It has truly changed me for the better. I am more confident in everything I do. I can't thank you guys enough for all this organization has given me.*

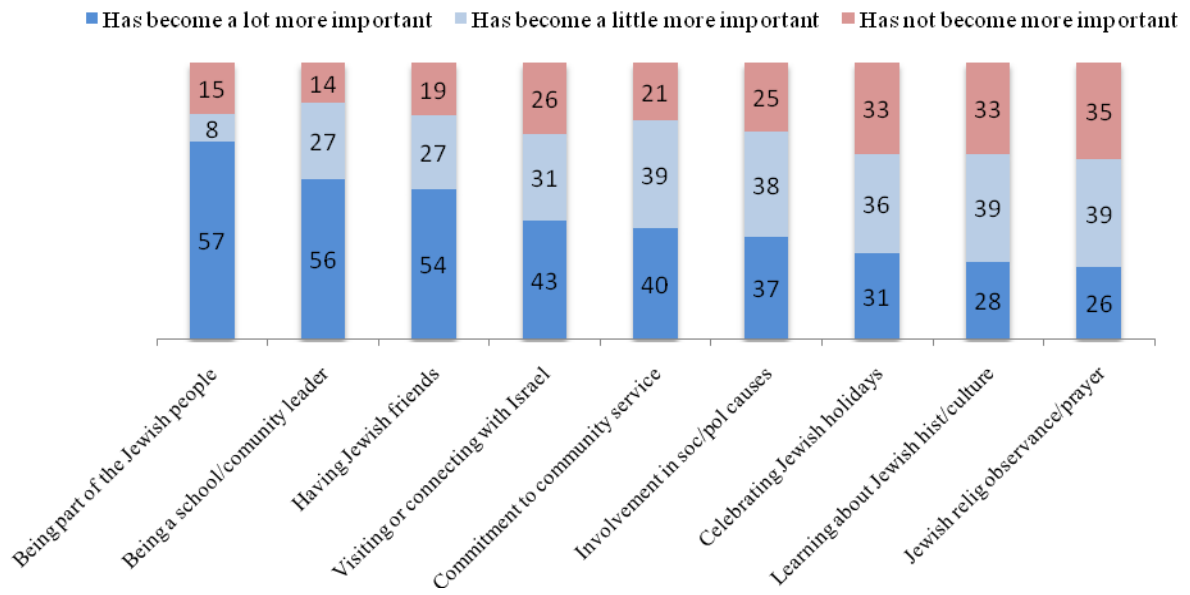
In the domain of leadership and leadership related attributes is where BBYO exercises its greatest impacts—a conclusion that is strongly supported by respondents' comments. The only other area that might match leadership in impact is the organization's role in fostering Jewish friendships.

## 12. Charts Summarizing the Survey’s Direct Impact Measures

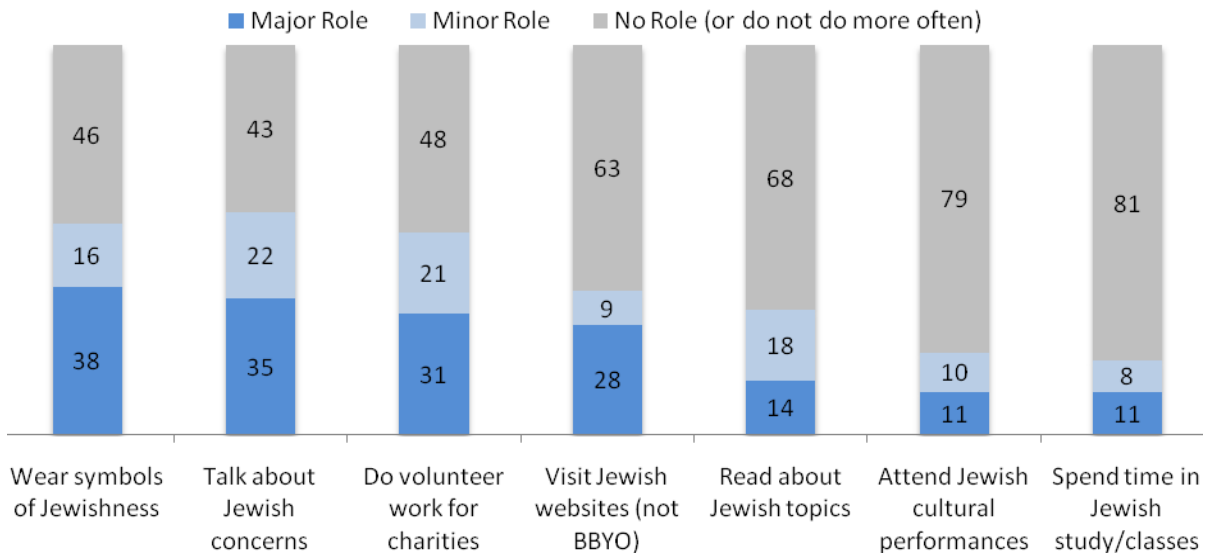
To assist in examining relative impacts across content areas, the following three graphs provide a visual comparison of respondents’ assessments of the various BBYO effects. All were reviewed above in detail. (The item labels had to be abbreviated. For the exact wordings, see the appropriate preceding table or the high school survey questionnaire.)



**Exhibit B-10**  
**After becoming involved in BBYO, how much more important in your life, if at all, has the following become? (%)**



**Exhibit B-11:**  
**Role Played by BBYO in Contributing to Greater Participation in Various Activities Since Becoming Involved in the Organization (%)**



## **13. Effectiveness of BBYO Programs**

### **13.1 Evaluating Individual Programs**

The final analysis of the high school survey data examines program effectiveness. In the absence of experimental controls or, at the very least, a much larger sample, the ability to isolate the impact of participation in a specific program with confidence is greatly compromised. As pointed out at the outset, the difficulty of controlling for other possible causal factors (demographics and other pre-involvement differences such as Jewish background) applies generally to all parts of the study including here. However, evaluating the effectiveness of an individual program poses the additional challenge of having to separate its impact from the impact of participation in other programs and from total BBYO participation. It is especially difficult to pinpoint exactly which program is causing differences observed between participants and non-participants on the criterion measures—the attitudes, attributes, values, and practices which BBYO seeks to instill—when most BBYOers have participated in multiple programs. This is because participation in multiple programs produces high correlations among them and, also, between involvement in any one program and total BBYO participation. The problem faced in trying to isolate the impact of Program X from that of Program Y, and from one’s total BBYO experience, becomes apparent when one recognizes that across 15 AZA/BBG and BBYO programs asked about, 95% have participated in more than one, and 49% have participated in five or more.

It also needs to be pointed out that the assessment of programs will necessarily be confined to the criterion measures contained in the survey and reported on in preceding sections, as no evaluative questions were asked about individual programs. Such questioning might have included respondents’ ratings of the programs, whether their expectations were met, whether they would recommend the program to others, what they liked or disliked about the program, whether they learned from it or otherwise thought it was effective, or similar customary methods of direct evaluation. This was not an oversight in design but, rather, a limitation of survey length and the many other competing study objectives to be addressed.

One must also recognize that many of these programs are one- or two-day or very episodic experiences for participants which must be evaluated in the context of what for most respondents are three, four, or more years of active involvement in AZA/BBG meetings, social events, and other programs and activities. In other words, it requires isolating the impact of an individual program, which usually makes up a small fraction of a participant’s total exposure to BBYO. This is especially difficult to do this in the absence of questions which ask specifically about the program.

### **13.2 The Approach**

With these caveats in mind, we assess program effectiveness with the data that is available. The analysis will first examine the extent to which participation in Program X is associated with a sampling of measures of desired attitudes, attributes, values, and practices in the total sample (without controls). The size of these “zero-order correlations” can be taken as

prima facie evidence of effectiveness. In each instance when this initial analysis produces a statistically significant association—for example, between participation in JServe and the importance of community service in one’s life—we will then dig deeper to determine whether the relationship continues to hold when controls are applied, to try to rule out other possible factors that might be causing the observed difference. The two factors that will be controlled in the deeper analysis are (1) total BBYO participation in all other programs and (2) strength of Jewish background. If a statistically reliable association is maintained under these more stringent tests, this will strengthen our confidence in concluding that the program is impactful. If, on the other hand, if the relationship vanishes, this will diminish our confidence in that program’s effectiveness with respect to the measure(s) examined.

Sixteen measures that represent a sampling of the variety of content asked about in the survey were chosen for this analysis:

- How often do you do anything special to observe or celebrate the Sabbath (such as Shabbat dinners with family or friends)?
- How much do you agree or disagree?: The fact that I am Jewish has a lot to do with how I see myself.
- How much do you agree or disagree?: I feel a special responsibility to help Jews in need around the world.
- How important of a role does learning about Jewish history, people, culture or sacred texts play in your life?
- How important of a role does visiting or connecting with Israel play in your life?
- How important of a role does being part of the Jewish people play in your life?
- How often do you wear a Jewish star, chai, Jewish t-shirt, or other sign that you are Jewish?
- How much do you agree or disagree?: I do not feel particularly connected to the Jewish people.
- How much do you agree or disagree?: I feel a strong responsibility to be involved in community service.
- How much do you agree or disagree?: Jewish tradition has an impact on the decisions that I make.
- Thinking now about your six best friends (not relatives) – those you feel closest to – how many of them, if any, are Jewish?
- How much do you agree or disagree?: I do not feel especially motivated to be involved in Jewish life after high school.
- How important of a role does Jewish religious observance including praying play in your life?
- How often do you talk about Jewish concerns, values, anti-Semitism, Israel or related topics?
- How much do you agree or disagree?: I have a clear sense of what it means to be Jewish.
- How important of a role does being a leader in my school or community play in your life?

None of these measures are direct respondent assessments, where respondents were asked their opinion of BBYO’s influence, role, or impact on a particular value, interest, or practice. For programs where there is a logical connection between the program’s objectives and a direct assessment survey item—for example, with respect to the local and international leadership training programs: “Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your leadership skills?”—those direct assessment measures will also be included in this analysis. Those results will be reported in the program-by-program summaries at the end and factored into those programs’ assessments.

Twelve of the 15 programs asked about in the survey and listed earlier in Exhibit B-3 will be included in this analysis. Two of the programs—non-Israel International Travel and Impact Service Programs—are not included because small numbers of participants, making comparisons unreliable. One other program—AZA/BBG Regional Weekend—is excluded for the same reason because of the small number of *non*-participants.

### **13.3 Results I: Uncontrolled Statistical Associations**

Table B-14 presents the full-sample correlations (without controlling for total BBYO participation or strength of Jewish background).<sup>xviii</sup> The larger the correlation, the stronger the relationship. Table cells containing a horizontal line (—) indicate results which are not statistically significant.<sup>xix</sup>

**Table B-15**  
**Correlations (Somer’s D\*) Between Program Participation and Criterion Measures**  
 (dashed line [—] indicates a not statistically significant value)

	<b>International Leadership Training</b> (409)	<b>Local Leadership Training</b> (463)	<b>International Convention</b> (230)	<b>Teen Connection</b> (355)	<b>Athletic/Sports Programs</b> (687)	<b>Israel Advocacy</b> (218)	<b>J-Serve</b> (762)	<b>International Kallah</b> (145)	<b>Israel Travel</b> (104)	<b>Panim</b> (98)	<b>AZA/BBG Chapter Community Service Projects</b> (953)	<b>AZA/BBG Shabbat Experience</b> (892)
How often do you do anything special to observe or celebrate the Sabbath (such as Shabbat dinners with family or friends)?	—	—	—	.13	—	.15	—	.13	—	—	—	—
How much do you agree or disagree?: The fact that I am Jewish has a lot to do with how I see myself.	.12	.08	.08	.08	—	.14	.08	.18	—	—	.10	.18
How much do you agree or disagree?: I feel a special responsibility to help Jews in need around the world.	.17	.08	.13	.13	—	.24	.15	.19	.16	.16	.24	.15
How important of a role does learning about Jewish history, people, culture or sacred texts play in your life?	—	.07	—	.12	—	.17	.12	.18	—	—	.14	.18
How important of a role does visiting or connecting with Israel play in your life?	.14	.09	.13	.10	—	.20	.10	.17	.24	.13	.16	.22
How important of a role does being part of the Jewish people play in your life?	.09	—	.10	.07	—	.15	.11	.21	.12	—	.18	.16
How often do you wear a Jewish star, chai, Jewish t-shirt, or other sign that you’re Jewish?	.23	.18	.23	.17	—	.25	.25	.26	.24	.13	.29	.34
How much do you agree or disagree?: I do not feel particularly connected to the Jewish people.	.09	.09	.08	.09	—	.13	.10	.22	.20	—	—	.19
How much do you agree or disagree?: I feel a strong responsibility to be involved in community service.	.11	.15	—	.10	—	.22	.19	.11	—	.22	.32	.16
How much do you agree or disagree?: Jewish tradition has an impact on the decisions that I make.	—	—	—	.20	—	.18	—	.16	.13	.19	.15	.15
Thinking now about your six best friends (not relatives) – those you feel closest to – how many of them, if any, are Jewish?	.24	.23	.29	.14	.19	.24	.19	.26	.21	.15	.24	.27
How much do you agree or disagree?: I do not feel especially motivated to be involved in Jewish life after high school.	.15	.11	.11	.14	.08	.22	.18	.20	—	.10	.23	.19
How important of a role does Jewish religious observance including praying play in your life?	.10	.11	.09	.18	—	.17	.11	.23	—	.13	.12	.18
How often do you talk about Jewish concerns, values, anti-Semitism, Israel or related topics?	.09	.10	.10	.18	—	.29	.23	.20	.21	.21	.22	.24
How much do you agree or disagree?: I have a clear sense of what it means to be Jewish.	—	—	—	.07	—	—	—	—	.11	.11	—	—
How important of a role does being a leader in my school or community play in your life?	.15	.21	.17	.15	.09	.20	.22	.16	.19	.10	.24	.15

\* Higher numbers indicate a stronger relationship between participation in the program and the outcome measure. For a more complete explanation of the Somer’s D statistic, see endnote xxiv.

With the exception of Local Athletic/Sports Programs, which is related to only three impact measures, all of the programs exhibit significant uncontrolled, total-sample associations with most of the measures. The consistency of associations across indicators is especially impressive for Teen Connection, International Kallah, Israel Advocacy, and AZA/BBG Shabbat Experience—all of which show apparent effects for all but one or two of the measures. J-Serve, AZA/BBG Chapter Community Service Projects, International Leadership Training, and Local Leadership Training manifest apparent impacts for all but three or four of the 16 measures. International Convention and Panim exhibit apparent effects for eleven of the 16 indicators. Israel Travel does the same for ten of the 16. The average *size* of apparent impact is greatest for Israel Advocacy, AZA/BBG Shabbat Experience, Chapter Community Service Projects, International Kallah, and Israel Travel.

Examining across the rows (criterion measures) rather than the columns (programs) reveals that all twelve of the programs are positively related to the proportion of one’s closest friends who are Jewish and the expressed importance of being a leader in one’s school or community. Interestingly, these are the two domains of greatest impact that the analysis reported previously—further evidence that all types of BBYO participation examined here might be effective in promoting Jewish friendships and motivating leadership. Eleven of the twelve programs appear to positively impact feeling of responsibility to Jews in need around the world, the importance of connecting with Israel, the frequency of public display of one’s Jewishness, how often one discusses Jewish issues and concerns, and one’s motivation to be involved in Jewish life after high school.

### **13.2: Results II: Likely Impacts (Associations Persisting After Controls are Applied)**

Thus far, the analysis has identified programs which are *statistically associated* with some or many of the impact measures (and, secondarily, highlighting which types of impacts are associated with all or most of the programs). However, showing a statistical association, while providing prima facie evidence of impact, is only the first step toward feeling reasonably sure that participating in the program is *causing* the presumed impact. It might be that those who were in Teen Connection are also the same youth who tend to participate in many other BBYO programs, or that those who signed up for International Kallah tend to be mainly BBYOers with stronger Jewish backgrounds. So, to get beyond this weak evidence and build the case for program impact requires further analysis to diminish the possibility that total participation, more extensive Jewish backgrounds (and ideally other factors) are the true or main causes producing the observed differences.

The next table (Table B-16) reveals which programs are associated with the various indicators of effectiveness after controlling for the potential confounding factors of total participation in all other programs and strength of Jewish background. Statistical correlations were again calculated for each of the ten programs with respect to each of the 16 measures for the following four subgroups:

- Those in upper half of total participation in all other BBYO programs
- Those in lower half of total participation in all other BBYO programs
- Those in the stronger half on the strength of Jewish background index
- Those in the weaker half on the strength of Jewish background index

When there is a significant correlation (90% confidence level) in all four subgroups, the average of the four Somer's D correlations is reported in in the table, and we can feel greater certainty of a true program impact in those cases. When the correlation fails to reach the threshold for statistical significance for two or more of the four subgroups, "NS" is entered in the table cell to indicate that the total-sample correlation fails to survive the tests for other possible causal factors. When the correlation holds in three of the four tests, we indicate which one fails to remain significant, using the following abbreviations:

- NS-LP: not statistically significant for the lower half of the sample in total BBYO participation
- NS-HP: not statistically significant for the higher half of the sample in total BBYO participation
- NS-WB: not statistically significant the weaker half of the sample in strength of Jewish background
- NS-SB: not statistically significant for the stronger half of the sample in strength of Jewish background

**Table B-16**  
**Strength of Relationship Between Program Participation and Impact Measures**  
**After Controlling for Total BBYO Participation and for Strength of Jewish Background\***  
**(Dashed line [—] indicates that the total-sample correlation in Table B-15 is not statistically significant.)**

	International Leadership Training	Local Leadership Training	International Convention	Teen Connection	Athletic/Sports Programs	Israel Advocacy	J-Serve	International Kallah	Israel Travel	Panim	AZA/BBG Chapter Community Service Projects	AZA/BBG Shabbat Experience
How often do you do anything special to observe or celebrate the Sabbath (such as Shabbat dinners with family or friends)?	—	—	—	NS	—	NS-WB	—	NS	—	—	—	—
How much do you agree or disagree?: The fact that I am Jewish has a lot to do with how I see myself.	NS-LP	NS	NS	NS	—	NS	NS	NS-LP	—	—	NS	NS
How much do you agree or disagree?: I feel a special responsibility to help Jews in need around the world.	NS-HP	NS	NS-HP	<b>.09</b>	—	<b>.20</b>	NS-LP	NS	NS	NS-HP	NS-HP	NS
How important of a role does learning about Jewish history, people, culture or sacred texts play in your life?	—	NS	—	NS	—	<b>.14</b>	NS-LP	<b>.16</b>	—	—	NS	NS-LP
How important of a role does visiting or connecting with Israel play in your life?	<b>.17</b>	NS	NS-HP	NS	—	<b>.17</b>	NS	NS	<b>.24</b>	NS	NS	NS-HP
How important of a role does being part of the Jewish people play in your life?	NS-SB	—	NS-HP	NS	—	NS-LP	NS-LP	<b>.20</b>	NS	—	NS-LP	NS
How often do you wear a Jewish star, chai, Jewish t-shirt, or other sign that you're Jewish?	NS-LP	NS	<b>.18</b>	<b>.14</b>	—	NS-LP	<b>.21</b>	NS-LP	NS-LP	NS	NS-HP	<b>.32</b>
How much do you agree or disagree?: I do not feel particularly connected to the Jewish people.	NS	NS	NS	NS	—	NS-HP	NS	<b>.20</b>	<b>.20</b>	—	—	NS-HP
How much do you agree or disagree?: I feel a strong responsibility to be involved in community service.	NS	NS	—	NS	—	NS-LP	<b>.15</b>	NS	—	<b>.20</b>	<b>.32</b>	NS
How much do you agree or disagree?: Jewish tradition has an impact on the decisions that I make.	—	—	—	NS-LP	—	<b>.16</b>	—	NS-LP	NS	<b>.18</b>	NS	NS
Thinking now about your six best friends (not relatives) – those you feel closest to – how many of them, if any, are Jewish?	NS-LP	NS-LP	NS-LP	NS-LP	NS	NS-HP	NS-HP	NS	NS	NS	NS-HP	<b>.21</b>
How much do you agree or disagree?: I do not feel especially motivated to be involved in Jewish life after high school.	NS-LP	NS-LP	NS	NS	NS	<b>.19</b>	<b>.15</b>	NS-LP	—	NS	NS-HP	NS-HP
How important of a role does Jewish religious observance including praying play in your life?	NS	NS	NS	NS-LP	—	<b>.13</b>	NS	NS-LP	—	NS	NS	NS-HP
How often do you talk about Jewish concerns, values, anti-Semitism, Israel or related topics?	NS	NS	NS	<b>.14</b>	—	<b>.25</b>	NS-HP	NS-LP	NS-HP	NS-HP	NS	NS-HP
How much do you agree or disagree?: I have a clear sense of what it means to be Jewish.	—	—	—	NS	—	—	—	—	NS	NS	NS	—
How important of a role does being a leader in my school or community play in your life?	NS	<b>.16</b>	NS	NS-LP	NS	<b>.16</b>	<b>.17</b>	NS-LP	NS	NS	NS	NS

\* Numbers shown in the table represent the average value of Somer’s D across the four subgroups when all are statistically significant. Higher numbers indicate a stronger relationship between participation in the program and the outcome measure. For a more complete explanation of the Somer’s D statistic, see endnote xxiv.

NS = not statistically significant for two, three, or all four of the total BBYO participation and Jewish background subgroups.

NS-LP = not statistically significant only for the lower half of the sample in total BBYO participation.

NS-HP = not statistically significant only for the higher half of the sample in total BBYO participation.

NS-WB = not statistically significant only for those in the weaker half of the sample in strength of Jewish background.

NS-SB = not statistically significant only for those in the stronger half of the sample in strength of Jewish background.

### 13.3: Program-by-Program Summaries

In terms of significant impacts after controlling for total BBYO participation and strength of Jewish background, Local BBYO Athletic/Sports Programs show the poorest performance of the twelve programs. None of the three areas which showed significant zero-order relationships maintain significant relationships for participants in local sports programs after the controls are applied. With the exception of making Jewish friends, which might occur through BBYO-based sports participation, there is no reason to expect direct impacts from involvement in local sports. Despite the lack of evidence of effectiveness on these 16 outcome measures, BBYO athletic competition might, nevertheless, be an effective way of attracting new members.

Participation in Local Leadership Training (YLI) fails to exhibit significant impacts for 15 of the 16 indicators. But it does show a positive impact where it would be expected to—on the importance of being a school or community leader. For two other indicators, YLI falls below the threshold for significance only in the low total BBYO participation subgroup.

Two direct respondent assessments of impact are logically related to Local Leadership Training: To the extent that the program is effective, youth who underwent YLI should be more likely than non-participants to credit BBYO for stimulating them to becoming leaders and, also, for developing their leadership skills. This is indeed the case for developing leadership skills, but the relationship does not hold for strengthening leadership motivations among those having higher than average participation in other BBYO programs. Because the program mostly appears to accomplish its intended objective, the program can be adjudged largely effective in that limited domain.

Similarly, International Leadership Training (CLTC and ILTC) manifests its only significant impact after controls are applied on the importance of visiting or connecting with Israel. Since improving participants’ orientation toward Israel should be integral to the program, this outcome too suggests that the program is having an intended impact. On six other measures, International Leadership Training falls short for only one of the four subgroups tested, most commonly for those BBYOers in the lower half of total participation. It may be that CLTC/ILTC needs to be combined with high overall BBYO participation for its effects to become evident.

Youth trained in the CLTC or ILTC program should be more likely than non-participants to credit BBYO for stimulating them to becoming leaders and, also, for developing their leadership skills. This expectation is borne out strongly and consistently across the four

total participation and Jewish background categories, thus strengthening the case for this program’s effectiveness.

AZA/BBG Chapter Community Service Projects (ComServ) is consistently related to one outcome measure, however it is the one most logically connected to this program—feeling a strong responsibility to be involved in community service. Correlations fall short of significance in only one of the four subgroups five other times (generally for those with above average total participation). This suggests that the program is more effective among less involved BBYOers.

If this program is effective, BBYOers participating in Chapter Community Service Projects should say that their commitment to community service has become more important since becoming involved in BBYO and, also, they should credit the organization for increasing how much they do volunteer work for charities and other non-profits. This proves to be the case for both Jewish background segments and for members with lower total BBYO participation, but, once again, not for those in the higher participation group.

Attending an International Convention also exhibits one significant impact when controls for total participation and strength of Jewish background are applied—in the frequency of public display of ethnic pride through wearing symbols/signs of being Jewish. Four other tested impacts remain significant for all but one of the two total participation groups. Since three of them are the upper 50% participation subgroup, it seems as though attending an international convention might have more effect on BBYOers who are participating less than average in other programs.

Three other programs each show two significant effects. Panim demonstrates its value through heightening the sense of responsibility to community service (one of its signature objectives) and also on participants’ belief that Jewish tradition influences the decisions that they make. On two other measures, Panim exhibits impacts regardless of Jewish background on all but the higher total participation group. It could be that Panim seminars are somewhat redundant (or more redundant) for those who are already participating in other BBYO programs at an above average rate.

Israel Travel (Passport to Israel, March of the Living, ILSI) manifests significant impacts on feeling connected to the Jewish people and, not surprisingly, on the importance of visiting or connecting with Israel. Although these are the only ones, they are two effects that one should expect from an a travel to Israel program. (In passing, it warrants mentioning that the relatively small samples of participants in Panim seminars and in Israel Travel might have presented an obstacle to these two programs achieving the threshold for statistical significance on a greater number of indicators.)

To the extent that Israel Travel programs are effective, those who took part in BBYO travel to Israel can be expected to feel that visiting/connecting with Israel has become more important to them and to acknowledge the organization’s contribution toward increasing their knowledge and understanding about Israel. Based on the data analysis, both of these expectations are realized, thus helping build a case for the program’s impact.

AZA/BBG Shabbat Experience (ShabExper) exhibits significant impact on displaying pride through wearing clothing or accessories with Jewish symbols, and on number of Jewish friends. It falls short of statistical reliability six other times in only one of the four control categories, five of which are those participating in BBYO more than average.

Two direct assessment measures are logically related to Shabbat Experience. To the extent that the program is effective, program participants should be more likely to credit BBYO for increasing the importance in their life of Jewish religious observance including prayer, and in increasing their interest in praying and performing Jewish rituals. Both of these hypotheses are substantiated in the data, but only marginally so for those with stronger Jewish backgrounds.

Participation in Teen Connection exhibits three probable impacts—an increased feeling of responsibility to help Jews in need, greater discussion with others about Jewish issues and concerns, and more frequent expressions of pride through wearing apparel with Jewish symbols. Teen Connection also produces effects for four other measures, but only for BBYOers in the higher total participation segment. Thus, those who remain active after entering BBYO early through this program could be given a special “boost.” However, BBYOers whose participation falls below average do not appear to realize the full benefits of Teen Connection.

International Kallah – Jewish Learning shows three areas of likely impact—two measure of ethnic identity (sense of connectedness to the Jewish people and the importance in participants’ lives of being part of the Jewish people) and on enhancing the role of Jewish learning in participants’ lives. Once again, these attributes are related to the program’s specific objectives, especially interest in life-long Jewish learning. With respect to seven of the other measures, Kallah participation exhibits significant impacts irrespective of Jewish background for participants in the higher total BBYO participation segment. (The very small number of Kallah participants in the lower half on the total participation scale [fewer than 30] likely hindered attainment of statistical significance for that subgroup, leading to a possible underestimate of Kallah’s effectiveness.)

To the degree that the identity enhancing International Kallah program is effective, participants should be more likely than others to acknowledge BBYO’s role in their achieving a better understanding of what it means to be Jewish, a greater appreciation of how living Jewishly can provide a more fulfilling life, and an enhanced importance of being part of the Jewish people. Participation in the program does not show a consistent relationship with changes in the felt importance of being part of the Jewish people. It *does* display the expected linkage with an improved understanding of what it means to be Jewish and with how living Jewishly can provide a richer, more fulfilling life (but not for those in the below-average total participation group).

There are four impacts evident for participants in J-Serve—the motivation to be a leader in one’s school/community, commitment to remain involved in the Jewish community after high school, display of pride in one’s Jewishness, and consistent with program’s signature

purpose, the feeling of responsibility to be involved in community service. On five other indicators, J-Serve effects remain influential on one of the two total participation segments but not the other.

As for respondent assessments of impact, the analysis show that participants' commitment to community service has increased significantly since becoming involved in BBYO for all control group segments, but their propensity to volunteer for charities and other non-profit organizations does not significantly increase among those in the lower total participation segment.

The program that demonstrates the most positive impacts by far is Israel Advocacy Training. On no fewer than eight measures does this program's impact remain significant even after controlling for Jewish background and for total BBYO participation. Moreover, on six other indicators, its effects remain evident on three of the four control subgroups. Israel Advocacy Training produces desired effects for the increased importance of being a leader, of Jewish learning, of religious observance, of feeling part of the Jewish people, and, to no one's surprise, of connecting with Israel; also, on sense of responsibility to help Jews in need worldwide, on the belief that Jewish tradition affects participants' decisions, and on motivation to be involved in the Jewish community after high school.

To the extent that Israel Advocacy Training is an effective program, those who took part in it can be expected to feel that visiting or connecting with Israel has become more important to them and to acknowledge the organization's contribution to increasing their knowledge and understanding about Israel. In fact, the research demonstrates that both expectations are substantiated, thereby increasing the case for this program's impressive effectiveness.

#### **13.4: Closing Observations About Program Effectiveness**

To summarize, eleven of the twelve programs exhibit evidence of effectiveness on at least one of the outcome measures after controlling for total BBYO participation and strength of Jewish background. Even in programs manifesting effectiveness only a few times after controls are applied, the apparent impacts typically include those which are logically most expected, given the purpose of the program. Judged by number of significant controlled associations, Israel Advocacy is the most effective program evaluated. The analysis also turned up multiple indications of effectiveness for J-Serve, International Kallah, and Teen Connection. Other programs rank lower in this analysis's constrained assessment of effectiveness, but even some of those programs produced expected results on measures related to their objectives.

Often, programs failed to produce grounds for inferring effectiveness in one of the two total participation groups but not the other. This suggests an "interaction effect"—that some programs are more impactful among less active BBYOers and others tend to exhibit their positive effects more with very involved, hard-core members. Admittedly, this line of reasoning is speculative. More research is needed to better identify which programs, or

combinations of programs, function best to produce specific kinds of results for different types of participants.

We close this section by reiterating the special difficulty of establishing conclusive grounds for program effectiveness in the context of (1) self-selection into programs (rather than random assignment), (2) participation in multiple programs, (3) time spent participating in specific programs generally constituting a small fraction of total exposure to BBYO, and (4) limited sample size preventing segmentation of the sample into larger but more narrowly defined subgroups to facilitate reliable statistical comparisons. A more complete analysis of individual program impact would include questions geared toward specific programs.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>i</sup> While the distribution of the unweighted sample was not far off from being representative with respect to region, it was skewed in the direction of having too many female respondents (62%).

<sup>ii</sup> As indicated earlier, sample selection was limited to seniors and juniors to enable the evaluation to capture a sufficient period of participant involvement including involvement in a variety of BBYO programs and activities.

<sup>iii</sup> Independent research found synagogue membership in 44% of families with teen-agers. The estimate is based on a composite of Jewish population studies (community surveys in the 11 U.S. communities) carried out during the past decade. (Sid Groeneman and Tom W. Smith, “The Impact of Mobility on the Jewish Community,” 2009.)

<sup>iv</sup> Ibid.

<sup>v</sup> One study found that adolescents in intermarried families are only one-fifth as likely to report regular participation in a Jewish youth group—reported in Steven M. Cohen, “Jewish Educational Background: Trends and Variations Among Today’s Jewish Adults,” Hebrew University of Jerusalem (2004).

<sup>vi</sup> The survey response rate, while not far out of line with other examples of online data collection, can also be taken as evidence consistent with the unrepresentative sample hypothesis. Had the study achieved a response of 40-50% or higher, there would be less concern about the quality of the sample.

<sup>vii</sup> Only one respondent marked being a non-member participant and four others were not sure. The rest are members of AZA or BBG.

<sup>viii</sup> “Jewish Background” is measured in this research as a composite scale that combines five items: years of Jewish education plus four agree/disagree statements about parents’ Jewish-relevant expectations for their son/daughter and their own involvement in Jewish life (as reported by the BBYOer respondents). Answers were converted to z-scores, combined through summation to form the scale, and then the scale was collapsed into three categories to facilitate cross-tabular analysis. Because the distribution of scores was concentrated toward the higher side—clustering at the stronger Jewish background end of the scale—the cut-points were set to reflect roughly equal distances along the scale rather than equal numbers of respondents in the three categories. The highest category—the strongest on “Jewish Background” (relative to others) captures about half of the sample (the top 50% approximately), and the two remaining categories represent respondents manifesting the weakest quarter and second weakest quarter of Jewish Background scores.

Although intermarriage was *not* used as part of the Jewish Background scale—it was not used to help define it operationally—it is clearly associated with having intermarried parents: Only 5% of those with the strongest backgrounds have one parent who is not Jewish, which increases to 16% for the middle category and to 34% among those the weakest Jewish Background quartile.

<sup>ix</sup> The BBYO Involvement scale is a composite measure made up of answers to 17 participation questions, which were converted to z-scores and combined. Attendance at chapter meetings was given a double weight due to its fundamental importance. The distribution of scores making up the composite measure were then collapsed into four groups—the highest eighth of the sample (the top 12.5%) labeled Very High Involvement, the next highest 3/8 (50th – 87.5th percentile) labeled Medium High Involvement, the next highest 3/8 (12.5<sup>th</sup> – 50th percentile) labeled Medium Low Involvement, and the lowest 1/8 (bottom 12.5%), labeled Very Low Involvement. As in the trichotomous Jewish Background variable, the cut-points defining the four categories were established to reflect meaningful differences.

<sup>x</sup> Robert D. Putnam and David E. Campbell, *American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us*, Simon & Schuster (New York, 2010), p. 287.

<sup>xi</sup> As is natural to expect, amount of participation is correlated with years of involvement in BBYO. For the full, uncollapsed measure of participation, Pearson's  $r = .45$ ; when participation is recoded into four groups, Somers' D, a measure of ordinal association, is .37.

<sup>xii</sup> Charles Kadushin, Shaul Kelner, Leonard Saxe, "Being a Jewish Teenager in America: Trying to Make It," Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (December, 2000).

<sup>xiii</sup> The two indicators where tenure is associated with responses for weaker background youth (but not for their counterparts) are: (1) the importance of visiting or connecting with Israel and (2) the judgment that BBYO has improved their knowledge/understanding of Israel. Tenure (as well as involvement) are significantly related for both background groups for the other items in the table.

<sup>xiv</sup> Michael Whitehead-Bust, op cit, pp. 20-21.

<sup>xv</sup> Twenty-six percent in the highest participation segment attends at least once a month, compared to 21% in the medium high group, 18% in the medium low group, and 16% in the lowest segment.

<sup>xvi</sup> Quotes from the organization's website: <http://bbyo.org/about/mission/>

<sup>xvii</sup> Kadushin et al, op cit, found in their 2000 study that 70% of Jewish teenagers planned to attend an elite university. Those with the highest academic aspirations tended to be those for whom being Jewish mattered a great deal (Executive Summary, p. 5). Steven M. Cohen found that 86% were extremely/very concerned about getting into a good college ("The Differential Impact on Adult Jewish Identity," AviChai Foundation, 2007).

<sup>xviii</sup> The statistic represented by the values in the table is Somers' D, a measure of ordinal association commonly used to measure the strength of the connection between two variables measured on an ordinal scale. An ordinal scale is any scale that has values arranged in a sequence from lower to higher, such as Not At All Important, Not Very Important, Somewhat Important, Very Important; or: Strongly Disagree, ... , Strongly Agree; or: number of one's close friends who are Jewish (0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6).

In this case, strength of relationship (or strength of association—the terms are used interchangeably) indicates the consistency of the relationship between participation in program x and a higher/stronger desired response on the impact measure. For example:

- to the extent that participants in Local Leadership Training answer more often than non-participants that they "do something special to observe or celebrate Shabbat," the value of Somers' D will be higher;
- to the extent that participants agree more strongly (or disagree less strongly) than non-participants with "the fact that I am Jewish has a lot to do with how I see myself" the value of Somers' D will be higher;
- to the extent that they regard "learning about Jewish history, culture, or sacred texts" as more important than non-participants do, the value of Somers' D will be higher;

- to the extent that they *disagree* more strongly (or agree less strongly) than non-participants with the statement “I do not feel particularly connected to the Jewish world,” the value of Somer’s D will be higher;
- . . . and so forth for all 16 items.

To calculate Somer’s D, all respondents are paired with all other respondents. The mathematical formula for Somer’s D is:  $(P - Q) / (P + Q + T_y)$ , where P is the number of pairs of cases which are concordant on two variables, Q is the number of pairs of cases which are discordant on two variables, and  $T_y$  is the number of cases tied on the independent variable only. A concordant pair occurs, in this research, when a respondent who participated in the program answers with a higher (more desired) response on the impact measure than that person’s paired non-participant. A discordant pair occurs when a respondent who participated in the program answers with a lower (less desired) response on the impact measure than that person’s paired non-participant.

The asymmetric version of Somer’s D is used because we are testing the hypothesis between an independent variable (participation in Program X) and a series of dependent variables (the desired attitudes, attributes, values, and practices).

In short, Somer’s D can be interpreted as the excess of concordant pairs over discordant pairs among pairs not tied on the independent variable. (Marija J. Norusis, *SPSS 16: Statistical Procedures Companion* (Upper Saddle River, NJ; 2008), pp. 179-182.

We advise against comparing Somer’s D values for impact indicators measured on different types of scales; for example, as used in this research: a 4-point scale [strongly agree . . . strongly disagree], a 3-point scale [Yes-Very Much, Yes-Somewhat, No], a 7-point scale [0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 (close friends are Jewish)]. For this reason, we rely in our analysis more on the number of statistically significant outcomes rather than the relative size of the Somer’s D values.

<sup>xix</sup> The threshold adopted for statistical significance was the convention 95% level for nine of the twelve programs. Because the participant sample sizes for the International Kallah, Israel Travel, and Panim programs are considerably smaller, the significance cut-off for those three programs is set at 90%.

## **C. College-Age Alumni (“Younger Alumni”)**

### **0. Summary of the Survey of College-Age Alumni**

Most findings from the national survey of 722 BBYO alumni 18-23 years of age are consistent with an interpretation of organizational impact. This applies in particular to ethno-religious identity, understanding, and pride; Jewish communal attachment, commitment, responsibility and desire to “improve the world;” interest in and knowledge of Israel; participation in Jewish organizations; and, above all, to having Jewish friend and to leadership skills and motivations.

Evidence of impact on interest in Jewish learning/study is more mixed; nevertheless, well over half of 18-23 year-olds have taken a Jewish studies class since graduating from high school. Few alumni engage in regular voluntarism or philanthropy, but both practices are linked to BBYO involvement. Somewhat lesser impacts were found for synagogue attendance, praying, and honoring Shabbat, and for participation in Jewish cultural pursuits.

While over six in ten college-age alumni report that they sometimes participate in Hillel activities, involvement in Jewish life on campus is only moderate, as fewer than half of those enrolled in a college say they participate even fairly often, and about one-quarter do so rarely or never. Almost three-quarters of younger BBYO alumni have served in a leadership capacity in some organization since high school; nearly half have played a leadership role in a Jewish organization.

Despite respondents’ perceptions that BBYO has increased their knowledge of Israel, a notable weakness lies in younger alumni’s confidence in talking to others about the situation in Israel—a capability that has grown in importance on college campuses—which is unrelated to degree of prior BBYO involvement. Only one-fifth of college-age alumni feel very confident in their ability to explain the situation in Israel.

Several types of BBYO impacts not addressed in the structured questioning were revealed in respondents’ verbatim comments: (1) providing a “safe haven” for exploring being Jewish and developing one’s personal identity in a familiar and comfortable environment; (2) appreciation and tolerance of the variety of Jewish values, beliefs, experiences (pluralism); (3) opportunity to meet and make friends with other Jews, especially for those who would otherwise be Jewishly isolated.

As in the survey of current BBYO high school juniors and seniors, the sample of 18-23 year-old alumni appears to exhibit background characteristics which are stronger or more extensive than average for American Jews in that age range.

**1. Profile of the College-Age Alumni Sample (18-23 years of age)**

The college-age BBYO alumni analysis is based on a final sample of 722 survey respondents. The sample should represent the total 18-23 year old BBYO alumni population in terms of gender and region, as the data were weighted based on the distribution of region by gender in the starting sample listings provided by BBYO. Table C-1 presents demographic characteristics of this group, who are occasionally referred to in this report as “younger alumni”. It shows that there are more females than males (even after weighting), a concentration in middle of the age range, and more alumni who in the East region of the country or the South than in the Midwest or West regions.

**Table C-1**  
**Demographic Characteristics of the College-Age Alumni Sample (%)**

		<b>BBYO</b>
Gender:	Male	45
	Female	54
	Other	<0.5
Age:	18	7
	19	27
	20	25
	21	20
	22	13
	23	8
School status:	Freshman	15
	Sophomore	28
	Junior	23
	Senior	19
	Grad/Prof School	4
	Not in school	11
Region of country when in BBYO:	East	33
	Midwest	20
	South	31
	West	15

Some rows might not appear to sum to 100% because of rounding.

We are less sure about the sample’s representativeness with respect to age than of the accuracy of the gender and regional distributions. The data could not be effectively weighted based on age, as this information was not available. It seems unusual that the age distribution of the obtained sample is not more evenly divided. The lower percentages near the high end of the age range likely means that 22 and 23 year-olds are under-represented. The same might also be true for seniors and students in graduate and professional study.<sup>1</sup>

Nearly three-quarters of younger BBYO alumni have had at least six years of Jewish education during the elementary school years, which can include Hebrew School, Sunday School, Jewish day school, or private tutoring (Table C-2). Nearly all (93%) had had a

Bar/Bat-Mitzvah. Two-thirds had either been to a Jewish overnight camp, had been a camp counselor or other staff member, or had been both a camper and a camp staff member.

**Table C-2**  
**Jewish Background Characteristics of College-Age Alumni**  
**Sample (%)**

		<b>BBYO</b>
Years of Jewish education during grades 1-8:	6-8	72
	4-5	13
	2-3	8
	1 or less	6
Had a Bar/Bat-Mitzvah:		93
Jewish camp experience:	Attended a Jewish overnight camp	37
	Worked on the staff of a Jewish overnight camp	4
	Attended camp and worked on camp staff	26
Parents belongs to a synagogue or temple:		76
Denominational identification:	Orthodox	3
	Conservative	41
	Reform	32
	Reconstructionist	4
	Just Jewish – no particular denomination	15
	Other	5
Are both parents Jewish?	Yes	87
	No, inter-married	9
	One or both parents no longer living	4

Most identify with either the Conservative or Reform movements (as do most Jews in the U.S.), one in five view themselves as part of no particular Jewish denomination (“just Jewish” and other responses), and relatively few (only 3%) regard themselves as Orthodox.<sup>ii</sup> A disproportionately large number (84%) report that their parents belong to a synagogue or temple. Only 9% has one parent who is not Jewish.

Just as in the high school survey of current BBYO juniors and seniors, the younger alumni group exhibits a set of Jewish background characteristics which seems above average in its “Jewishness.” Once again, it is difficult to determine the extent to which this is an accurate depiction of all BBYO alumni in this age cohort and how much alumni with these more Jewish attributes and experiences tended to respond in greater numbers to the survey.

## **2. BBYO Participation Among College-Age Alumni**

Nearly two-thirds of younger alumni were affiliated with BBYO, if only informally or irregularly, for four or more years, and over three-quarters report having been either extremely or very involved (Table C-3).<sup>iii</sup> From a substantive perspective, the findings of generally long and intense involvement, if characteristic of all BBYO alumni in this age cohort, suggests that

18-23 year-old “graduates” of the organization found it to be a worthwhile experience—a hypothesis which will soon be substantiated in respondents’ comments and their ratings of the organization’s impact.

Years of involvement in BBYO:	%	(n)
4 or more	65	(473)
3	17	(125)
2	11	(77)
1	4	(28)
Less than 1	3	(20)
How involved were you in BBYO?		
Extremely	53	(382)
Very	25	(181)
Somewhat	15	(112)
Not very	6	(42)
Not at all	1	(5)

Not shown in the table are two additional points about the participation of the college-age alumni sample:

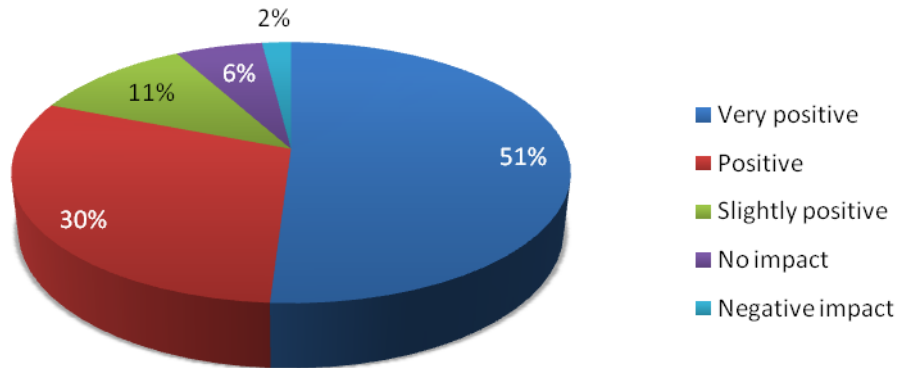
- Nearly all (97%) of the younger alumni were members of AZA/BBG, while only 11 of the 722 respondents participated in BBYO programs and activities without becoming a member.
- Most former AZA/BBG members (85%)—82% of the entire sample—served in a leadership position on the Board of their local chapter, the Regional Board, or on the International Board.

Partly because of anticipated recall difficulties and partly because of the survey’s length limitations, no other questions were asked in the survey about specific BBYO programs or activities in which college-age alumni might have participated.

### **3. Overall Impact and Volunteered Comments**

Approximately four-fifths (81%) of younger alumni rate BBYO as having had a positive or very positive impact on their life (Exhibit C-1).

**Exhibit C-1:  
Impact of BBYO on My Life**



As in the survey of high school participants, the reported impact of BBYO was strongly correlated with years of involvement and amount of involvement. For example, 62% of alumni participating in BBYO four or more years rated the organization as having had a very positive impact, compared to 46% of those with three years of affiliation, 22% of those with two years in BBYO, and only 6% of those involved in BBYO one year or less. An even stronger association pertains to *amount* of involvement and impact.

As noted in the previous section about current high school participants, these robust correlations no doubt reflect both greater positive impacts resulting from longer and more intense involvement as well as participants choosing along the way, during their period of participation, to extend and deepen their involvement because they perceived BBYO was having an impact. Males’ and females’ ratings of overall impact are equally strong as are those of alumni from different parts of the country.

The younger alumni survey also asked respondents to describe “...what about BBYO has had the biggest impact on you.” Here is a sampling of comments which illustrate the variety of types of impact:

*A female from Michigan: BBYO turned me into the confident leader that I am today. I have given speeches in front of hundreds for regional positions and spoke about the holocaust in front of a large crowd to for oratory.*

*A male from Ohio: I have made the longest lasting best friends in AZA. Holding chapter board positions helped me with leadership skills and confidence. Having something fun to do every weekend was great.*

*A female from Washington, DC: Made being Jewish part of my everyday life with Jewish friends and daily rituals.*

A male from Texas: *I learned important lessons on what it means to be Jewish in a social sense, and how to use my Judaism to frame the important life choices I have and decisions I make.*

A female from Colorado: *BBYO gave me a sense of belonging. I could be myself and know that I was surrounded by other people who I could connect with and feel comfortable around, whether we had known each other forever or had just met.*

A male from Massachusetts: *It boosted my self-confidence 500%. Being engaged in the region and international order gave me a sense of belonging. ILTC impacted me the most where I met my best friends and showed me what BBYO and being Jewish is all about.*

A female from South Carolina: *It kept me connected with my Jewish identity when it would have been easy for me to become more involved in other aspects of high school life. It also introduced me to friends who share common beliefs and faith in our religion.*

A male from Iowa: *I think it provided an outlet for me to grow as a teen and see that I had the ability to get things done. There is a certain level of autonomy in every chapter that simply cannot be found in other high school organizations.*

A female from New York: *Community leadership. The collaboration among members, with the guidance of professional staff, gave me a strong framework and understanding early on of what it means to be a community leader.*

A male from New Jersey: *The biggest impact BBYO has had on me is that it has made me a more independent person. I have grown more confident in myself and have matured through the program.*

A female from California: *Social skills. I started being more social once I joined BBYO.*

A male from Connecticut: *Leadership, Confidence, connection to Judaism and Jewish people.*

However, not all comments were positive:

*I dropped out of BBYO because it did not fulfill my expectations religiously. There was very little Jewish content in most of the events and meetings, so I dropped out and joined USY. (Minnesota female)*

*BBYO has impacted me with the leadership skills to go forward. However, BBYO really stifled me when I realized that a lot of people were in it to just hook up with others and drink at conventions. (Ohio male)*

*Unfortunately, my experience in BBYO (BBG) taught me very little about Judaism and my relationship with it. The biggest thing BBYO taught me was that I definitely didn't want to be in a sorority. (Pennsylvania female)*

As in the high school survey results, this word cloud demonstrates the frequency that different words were mentioned in the open-ended responses of college-age alumni.



#### 4. Ethnic Identity and Related Orientations

This section parallels the high school analysis on this theme, reporting on similar impact measures related to ethnic Jewish identity:

- Understanding and appreciation of being Jewish
- Pride in being Jewish
- Perpetuation of Jewish life
- Jewish community and peoplehood

As in the case of the high school sample results presented earlier, this section begins the presentation of detailed survey results. Readers may wish to refresh their understanding of how to read the tables by reviewing the boxed explanation on page 27.<sup>iv</sup>

##### 4.1 Understanding and Appreciation of Being Jewish

Table C-4 shows that a sizable minority of younger alumni very much believe that BBYO has meaningfully increased/improved their understanding of what it means to be Jewish (45%). Somewhat fewer feel the same way regarding their appreciation of how “living Jewishly” can provide a richer, more fulfilling life (36%) and their appreciation of the problems and issues facing Jews in the U.S. and worldwide (29%). Adding those who answered “somewhat” increases each of those numbers to over 70%.

**Table C-4**  
**Indicators of Impact on Understanding/Appreciation Being Jewish**  
 ('+' denotes a positive association; '0' denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your understanding of what it means to be Jewish. (yes-very much)	<b>45</b>	+	+
The fact that I am Jewish has a lot to do with how I see myself. (strongly agree)	49	+	0
I have a clear sense of what it means to be Jewish. (strongly agree)	48	+	+
Jewish tradition has an impact on the decisions that I make. (strongly agree)	34	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your appreciation of the problems and issues facing Jews in the U.S. and worldwide. (very much)	<b>29</b>	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your appreciation of how “living Jewishly” can provide a richer, more fulfilling life? (yes-very much)	<b>36</b>	+	+
How important is being Jewish in your life? (very important)	66	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

The significant associations of all seven items in the table with amount of self-reported BBYO involvement (“Involve” column) and six of the seven with years of involvement (“Tenure” column) are also consistent with a finding of positive BBYO influence. These results are grounds for believing that the organization has had a positive impact on college-age alumni’s understanding/appreciation of being Jewish and Jewish life.

*An alumna from Massachusetts described BBYO’s main impact on her in terms of introducing me to different types of people and observances from many different places. I learned a lot about the Jewish community and about how to be involved in it.*

*Commented a female from Nebraska: BBYO defined me as a teen and shaped me for the future. Specifically, the March of the Living program truly showed me what it meant to be Jewish.*

## 4.2 Jewish Pride

A majority of college-age alumni feel a strong sense of pride in Jewish accomplishments (Table C-5), and nearly all (90%) feel *some* pride—responses which are related to amount of BBYO involvement but not to years of participation. Fewer, though still meaningful numbers, feel ashamed when they hear about negative Jewish behavior. About one-

third display their Jewishness through clothing and jewelry more often since becoming involved in BBYO. Like experiencing feelings of pride from hearing about Jewish accomplishments, public display of one’s Jewishness is connected to amount of involvement, and it is also correlated with years of involvement.

**Table C-5**  
**Indicators of Impact on Jewish Pride**  
 ('+' denotes a positive association; '0' denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
I feel especially proud when someone Jewish is publicly cited for a significant achievement. (strongly agree)	51	+	0
I feel ashamed when I hear news reports of Jews behaving illegally or unethically. (strongly agree)	35	0	0
I wear a Jewish star, chai, Jewish t-shirt, or other sign that I am Jewish. (indicated agreement)	34	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**  
 \*\* Base: those answering that they do this more often since becoming involved in BBYO

*BBYO taught me to be proud of my religion. It taught me to be confident in everything I do and take responsibility for my actions. (Florida alumnus)*

*BBYO was an excellent time as a young individual to meet other kids with similar interests so together we could "flex our Jewish muscles" and be proud together. (Alabama male)*

### 4.3 Perpetuation of Jewish Life

Both the importance of raising one’s children to be Jewish and the intention of be involved in Jewish life after completing one’s education are significantly associated with amount of BBYO participation and years of involvement (Table C-6). Only 10% and 15% of younger alumni, respectively, agree with these statements signifying a disinclination to perpetuate Jewish life. Intentions to carry on the tradition are widespread among younger alumni and linked to their BBYO experience.

**Table C-6**  
**Indicators of Perpetuation of Jewish Life**  
 ('+' denotes a positive association; '0' denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
It is <u>not</u> so important to raise any children I might have to be Jewish. (strongly disagree)	71	+	+
I do <u>not</u> feel especially motivated to be involved in Jewish life after completing my education. (strongly disagree)	50	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

Commented a female from Virginia: *It made me realize how important it is to be an active Jew and how important it is to me to be surrounded by Jewish friends in my life.*

A male from Vermont described BBYO’s main impact ... *[as] being very proud to be Jewish, and for wanting to continue with my Jewish experiences in life.*

**4.4 Connectedness to and Responsibility for Other Jews**

*[BBYO] provided a Jewish connection at a crucial time in between my Bar Mitzvah and college - kept me on track!* (Illinois male)

About two-thirds of younger BBYO alumni strongly feel connected to the Jewish people and that it plays a very important role in their life—beliefs which are related to their BBYO participation but not to the number of years associated with the organization (Table C-7). Three of every five college-age alumni give major credit to BBYO for this.

Sense of responsibility to worldwide Jewry is somewhat weaker with only 37% agreeing strongly, although 86% agreeing at least somewhat, that they are responsible to Jews around the world. Nevertheless, over one-third (35%) say that their BBYO involvement has very much served to increase that feeling of responsibility. Sense of responsibility to Jews worldwide and crediting BBYO for enhancing that feeling are both related to amount and years of involvement in the organization.

**Table C-7**  
**Indicators of Sense of Connectedness and Responsibility**  
 ('+' denotes a positive association; '0' denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
I do <u>not</u> feel particularly connected to the Jewish people. (strongly disagree)	64	+	0
How important of a role does being a part of the Jewish people play in your life? (very important)	67	+	0
How much impact, if any, do you feel that BBYO had on strengthening or enhancing your interest in being part of the Jewish people? (major impact)	<b>60</b>	+	+
I feel a special responsibility to help Jews in need around the world. (strongly agree)	37	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your feeling of responsibility to Jews worldwide? (yes-very much)	<b>35</b>	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

The theme of providing ethno-religious support and protection was expressed in several of the verbatim comments:

*I love being Jewish, when before BBYO I struggled with my culture and religion, being from a southern state. (Oklahoma male)*

*BBYO afforded a uniquely personal benefit to this alumna from Missouri: In an area that had few Jews, some anti-Semitism, and a great deal of homophobia, BBYO gave me a safe haven in which I could explore my Jewish identity and come to terms with being gay.*

*BBYO allowed me to feel as though I was in a place free of discrimination and self-consciousness. I always felt as though I was truly myself with any area of BBYO. (South Carolina female)*

## 5. Jewish Friends

Over half of college-age alumni maintain that having Jewish friendships plays a very important role in their life. Only 13% feel having Jewish friends is not important to them. More relevant to this evaluation, only about one in ten alumni fail to credit BBYO for strengthening the importance to them of having Jewish friends, while nearly two-thirds (65%) assign a major role to the organization for this view (Table C-8). In fact, 37% of them say that they met six or more of their good friends through BBYO. Over half (53%) reported that at least four of their good friends came through BBYO involvement. The differences on these measures by gender are minor.

**Table C-8**  
**Jewish Friends**

(‘+’ denotes a positive association; ‘0’ denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
How important of a role does having Jewish friends play in your life? (very important)	53	+	0
How much impact, if any, do you feel that BBYO had on strengthening or enhancing your interest in having Jewish friends? (major impact)	<b>65</b>	+	+
How many of your six best friends are Jewish? (% 4 or more)	62	+	+
Of the people you consider to be your good friends, how many did you meet through BBYO? (6 or more)	<b>37</b>	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

Not surprisingly, having Jewish friends, making Jewish friends through BBYO, and attributing the importance of having Jewish friends to BBYO are all related to amount of BBYO participation and length of involvement.

A female from Connecticut commented: *I will carry the friends I made during my BBYO career throughout my entire life. I went to a high school where I was the only Jew so BBYO was my way to connect with other Jews my age. It was an invaluable experience.*

Commented a male from Illinois: *The biggest thing that BBYO gave me was self-confidence and friends. Without BBYO, I wouldn't have nearly as many friends.*

And an alumna from Florida said: *It brought me together with other Jewish teenagers that are still my friends today.*

## 6. Jewish Learning

Jewish learning plays a very important role in the lives of only one-third (34%) of younger alumni, and it does not appear to be influenced by BBYO dosage or duration, as evidenced by the lack of significant correlation (Table C-9). Nevertheless, almost three in ten college-age alumni (29%) said BBYO had a major impact on developing their interest in Jewish learning, which is validated by approximately the same proportion (31%) who said BBYO increased their interest in continuing Jewish learning. Those findings *are* related to BBYO involvement and tenure.

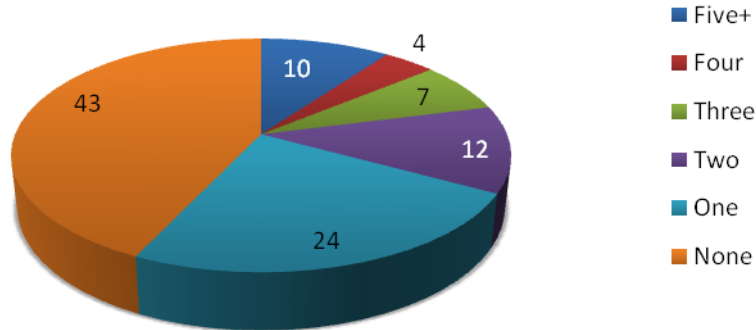
**Table C-9**  
**Indicators of Impact on Interest in Jewish Learning**  
 ('+' denotes a positive association; '0' denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
How important of a role does learning about Jewish history, people, culture, or sacred texts play in your life? (very important)	34	0	0
How much impact, if any, do you feel that BBYO had on strengthening or enhancing your interest in learning about Jewish history, people, culture, or sacred texts become? (major impact)	<b>29</b>	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased your interest in continuing Jewish learning? (yes-very much)	<b>31</b>	+	+
Have taken <u>two or more</u> Jewish studies courses (in college or elsewhere) since graduating from high school.	33	+	0

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

One-third of younger alumni have taken at least two Jewish studies courses since graduating from high school (Table C-1A). (The survey specified that the courses can include study of Torah or other sacred texts; Jewish history, culture, or ethics; contemporary Jewish issues; Jewish music, art, or literature; Hebrew; and courses about Israel.) Over half (57%) have taken at least one such course. One in ten BBYO alumni 18-23 years of age have five or more courses. Number of courses taken is significantly associated with amount of BBYO involvement but not years of affiliation.

**Exhibit C-1A**  
**Number of Jewish Content Courses Taken Since High School**  
 (%)



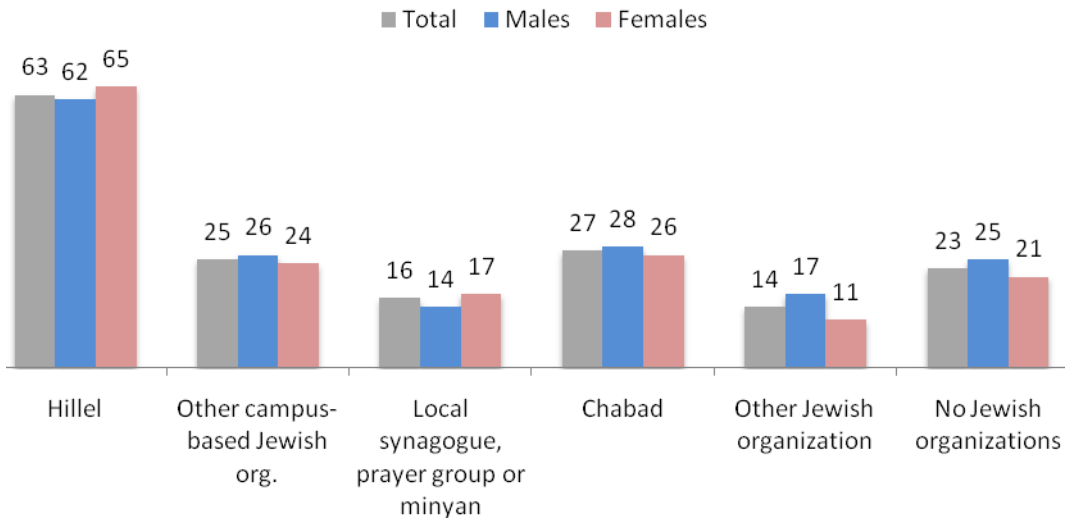
The impact of BBYO on interest in Jewish study and learning, though far from absent, are more moderate than other impacts identified in the research on this age cohort. Minorities of college-age alumni do appear to have been positively affected.

## 7. Participation in Jewish Organizations

One objective of the survey of college-age alumni survey is to find out how much former BBYOers continue to participate in Jewish organizations. Like the other indicators already reviewed, participation in Jewish organizations is yet another way of demonstrating one’s interest and commitment to Jewish life.

Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life is the largest campus-based Jewish organization, serving students at more than 500 colleges and universities. Most college-age BBYO alumni (89%) attend or live near a school where a Hillel or other, similar Jewish organization exists on campus. Sixty-three percent of alumni belong to or sometimes participate in programs, activities, or events at Hillel (Exhibit C-2), which equals 71% of respondents having easy access to a Hillel. The figures are pretty much the same by gender: 62% of males participate in Hillel (70% of those with a Hillel nearby) as do 65% of females (72% of those with a Hillel nearby).

**Exhibit C-2:  
Participation in Jewish Organizations (%)**



*My BBYO experience made prayer and discussing Jewish issues fun. As a result of my amazing BBYO experience, I'm very involved with Hillel at my university.*  
(New York alumna)

*It gave me the self confidence I never had before entering BBYO. I have grown in my Jewish identity and am now president of the Hillel in Milwaukee, WI.*  
(Wisconsin female)

*I became more involved in the Jewish community in Boca. I later went to college and my major is now Jewish studies. I am actively involved in the Hillel on my campus as well as activities for Israel.* (Florida female)

The percentages of college-age alumni participating in Hillel and other Jewish organizations not necessarily on campus is also shown in Exhibit C-2. Not surprisingly, there is overlap in participation, as the totals exceed 100% across the different organization types. The cluster of columns on the right side of the chart reveals that nearly one-quarter (23%) of BBYO alumni of college age participate in no Jewish organization.

*A female from Minnesota wrote: As a part of BBYO, I gained significant insight and experience in dealing with nonprofit organizations. Going off to college, I felt that I had all the tools necessary to become actively involved in organizations on campus.*

*An alumna from Mississippi commented on how, among other things, BBYO has given direction to her choice of career: It gave me so much self-confidence. I made life-long friends and it has given me professional skills that I have been able to use in all aspects of my life to this day. Because of BBYO, I want to work in the Jewish world and specifically the nonprofit sector.*

Altogether, 28% of those currently enrolled in college say they participate in Jewish campus life very often (Table C-10), and another 16% participate fairly often; 26% participate rarely or never—a number similar to the proportion shown in Exhibit C-2, who say they participate in no Jewish organizations. What is BBYO’s contribution to the Jewish participation of their recent alumni? Fully 37% say it has increased their participation very much (Table C-10), and 31% answered “somewhat.” Thus, about two-thirds of younger alumni believe BBYO has encouraged their continuing involvement in Jewish organizations.

**Table C-10**  
**Participation in Jewish Organizations\*\***  
 (+’ denotes a positive association; ‘0’ denotes no association.)

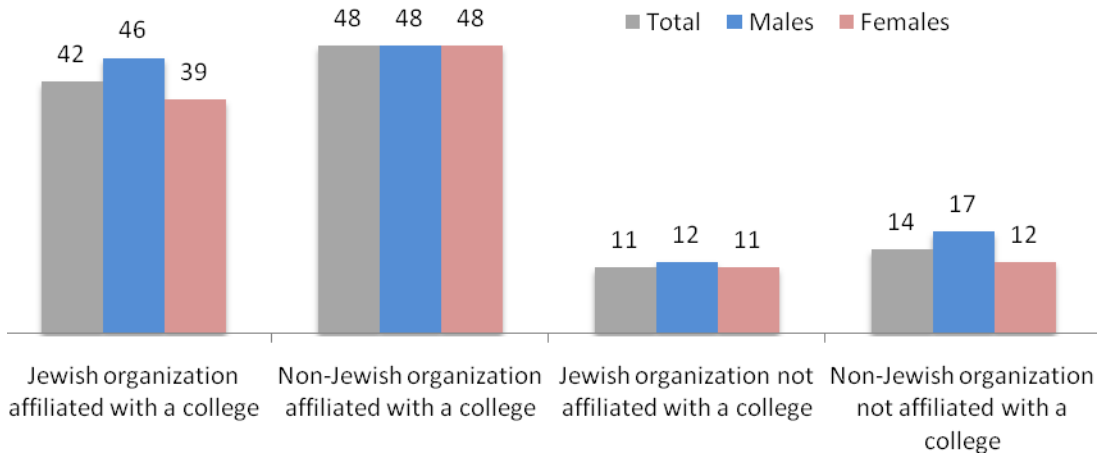
	<u>%</u>	<u>Involvement</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
Enrolled students who participate in Jewish life on campus very often:	28	+	0
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased your participation in Jewish life on campus? (yes-very much)	<b>37</b>	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**  
 \*\* Base: the 89% of the sample (n=642) who are currently enrolled in a college/university

*BBYO taught me how to be a leader in the Jewish community. Since then, I have become the President of Hillel at Arizona State University. (Arizona female)*

Just how many BBYO college-age alumni have played a leadership role in an organization since graduating from high school? Exhibit C-3 displays the answer for four different types of organizations:

**Exhibit C-3:**  
**Played Leadership Role (%)**  
 (Leadership role includes leading a particular activity or event, serving as an officer, or being on the organization's board.)



BBYO alumni are more likely to have performed in a leadership capacity in campus-based rather than non campus-based organizations. Within the former type, women (but not men) are slightly more likely to have been leaders in non-Jewish organizations. Combining across the four types of organizations reveals that almost three-quarters of the college-age alumni (72%) have played a leadership role in at least one of these organizations. Similarly, combining across the two types of Jewish organizations indicates that nearly half (46%) have been leaders in at least one Jewish organization since graduating from high school. Combining across the two types of non-Jewish organizations indicates that slightly more (51%) have been leaders in at least one non-Jewish organization.

The correlation between leadership activity (any organization) and BBYO involvement (both amount and years) is statistically significant but weak. For example, one would have had to be involved in BBYO four or more years to exhibit a significant increase in post high school leadership: 75%, compared to 66% of those with less than four years in BBYO. The correlation between post high school leadership in a Jewish organization and amount of BBYO involvement is also modest. It is only those who report having been “extremely involved” in BBYO who are more likely to be leaders in Jewish organizations after high school: 50%, compared to 42% for those who were less than extremely involved.

## 8. Israel

*I've made the met the most amazing people that will be in my life forever, had the opportunity to learn new leadership skills, and was able to travel to Poland and Israel. I would be an entirely different person without BBYO.* (alumnus from Washington, DC)

Just over two-thirds of younger alumni (68%) have visited Israel at least once. The largest segment (45%) had been to Israel only before becoming involved with BBYO; another 18% had visited Israel both before and since becoming involved; and five percent had visited only since they had begun participating in BBYO or after leaving BBYO.

Only 28% of college-age alumni agree (strongly or somewhat) that they do not spend much time thinking about Israel, while one-third strongly *disagree* with that statement (Table C-11) and another 38% disagree somewhat. The tendency to think about Israel is associated with amount of BBYO involvement. Over half (54%) say that visiting/connecting with Israel plays a very important role in their life, while only one in eight former BBYOers (13%) say that Israel is not important to them. Four out of every ten perceive their BBYO experience as having had a major impact in enhancing their interest in Israel. And nearly one-quarter (23%) believe it has meaningfully improved their knowledge and understanding of Israel very much; two-thirds feel it has done so at least somewhat. Both judgments about BBYO's impact are significantly related to amount and years respondents' involvement in the organization.

**Table C-11**  
**Orientations Toward Israel**  
 ('+' denotes a positive association; '0' denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
I do <u>not</u> spend much time thinking about Israel. (strongly disagree)	33	+	0
How important of a role does visiting or connecting with Israel play in your life? (very important)	54	0	0
How much impact, if any, do you feel that BBYO has had on strengthening or enhancing your interest in visiting or connecting with Israel? (major impact)	<b>40</b>	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your knowledge and understanding about Israel? (yes-very much)	<b>23</b>	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

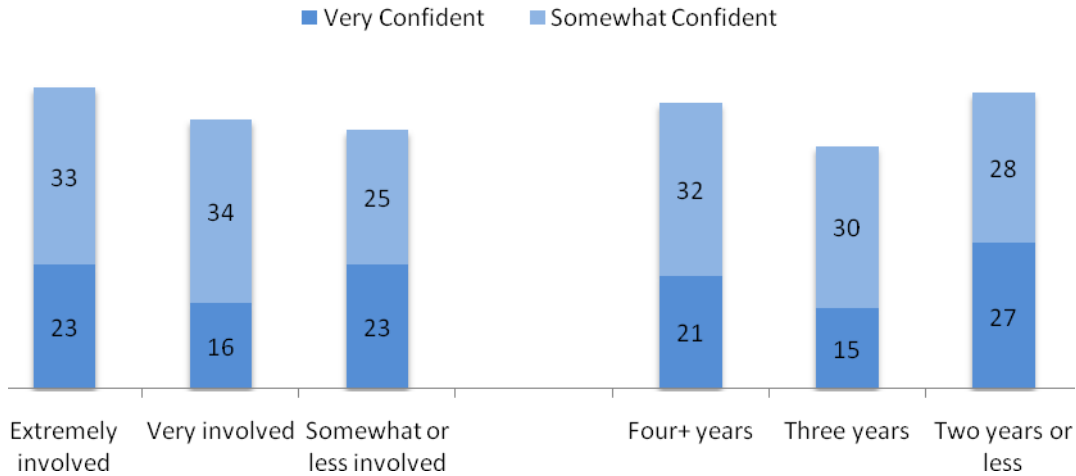
As Israel has become a subject of controversy on college campuses—and of active, organized opposition, in some places—it has grown increasingly important for other students, Jewish and non-Jewish, to be prepared to speak intelligently about Israel. To address this preparedness, the survey contained the following question:

*If someone asked you about the current situation in Israel, how confident do you feel in your ability to give a good explanation?*

The results are not impressive: Only 21% of BBYO alumni feel very confident in their ability to address issues involving Israel while another 31% are somewhat confident. Exhibit C-4 shows that effect on young alumni’s ability to be able to explain the situation in Israel. Neither amount nor length of involvement in BBYO demonstrates the intended impact. Together with the low levels of confidence expressed in discussing the situation in Israel, the absence of an association with BBYO involvement could reveal a distinct weakness in the organization’s programming.

Lack of confidence could be due to a weak understanding of the situation due to inadequate grasp of the facts. Or, it could be a result of ambivalence with regard to one’s own feelings about Israel’s policies actions toward her neighbors. For many 18-23 year-olds, low confidence probably represents of combination of these factors.

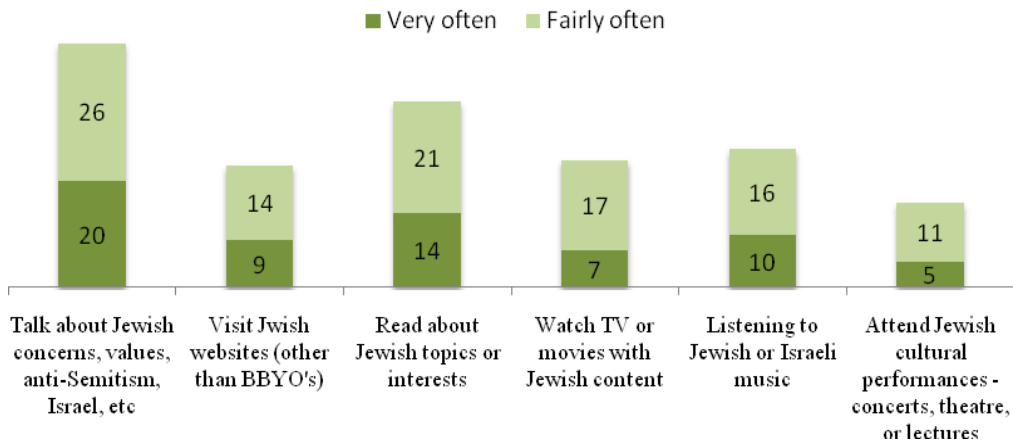
**Exhibit C-4:  
Lack of Desired Linkage Between BBYO Involvement  
and Confidence in Explaining Situation in Israel (%)**



### 9. Engagement with Jewish Culture

Except possibly for talking about Jewish topics, which nearly one-half (46%) of college-age alumni say they do at least fairly often, participation in Jewish cultural activities appears rather modest (Exhibit C-5). This finding also characterizes high school BBYOers, as reported earlier. It could be that Jews in these age groups might simply give a lower priority to involvement in Jewish cultural activities. This hypothesis will be further examined in the following section summarizing the results for older (24-35) BBYO alumni.

**Exhibit C-5:  
Engagement in Jewish Culture (%)**



Notwithstanding these rather modest levels of engagement, analysis by past BBYO involvement does provide some evidence that those who were more active participate more in four of the five varieties of cultural participation (all but listening to Jewish/Israel music), and those who have been in BBYO for a greater number of years participate more in all but listening to Jewish/Israel music and attending Jewish cultural performances such as concerts, theatre, or lectures. Nevertheless, BBYO’s impact on cultural participation is generally modest.

As a female from New York wrote: *My BBYO experience made prayer and discussing Jewish issues fun. (emphasis added)*

### 10. Religious Practices and Holiday Celebration

As in the case of current BBYOers still in high school, religious observance such as praying plays a lesser role in the lives of college-age alumni than does holiday celebration (21% vs. 59% very important – Table C-12). However, the perceived impact of BBYO on both is about the same, with just over one-quarter saying that the organization has had a major impact. Responses to a different question about BBYO’s impact on their interest in prayer and performing Jewish rituals is similar: 22% indicated that BBYO has meaningfully increased their interest in these practices very much. In all, 58% report that the organization has increased their interest at least somewhat.

**Table C-12**  
**Religious Observance and Holiday Celebration**  
 (+ denotes a positive association; ‘0’ denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
How important of a role does Jewish religious observance including praying play in your life? (very important)	21	0	0
How much impact, if any, do you feel that BBYO has had on strengthening or enhancing your interest in religious observance including praying? (major impact)	<b>26</b>	+	+
How important of a role does celebrating Jewish holidays play in your life? (very important)	59	0	0
How much impact, if any, do you feel that BBYO has had on strengthening or enhancing your interest in celebrating Jewish holidays? (major impact)	<b>27</b>	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your interest in prayer or performing Jewish rituals? (yes-very much)	<b>22</b>	+	+

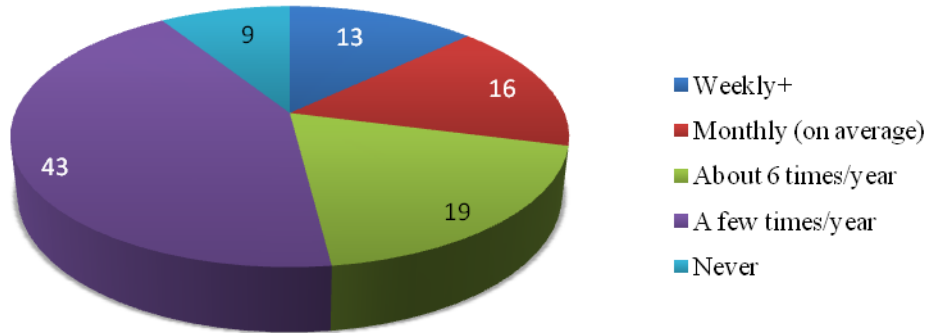
Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

Perceptions of BBYO’s impact are associated with reported extent of involvement and years of affiliation, whereas the two measures of existing *levels* of importance are associated with neither.

Younger alumni’s rather modest level of attendance at synagogue or *minyanim* services is consistent with their relatively weak interest in prayer and religious observance (Exhibit C-6). The modal response is “a few times a year.” Fewer than three in ten college-age alumni

attend services at least once a month, on average. Attendance at religious services is unrelated to amount or length of previous BBYO involvement.

**Exhibit C-7:  
Reported Attendance at Religious Services**



As for celebrating Jewish holidays and performing religious rituals, participation is quite high except for Shabbat related activities (Exhibit C-8). In addition, 8% indicated that they keep kosher, and another 37% said that they avoid some non-kosher foods (not shown in the table).

Except for lighting Hanukkah candles and attending services on Shabbat, performance of the other religious practices are associated with extent of BBYO participation in the intended direction. Attending High Holiday services and fasting on Yom Kippur are also correlated with years of BBYO involvement. These findings support concluding that BBYO participation has impacted most religious practices, but it does not appear to affect participation in religious services or Shabbat observance.

Some verbatim responses do illustrate BBYO’s effect on members’ religiosity:

*According to an alumna from Kansas: March of the Living had the biggest impact on my life and Judaism and after going to Israel for the second time (that being my second), I became more connected and even more religious.*

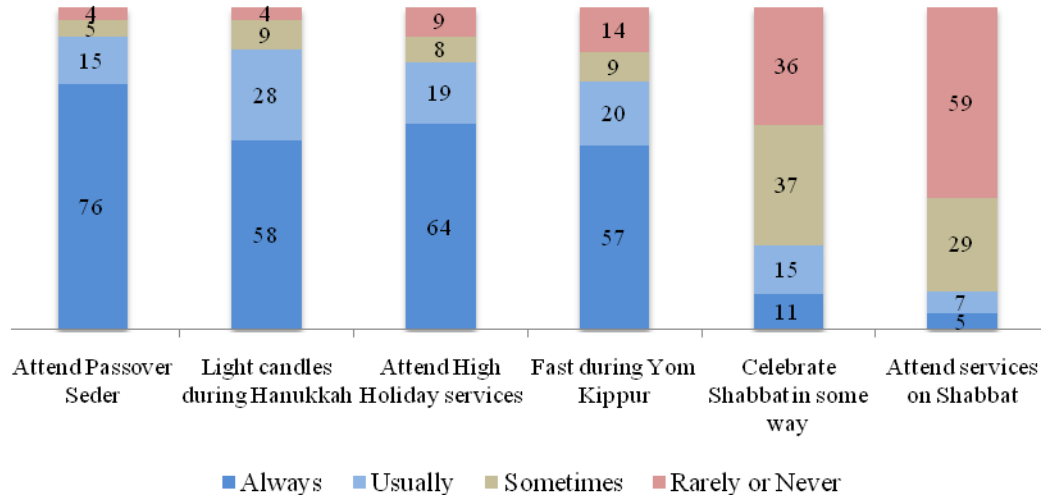
*A male from Ohio wrote: Through my involvement with BBYO Kallah International, I have become a more observant Jew!*

Several college-age alumni commented on the pluralistic nature of BBYO:

*It was a very enriching experience. But I felt it was more focused on the Jewish community and leadership, than the Jewish religion - which I liked. It brought all Jews together, no matter what their personal religious beliefs. (Michigan female)*

*It has helped me to connect and spend time with other Jewish teens from other Jewish denominations from myself, and each other. (Pennsylvania male)*

**Exhibit C-8  
Ritual Participation**



## 11. Community Service and Social Action, Philanthropy and Volunteerism

### 11.1 Community Service and Social Action

A alumna from Michigan described the main impact of BBYO as ... *teaching leadership and community service. Brings together teens from across communities to get involved in Jewish life.*

From a female in Ohio: *I learned about myself and how I can make a difference and change the world I live in.*

Commented an alumna from Texas: *I developed a deep appreciation for doing service in the community.*

Sizable proportions of younger alumni profess a strong commitment to community service (44%) and social action (37%) (Table C-13). When those replying “somewhat important” are added to these numbers, the proportions exceed 80%. Community service is correlated with both measures of BBYO participation; the professed importance of being involved in social and political causes is correlated with amount of BBYO participation.

**Table C-13**  
**Community Service and Social Action**  
 ('+' denotes a positive association; '0' denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
How important of a role does commitment to community service play in your life? (very important)	44	+	+
How much impact, if any, do you feel that BBYO has had on strengthening or enhancing your commitment to community service? (major impact)	<b>41</b>	+	+
How important of a role does involvement in social and political causes play in your life? (very important)	37	+	0
How much impact, if any, do you feel that BBYO has had on strengthening or enhancing your interest in social action or community service? (major impact)	<b>32</b>	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your commitment to social action or community service? (yes, very much)	<b>33</b>	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

Similar proportions attribute their enhanced valuation of community service and social action to their BBYO experience. When those regarding BBYO as having had a minor impact are added in, about 75-80% believe that the organization has had some effect on strengthening their interest/commitment. Each of the three direct measures of impact are positively associated with degree of BBYO involvement and years of affiliation, providing further evidence of impact. All in all, the data support the hypothesis that BBYO involvement leads to greater interest in social activism and, even more, stronger commitment to community service.

## 11.2 Philanthropy and Volunteerism

Despite the substantial commitment to community service expressed, volunteering and charitable contributing *behavior* seems to fall somewhat short. While the measures summarized in Exhibit C-14 might not be the best indicators of following through on professed service commitments, the numbers suggest a disconnect between attitudes and behavior. However, when those answering “very often,” “fairly often,” and “occasionally” are combined, the proportions of college age alumni grow to 74% (do volunteer work) and 60% (contribute money).

We leave it to the reader to judge whether these figures imply a glass that is half full or half empty. For a balanced assessment, it is fair to point out that many young adults in this age cohort may not have the time for frequent volunteering (because of school or work) or the resources to make regular financial contributions.

On the positive side, both frequency of volunteering and contributing are positively linked to BBYO involvement, affording evidence of impact.

**Exhibit C-14:**

**Philanthropy and Volunteerism**

(‘+’ denotes a positive association; ‘0’ denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
How often do you do volunteer work for charities or other non-profit organizations? (very often)	16	+	+
How often to you contribute money to charitable or other philanthropic organizations? (very often)	8	+	+

**Note: The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

**12. Impacts on Leadership and Related Values**

*I feel the BBYO provided me with the leadership skills I need to do well in life.*  
(Michigan female)

*The biggest impact was the leadership, planning, and organizational skills I acquired  
as a chapter board member for 4 years.* (New Jersey male)

Being a leader plays a very important role in the lives of about half of younger BBYO alumni (Table C-15)—a motivation which is positively related to the amount and the length of their prior involvement in the organization’s programs and activities. Indeed, fully 62% credit BBYO as having had a major impact on interest in becoming a leader in their school or community.

Large numbers of college-age alumni also credit the organization for meaningful increases in their leadership skills and in their self-confidence. All measures in Table C-15 are strongly and significantly correlated with degree of prior BBYO participation and with years of participation. The indicators in this research represent convincing evidence of the organization’s impact on leadership motivation and skills, and on enhancing members’ self-confidence.

**Table C-15**  
**Leadership, Self-Confidence, and Getting into College**  
 ('+' denotes a positive association; '0' denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
How important of a role does being a leader in your school or community play in your life? (very important)	52	+	+
How much impact, if any, do you feel BBYO has had on strengthening or enhancing your interest in becoming a leader in your school or community? (major impact)	<b>62</b>	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your leadership skills? (yes-very much)	<b>67</b>	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your self-confidence? (yes-very much)	<b>61</b>	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

BBYO’s effects on alumni’s leadership motivations and skills come through forcefully in many of the verbatim responses to the question about “how BBYO has impacted you the most”.

From a female from California: *Leadership skills—I'm the current chair of the environmental club at my university, and I have received multiple jobs and internships since coming to school. I learned how to work with staff and peers with diverse viewpoints because of BBYO.*

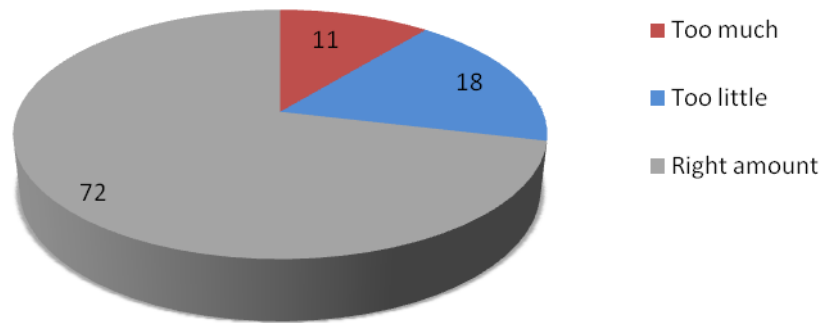
From a male alumnus in Delaware: *It gave me the confidence and leadership skills that I use every day to take on new challenges and excel in my college community.*

And from a Wisconsin alumna: *BBYO has greatly improved my self esteem and desire to take on leadership roles in my community. It has also given me my closest friends.*

### **13. Being Contacted by BBYO**

Few respondents feel that they hear from BBYO too often. Most think they are contacted the right amount (Exhibit C-9). Not surprisingly, those who were less involved in BBYO are more likely to say they hear from BBYO too much. However, even among this segment, only about one-quarter say they are being contacted too much.

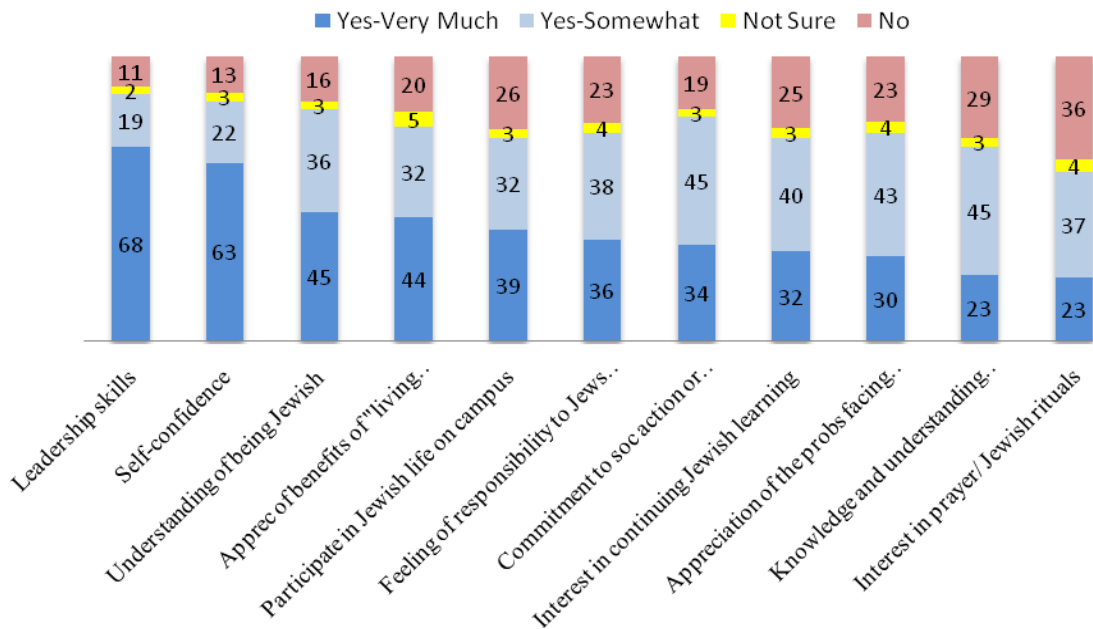
**Exhibit C-9:  
Frequency of BBYO Contacts (%)**



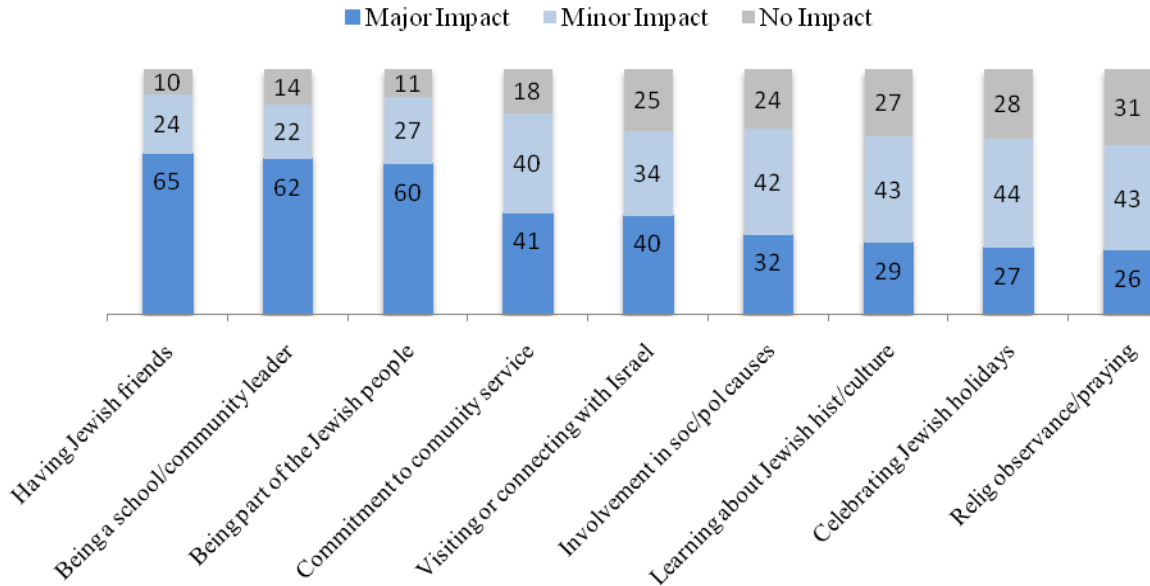
**14. Charts Summarizing the Direct Impact Measures**

The following two graphs provide a visual comparison of respondents’ assessments of the various BBYO impacts, irrespective of category, that were reviewed above in detail. (The item labels had to be abbreviated. For the exact wordings, see the appropriate preceding table or the college-age sample survey questionnaire.)

**Exhibit C-10  
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has  
meaningfully increased or improved your ... ? (%)**



**Exhibit C-11**  
**How much impact, if any, did BBYO have on strengthening or enhancing your interest in . . . ?**



**ENDNOTES**

<sup>i</sup> One reason for the uneven age distribution might be the greater difficulty of maintaining up-to-date email addresses for the older alumni within this age group; for 18 year-olds, it might reflect the smaller number high school graduates who remain 18 combined with the shorter time available for BBYO to update their email address after leaving high school.

<sup>ii</sup> As used here, denomination refers to a component of the individual’s Jewish identity—not to formal congregational affiliation.

<sup>iii</sup> The high rates of involvement revealed in Table C-3 present a methodological problem for the analysis. Although the outcome measures will be examined by length of involvement and amount of involvement to determine the extent to which there are statistical associations which provide evidence of impact (as in the high school survey analysis), the utility of these measures is compromised by the limited amount of variation they display. The diminished numbers of respondents around the low end of the scales will limit the reliability of the inferences than can be drawn. As a consequence, those approaches will be accorded less weight in overall and summary assessments. However, the availability of an independent comparison group to supplement the self-assessment will more than make up for the diminished applicability of the dosage measure in this section’s younger alumni analysis.

<sup>iv</sup> The amount of BBYO involvement measure referred to in the “Involve” column for the college-age sample tables is based on respondents’ recall of their level of involvement and, thus, might not be as accurate a gauge of their actual degree of participation while in BBYO during their high school years, compared to the more rigorously constructed measure used in the high school survey analysis (see endnote ix in the high school section).

## **D. Young Adult Alumni (Ages 24-35)**

### **0. Summary of the Survey of Young Adult Alumni**

Many of the findings from the survey of 1,036 young adult BBYO alumni parallel those from the college-age alumni survey and the survey of high school juniors and seniors. The analysis accumulated considerable evidence of the organization's sustained impacts on Jewish friendships, leadership skills, motivations, and related attributes (such as self-confidence), post high school leadership experiences, ethnic identity and connectedness, and commitment to community service and social action. Impact on knowledge of and attachment to Israel is moderately strong. Somewhat weaker but consequential results consistent with BBYO impact was found on interest in Jewish learning and celebrating Jewish holidays. The least amount of BBYO influence for this cohort, as for their younger counterparts, appears to lie in the domains of Jewish cultural engagement and, even more so, religious observance.

Although outward display of Jewish pride is modest—perhaps constrained by the prevailing mores of their age peers—young adult alumni manifest strong commitment to perpetuating Jewish life through raising their children as Jews and by a motivation to be active in the Jewish community. The expressed importance of having Jewish friends is substantiated by the large percentage of close friends made with other Jews including many friendships that originated within BBYO. The relatively low importance placed on Jewish learning is belied, to some extent, by the number of Jewish content courses taken by many young adult alumni. Much evidence accumulated in the research suggests that BBYO has helped instill norms of volunteerism and philanthropy, which have been significantly actualized since high school, though somewhat more for non-Jewish than Jewish organizations and causes.

A scan through the verbatim responses to the question of how the BBYO experience impacted them the most adds strong qualitative backing to concluding that the organization has had the most sustained impact on alumni's Jewish friendships (both directly and indirectly) and on their leadership practices.

### **1. Profile of the Young Adult Alumni Sample**

The young adult alumni analysis is based on a final sample of 1,036 survey respondents. Because the young adult alumni data file was weighted on region by gender, the final sample reflects the young adult alumni population on those two demographic characteristics. (The young adult alumni population is assumed to correspond to the listings made available to us for drawing the sample, as is the high school junior/senior population and the college-age population.)<sup>i</sup>

As Table D-1 shows, young adult alumni include more females than males, similar to college-age alumni and, to a lesser degree, current high school BBYOers. The table also indicates that the sample contains proportionately fewer respondents 32 and older than those in

the 26-31 age categories.<sup>ii</sup> The reason for the disproportionately low number of respondents 24-25 is unknown. As in the other two BBYO segments, the South region of the country is the region of highest concentration of young adult alumni.

Over half of the young adult alumni are either married (45%) or living with a partner (11%). Except for ten respondents who marked “divorced“ as their marital status (1%), the remaining 43% are never-married singles. Over one-quarter of them (27%) have children.

Gender:	Male	45
	Female	55
	Other	< 0.5
Age:	24-25	15
	26-27	19
	28-29	19
	30-31	20
	32-33	15
	34-35	12
Married:		45
Live with partner :		11
Have children		27
Current region of country:	East	23
	Midwest	23
	South	36
	West	16

Some rows might not appear to sum to 100% because of rounding.

Among young adult alumni who selected one of the categories describing the type of work they do, the kinds of work most often chosen were<sup>iii</sup>:

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| 1. Education (not Jewish education)             | 12% |
| 2. Jewish education or Jewish organization work | 10% |
| 3. Medical/health services or research          | 9%  |
| 4. Financial services                           | 8%  |
| 5. Media, public relations, advertising         | 7%  |
| 6. Legal services                               | 7%  |
| 7. Non-profit sector (not Jewish)               | 5%  |
| 8. Not currently working                        | 5%  |
| 9. Government                                   | 3%  |
| 10. Architecture or engineering                 | 3%  |
| 11. Retail                                      | 3%  |
| 12. Service industry (other)                    | 2%  |
| 13. Creative or performing arts                 | 2%  |
| 14. Manufacturing                               | 1%  |

As is the case with the two younger samples, a seemingly large proportion of young adult alumni had had at least six years of Jewish education during grades 1-8 (Table D-2). Three out of every ten (30%) had been enrolled for at least one year in Jewish day school

during their elementary school years. Nearly all survey respondents (93%) had celebrated a Bar/Bat-Mitzvah. Almost two-thirds had been to a Jewish overnight camp, and almost one-third had worked on a camp staff. Only 6% have parents who inter-married, while 87% have two living Jewish parents.<sup>iv</sup> Also like the 18-23 year-old alumni and the current BBYOers in high school, few identify with the Orthodox denomination of Judaism.

From the data in the table, it appears that the BBYO young adult alumni group, like their younger counterparts, is characterized by a set of Jewish background characteristics which is more extensively Jewish than average. It is once again not possible to determine whether this is an accurate picture of *all* BBYO alumni in this age cohort (i.e., of this BBYO alumni population) or if 24-35 year-old alumni with more Jewish attributes and experiences responded to the survey in greater numbers than alumni with less encompassing Jewish backgrounds.

Years of Jewish education during grades 1-8:	6-8	79
	4-5	11
	2-3	5
	1 or less	4
Years of Jewish day school education during grades 1-8:	6-8	14
	4-5	4
	2-3	8
	1	4
	None	70
Had a Bar/Bat-Mitzvah:		93
Jewish camp experience:	Attended a Jewish overnight camp	37
	Worked on the staff of a Jewish overnight camp	5
	Attended camp and worked on camp staff	27
Denominational identification:	Orthodox	3
	Conservative	37
	Reform	33
	Reconstructionist	2
	Just Jewish – no particular denomination	20
	Other	5
Are both parents Jewish?	Yes	86
	No, inter-married	7
	One or both parents no longer living	7

Two additional characteristics not included in the above table because they are of more recent vintage should be noted: (1) About one-quarter of young adult alumni (26%) pay dues to a synagogue or temple; and (2) about one-fifth of young adult alumni (21%) are married to or living with a partner who is not Jewish.

## 2. BBYO Participation Among Young Adult Alumni

Virtually all young adult alumni (98%) were members of AZA/BBG when participating in BBYO, 11 alumni (1%) participated but not as a member, and the remaining 10 were not sure of their status (Table D-3). Two-thirds indicated having been extremely involved in BBYO, and another 23% marked that they were very involved. Only 10% marked that they were only somewhat less than or less than somewhat involved.<sup>v</sup>

Years of involvement in BBYO:	%	(n)
4 or more	78	(806)
3	15	(153)
2	5	(50)
1	2	(17)
Less than 1	1	(10)
How involved were you in BBYO?		
Extremely	67	(691)
Very	23	(241)
Somewhat	8	(81)
Not very	2	(22)
Not at all	< 0.5	(2)

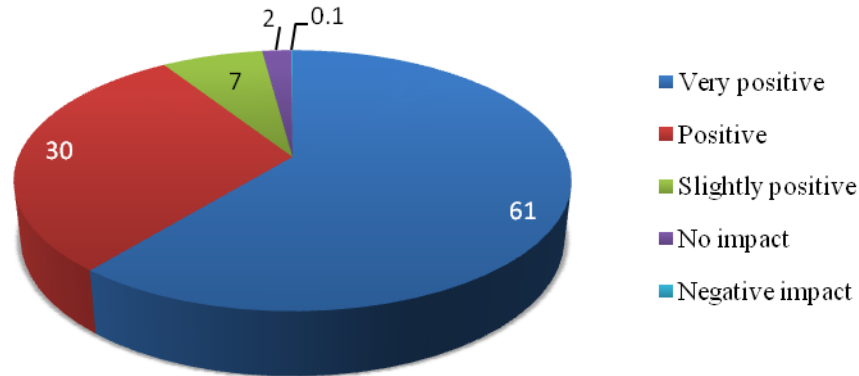
Consistent with this high level of reported BBYO involvement, fully 90% of young adult alumni served on an AZA/BBG Chapter, Regional or International Board.

## 3. Overall Impact and Volunteered Comments

More than nine of every ten young adult alumni regard BBYO as having had either a very positive (61%) or positive (30%) impact on their life. Two percent feel BBYO had no impact on their life, and only 1 person out of 1,036 viewed the organization’s impact as negative.

Rated overall impact does not differ by gender. Alumni in all geographic regions rate BBYO’s impact very positively. As in the high school and college-age alumni surveys reported on earlier, there is a strong and consistent correlation between past involvement in BBYO (both amount and number of years) and impact rating—the more involvement and the longer involvement, the more positive the impact.

**Exhibit D-1**  
**Impact of BBYO on My Life (%)**



The young adult alumni survey also asked respondents to look back on their BBYO experience and describe, in their own words, how they feel it has impacted them the most. The following is a sampling of the responses:

An alumnus from Illinois wrote: *It was a good environment to hone leadership skills. BBYO also was a great social outlet and it's where I met my wife.*

From a woman who grew up in Tennessee: *Growing up in the South, in the diaspora, BBYO helped normalize having a Jewish identity. I met many other teens -- teens who I considered to be cool and fun to be around -- who were also Jewish, and having each other made us stronger and less uncomfortable.*

A male from Michigan commented: *BBYO helped me learn how to lead. It taught me how to handle the highs and lows of life. Whether I won or lost an election, it was a learning experience. The largest impact BBYO had on me was it taught me how to use the life skills necessary to succeed.*

A women in Maryland wrote: *It has mostly impacted me on how to deal with others, the value of Judaism, and living Jewishly, how to compromise with those who do things differently than you, and very strongly on leadership.*

From a male in Virginia: *It definitely helped define what leadership was and gave me some background in how to plan for things. I currently do strategic planning as part of my career and I'm not sure I would have discovered an interest in that arena if it hadn't been for BBYO.*

An alumna from Texas commented: *I had an amazing time in BBYO. I learned a lot about myself and the Jewish religion. Also, I made a lot of friends where I felt comfortable and able to express myself religiously without being criticized.*

A female living in Washington state wrote: *The connections with others that I made in BBYO have impacted my life in a major way. The friends that I made are still my lifelong friends and we have a connection that will last forever. My Jewish identity was strengthened by my participation in BBYO.*

A male from Georgia commented: *Got me out of my little shell, god bless 'em. I also became an advisor for a brief period during which I learned a lot of important lessons I will carry over to bring a father someday.*

From a California alumna: *Before joining BBYO I stereotyped Jews and didn't really want any social involvement in Judaism. After my mom FORCED me to try it I loved it. Ever since Judaism has played a major role in my life including teaching preschool at a Jewish School.*

Commented another California female: *BBYO has impacted every aspect of who I am. To this day my closest friends are those I made in BBYO. Also, I am currently in rabbinical school- and I'm sure I would not have ever considered becoming a rabbi if it weren't for my BBG leadership experiences.*

There were also some not-so-flattering comments about BBYO:

Commented a male living in Washington, DC: *For the other kids, BBYO was mostly about sex and cruel gossip. The only Jewish thing taught in my BBYO region was a supremacist nationalistic attitude in which people wrote "Goy go home" when others invited non-Jews to events, and similar behaviors.*

From a Minnesota woman: *BBYO was a horrible experience. The members were shallow, inconsiderate, and mean. The adviser was just as clicky and childish. The members were only interested in finding ways to drink or have sex at events.*

From an Ohio female: *I don't know if it was my community, the directors, or what, but I never felt more goyish than in my years in BBYO. It was all schmaltzy and fake and garbage.*

From a Florida woman: *It made me realize I did not want to be in a sorority, because I had already experienced some of the shallowness in BBYO.*

As noted in the high school and college-age survey results, this word cloud demonstrates the frequency that different words were mentioned in the open-ended responses of young adult alumni.



that they do so somewhat. All of these views are positively associated with reported amount and length of prior BBYO involvement.

The more direct assessments of impact (the bolded percentages in the table) indicate that, depending on the item, between one-fifth and over one-third of young adult alumni believe very much that BBYO has increased/improved their appreciation or understanding of Jewish life. When those who agree somewhat are added to these percentages, the figures grow to between 72% and 84%. Again all three measures are associated with BBYO involvement. The data in Table D-4 provide consistent evidence of impact.

**Table D-4**  
**Indicators of Impact on Understanding/Appreciation Being Jewish**  
 ('+' denotes a positive association; '0' denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
When faced with an important life decision, I look to Judaism for guidance. (strongly agree)	10	+	+
The fact that I am Jewish has a lot to do with how I see myself. (strongly agree)	52	+	+
I have a clear sense of what it means to be Jewish. (strongly agree)	48	+	+
Jewish tradition has an impact on the decisions that I make. (strongly agree)	29	+	+
How important is being Jewish in your life? (very important)	68	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your appreciation of the problems and issues facing Jews in the U.S. and worldwide. (very much)	<b>20</b>	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your appreciation of how “living Jewishly” can provide a richer, more fulfilling life? (yes-very much)	<b>29</b>	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your understanding of what it means to be Jewish? (yes-very much)	<b>37</b>	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

## 4.2 Jewish Pride

*I grew up in a region of the country where Jewish people were definitely the minority. When I was participating in BBYO, I didn't feel like an "other." It gave me a sense of community and pride. (Illinois female)*

Approximately two of every five young adult alumni feels a strong sense of pride upon hearing of Jewish accomplishments and about the same proportion feels ashamed when hearing reports of negative behavior by Jews (Table D-5). Feelings of pride are related to both measures of BBYO involvement.

As revealed in the previous quotation, feelings of pride are particularly important for those who feel geographically isolated:

*It [BBYO] taught me to be proud of my heritage and to celebrate it. Sometimes it is hard to be proud of your Judaism when most of the kids around you are Christian.* (New York female)

Relatively few (17%) often wear symbols of being Jewish—a proportion that increases to about one-quarter (26%) when “fairly often” responses are combined with “very often.” Outward displays of one’s ethno-religious identity are unrelated to past BBYO involvement for these alumni.

**Table D-5**  
**Indicators of Impact on Jewish Pride**  
 (+’ denotes a positive association; ‘0’ denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
I feel especially proud when someone Jewish is publicly cited for a significant achievement. (strongly agree)	41	+	+
I feel ashamed when I hear news reports of Jews behaving illegally or unethically. (strongly agree)	40	0	0
Wear a Jewish star, chai, Jewish t-shirt, or other sign of being Jewish. (very often)	17	0	0

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**  
 \*\* Base: those answering that they do this more often since becoming involved in BBYO

### 4.3 Perpetuation of Jewish Life

*It [BBYO] made me want to be actively involved and a leader in the Jewish community.* (Maryland female)

This subsection examines young adult alumni’s attitudes and looks at relevant child-raising practices among those who have children. Nearly half (47%) feel strongly motivated to be involved in Jewish life (disagreeing strongly with the opposite position), while another 33% feel somewhat motivated to do so. Somewhat surprisingly, only 23% say that their level of Jewish activity has increased compared to when they were in high school, while almost twice that proportion (45%) say it has *decreased*. (“Jewish activity” was defined as the extent you do Jewish things and are involved in Jewish life with your family or the broader community.)

Only about one-third say that being active in the Jewish community plays a very important (34%) role in their life, but many (57%) believe that BBYO had a major impact in enhancing their interest in being active in the Jewish community—a proportion that increases to 90% when those answering “minor impact” are combined with “major impact.” Except for level of increase in Jewish activity, all of the measures are correlated with BBYO involvement.

**Table D-6**  
**Indicators of Perpetuation of Jewish Life**  
 ('+' denotes a positive association; '0' denotes no association.)

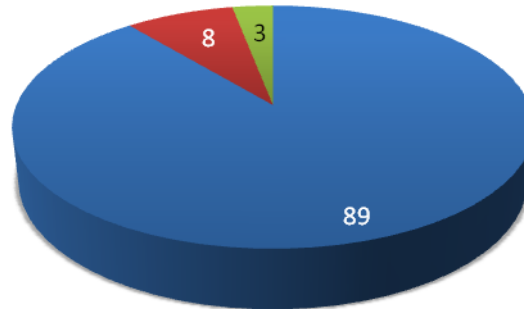
	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
I do <u>not</u> feel especially motivated to be involved in Jewish life. (strongly disagree)	47	+	+
Level of Jewish activity has increased compared to high school.	23	0	0
How important of a role does being active in the Jewish community play in your life? (very important)	34	+	+
How much impact, if any, do you feel that BBYO had on strengthening or enhancing your interest in being active in the Jewish community? (major impact)	<b>57</b>	+	+
It is <u>not</u> so important to raise any children I might have to be Jewish. (strongly disagree)	75	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

Three-quarters of young adult alumni strongly disagree that it is not so important to raise their children to be Jewish (92% strongly or somewhat disagree). This attitude too is positively associated with past BBYO participation and years of affiliation. In fact, of those with children, 89% say they are raising them Jewish, and 8% say they are raising their children “partly Jewish and partly something else” (Exhibit D-2).

**Exhibit D-2**  
**Raising Your Children Jewish? (%)**

■ Yes   ■ Partly Jewish & partly something else   ■ No



The young adult alumni sample contains 276 respondents who have children and are married or living unmarried with a partner. Of this group, 231 (84%) are married to a Jewish spouse or living with a Jewish partner, and the other 45 are married to a non-Jewish spouse or living with a non-Jewish partner. All but one of the 231 Jewish couples are raising their children as Jews; the one exception is raising his/her children partly Jewish and partly something else. Only 18 of the 45 couples in which one of the spouses/partners is Jewish (40%) are raising their children Jewish, 20 (44%) answered partly Jewish and partly something else, and seven (16%) respondent neither Jewish nor partly Jewish. Although the subsamples

are small, once the Jewish status of the spouse/partner is controlled for, prior BBYO involvement appears to have no impact on the likelihood of raising one’s children Jewish. The decision to raise one’s children as Jews is totally accounted for by the “Jewish status” of the spouse/partner.

Most young adult alumni have enrolled their children in some type of Jewish education or expect to when they are old enough (Table D-7). One-quarter of young adult alumni have all of their children enrolled in a Jewish day school or will have them enrolled when they are old enough. The same applies to 62% of the children of alumni for enrollment in Hebrew School, and to 58% of the children for Sunday School. All but one of the 279 respondents with children already has or expects to have at least some of their children enrolled in at least one the three types of Jewish schooling.

**Table D-7**  
**Jewish Education of Children of Young Adult Alumni\***  
 (The table percentages sum to 100% horizontally.)

	<u>All of my</u> <u>Children</u>	<u>Some of my</u> <u>Children</u>	<u>None of my</u> <u>Children</u>	<u>Did not answer</u>
Hebrew School	62	2	27	9
Jewish Day School	25	2	57	16
Sunday School	58	4	26	12
Private Tutoring	11	6	60	23

*\* For each type of Jewish education listed, please mark how many of your children are receiving that form of education or do you expect **will** be receiving that form of education in the future.*

#### 4.4 Connectedness to and Responsibility for Other Jews

*The importance of building a sense of community was one integral part of what I took away from Kallah. (Alumnus from Illinois)*

Eight out of every nine BBYO young adult alumni feels connected to the Jewish people, either strongly (61%) (Table D-8) or somewhat (28%). The same proportion that feels strongly connected (61%) strongly agrees that being part of the Jewish people plays a very important role in their life; another 31% answered somewhat important. Sense of responsibility to help Jews in need around the world is lower, with only about one-quarter (26%) strongly agreeing, though 55% agree with that statement somewhat. All three of these attitudes are correlated with amount and duration of BBYO participation.

*A Florida female wrote: It gave me a place to feel connected to the Jewish community after finishing Hebrew School and taught me how local Jewish communities operate.*

A sizable percentage of young adult alumni (58%) believe that their prior BBYO experience had a major impact on strengthening their interest in being part of the Jewish people—a figure which grows to 92% when those answering that it had a minor impact are

added in. The perceived impact of BBYO on having increased alumni’s feelings of responsibility to Jews worldwide is lower, just like the proportion who feel that strong sense of responsibility. Fewer than one-quarter believe BBYO has very much increased it, while 48% answered that BBYO somewhat increased it. Respondents’ assessments of the organization’s impact are positively related to amount of prior involvement and years spent in BBYO.

**Table D-8**  
**Indicators of Sense of Connectedness and Responsibility**  
 (+’ denotes a positive association; ‘0’ denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
I do <u>not</u> feel particularly connected to the Jewish people. (strongly disagree)	61	+	+
How important of a role does being a part of the Jewish people play in your life? (very important)	61	+	+
How much impact, if any, do you feel that BBYO had on strengthening or enhancing your interest in being part of the Jewish people become? (major impact)	<b>58</b>	+	+
I feel a special responsibility to help Jews in need around the world. (strongly agree)	26	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your feeling of responsibility to Jews worldwide? (yes-very much)	<b>22</b>	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

## 5. Jewish Friends

*I learned a lot about the importance and meaning of friendship with other Jews - it's just more comfortable and compatible. (Florida male)*

Having Jewish friends plays a very important role in the lives of close to half of young adult alumni (Table D-9). At the other extreme, 15% say it is not very important or not at all important. The rest answered somewhat important. Nearly two-thirds (65%), however, view BBYO as having had a major impact on strengthening their interest in having Jewish friends. Both the assessed importance of having Jewish friends and the degree of credit for this view attributed to the BBYO experience are correlated with prior amount and length of participation in the organization.

**Table D-9**  
**Jewish Friends**

(‘+’ denotes a positive association; ‘0’ denotes no association.)

	%	Invol ve	Tenure
How important of a role does having Jewish friends play in your life? (very important)	49	+	+
How much impact, if any, do you feel that BBYO had on strengthening or enhancing your interest in having Jewish friends become? (major impact)	<b>65</b>	+	+
How many of your six best friends are Jewish? (% 4 or more)	61	+	+
Of the people you consider to be your good friends, how many did you meet through BBYO? (6 or more)	<b>27</b>	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

The rated importance of having Jewish friends carries over into the lives of young adult alumni, as no less than 61% of them say that four or more of their six best friends are Jewish. In fact, three of every ten (30%) answered that all six of their six best friends are Jewish.

*I used to have a bumper sticker that said 'You can never have enough friends—Join BBYO'. I think that was one of the greatest quotes to look at each day and remind myself that some of my best & dearest friends (even today) are from BBYO. (female living in Connecticut)*

A large number of the members in this cohort met many of their Jewish friends through BBYO. More than one-quarter of them (27%) say they met six or more of their best friends through BBYO; 43% say they met four or more of their best friends through BBYO. Nevertheless, some young adult alumni (19%) no longer have any good friends that stemmed from their BBYO experience.

*[BBYO impacted me the most by] creating lasting friendships. Out of the groomsmen at my wedding 3 of 4 were in my AZA chapter. (Washington State male)*

As one might expect, the number of good friends met through BBYO is correlated with amount of prior involvement and number of years in the organization—as is the percentage of 24-35 year-old alumni’s best friends who are Jewish. The data reviewed in this subsection document the lasting significance of the BBYO experience in producing personal connections with other Jews.

*From a Virginia woman: I made tons of wonderful friends there, many of whom I am still in touch. They were kinder, more supportive friends than what I found in my high school - more like family.*

**6. Jewish Learning**

*I learned a lot about myself and my Jewish religion. (Texas female)*

Learning about Jewish history, people, culture, or sacred texts is very important to 25% of young adult alumni (Table D-10); almost three-quarters (74%) responded that it plays at least a somewhat important role in their life. The importance of Jewish learning is unrelated to BBYO participation or tenure. Nevertheless, when asked, about one-quarter of young adult alumni answered that BBYO did have a major impact in enhancing their interest in Jewish learning. Consistent with this response, approximately the same percentage indicated that BBYO has meaningfully increased their interest in continuing Jewish learning.

**Table D-10**  
**Indicators of Impact on Interest in Jewish Learning**  
 ('+' denotes a positive association; '0' denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Invol</u> <u>ve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
How important of a role does learning about Jewish history, people, culture, or sacred texts play in your life? (very important)	25	0	0
How much impact, if any, do you feel that BBYO had on strengthening or enhancing your interest in learning about Jewish history, people, culture, or sacred texts become? (major impact)	<b>24</b>	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased your interest in continuing Jewish learning? (yes-very much)	<b>23</b>	+	+

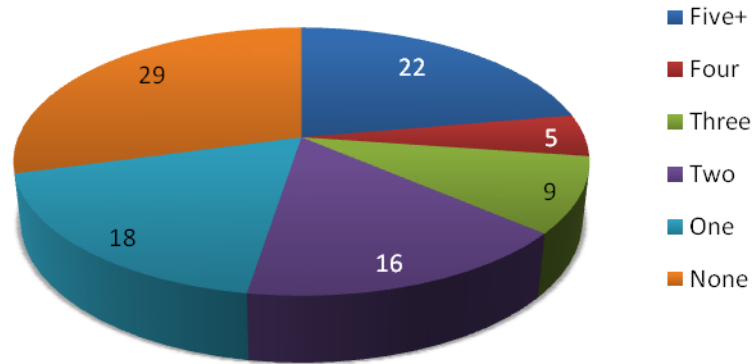
**Note: The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

Most young adult alumni (70%) report having taken at least one Jewish studies course, either in college or elsewhere, since graduating from high school. Approximately half (52%) have taken at least two, and 22% have taken five or more Jewish studies courses (Exhibit D-3). (As in the survey of 18-23 year-olds, the question specified that these courses can include a broad range of content including Torah or other sacred texts; Jewish history, culture, or ethics; contemporary Jewish society or issues; Jewish music, art or literature; also included are courses in Hebrew or about Israel.) The number of courses taken is positively related to BBYO involvement.

An alumna from Wisconsin said: *BBYO... definitely directed me to study Jewish history in college.*

The indicators reviewed here support the conclusion that BBYO has helped develop/sustain at least some level of interest in Jewish learning among most in this cohort of alumni. While most do not ascribe a high personal importance to it, about half have made Jewish study a part of their life by having taken at least several courses with Jewish content since high school.

**Exhibit D-3**  
**Number of Jewish Content Courses Taken**  
**Since Graduating from High School (%)**



*My experience in the BBYO summer programs, specifically CLTC and ESPECIALLY Kallah, truly were catalysts to my increasing Jewish learning and observance, something that I am passing on to my son and daughter. (Maryland female)*

## 7. Participation in Jewish Organizations

Among other objectives, BBYO seeks to sustain involvement in Jewish organizations by encouraging participation in programs and financial support. Young adult alumni were asked if, in the past year, if they have contributed money to, or participated in, the programs, activities, and events of three specific types of organizations— a Jewish Community Center (JCC), a local Jewish Federation, or an organization that deals with issues related to Israel—or in any other Jewish non-profit organization.

Nearly two in every five answered affirmatively that they had participated in the activities or contributed money to a JCC (38%) and a local Federation (39%), 17% said they had been involved in the past year with an Israel related organization, and 55% were involved in some other Jewish non-profit group. The linkage of involvement in these types of organizations to prior BBYO participation is inconsistent: JCC involvement is associated with both amount of BBYO participation and years of affiliation; Federation involvement is related to years of BBYO affiliation but not to amount of participation; involvement with an Israel group is unrelated to both measures of BBYO involvement; involvement with some other Jewish non-profit organization is related to both types of BBYO involvement. This analysis, which is unavoidably limited to the correlations with dosage and duration, indicates that BBYO’s influence on alumni’s involvement in Jewish organizations is mixed.

Federation participation—presumably, this means mainly financial contributing—shows a modest correlation with age, as older alumni within the young adult alumni age range of 24-35 are more likely to have answered affirmatively than those at the lower end of the age range.

Several alumni commented that BBYO impacted them the most by pointing them to Jewish organization work as a career:

*It has provided the foundation for me to make Jewish communal service my life-long career.* (Pennsylvania female)

*I felt confident in choosing a career in Jewish Communal Life and that it is a respectable career. I also learned how to work with other people in a team setting.* (Georgia female)

## 8. Israel

*BBYO took me to Israel for the first time in high school. It was the most amazing experience of my life at the time (CLTC was great too, but Israel was incredible). It tied me to the country, made me feel more connected to the Jewish people.* (Nevada female)

*My ISI trip for 6 weeks had a huge impact on my life. It laid the groundwork for working in College for AIPAC, being involved, going on other Israel trips, working for Hillel, etc.* (Georgia alumna)

Most young adult BBYO alumni (84%) have been to Israel at least once. Approximately one-third (34%) visited before or during high school (but not on a BBYO sponsored trip). Three out of five (60%) have visited since graduating from high school. Just over one-quarter (26%) did visit Israel on a BBYO sponsored trip while in high school.

Two-thirds (66%) disagree regarding not spending much time thinking about Israel, 24% disagreeing strongly with the statement (Table D-11). Amount of time spent thinking about Israel appears unrelated to prior BBYO involvement. For three-quarters of young adult alumni, Israel plays either a very important or somewhat important role in their life. This orientation is related to amount of prior BBYO participation, though weakly. About one-fifth (19%) believe that their BBYO experience has had a very meaningful impact on their knowledge and understanding of Israel, with two-thirds believing it has had some impact. One-third of young adult alumni feel that BBYO has had a major impact on enhancing their interest in connecting with Israel. Both of these responses are positively related to amount and years of participation in the organization. All in all, the evidence is moderately strong that BBYO has had an influence on the way that more than a small number of young adult alumni understand and feel about Israel.

**Table D-11**  
**Orientations Toward Israel**

(‘+’ denotes a positive association; ‘0’ denotes no association.)

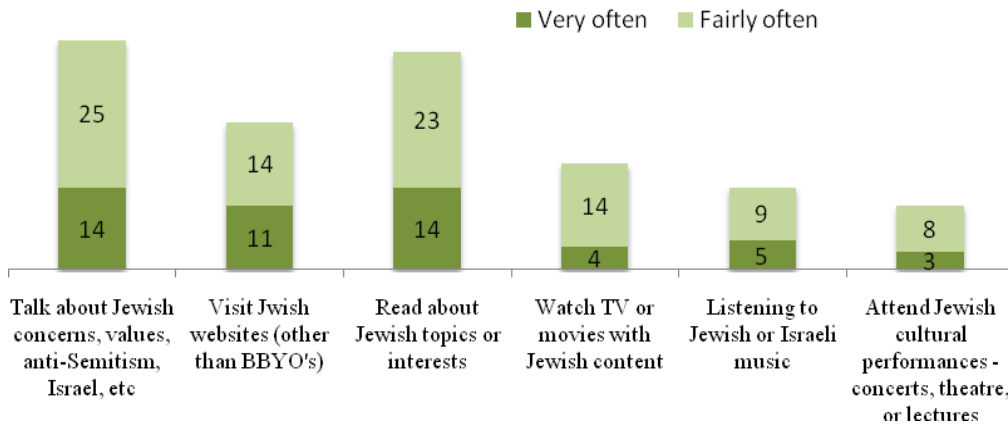
	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
I do <u>not</u> spend much time thinking about Israel. (strongly disagree)	24	0	0
How important of a role does visiting or connecting with Israel play in your life? (very important)	35	+	0
How much impact, if any, do you feel that BBYO has had on strengthening or enhancing your interest in visiting or connecting with Israel? (major impact)	<b>33</b>	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your knowledge and understanding about Israel? (yes-very much)	<b>19</b>	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

## 9. Engagement with Jewish Culture

Exhibit D-4 reveals that engagement in six Jewish cultural activities is rather modest, as was the case for college-age alumni and high schoolers. Discussions of Jewish topics takes place very often or fairly often for 39% of young adult alumni, and 37% read about Jewish topics or interests that often. Although levels of engagement in these activities are generally not impressive, as also found for younger alumni of college age (and also current BBYOers in high school), participation in all forms of cultural participation is statistically linked to prior BBYO involvement—both amount and years of affiliation—consistent with inferring some degree of impact from the BBYO experience.

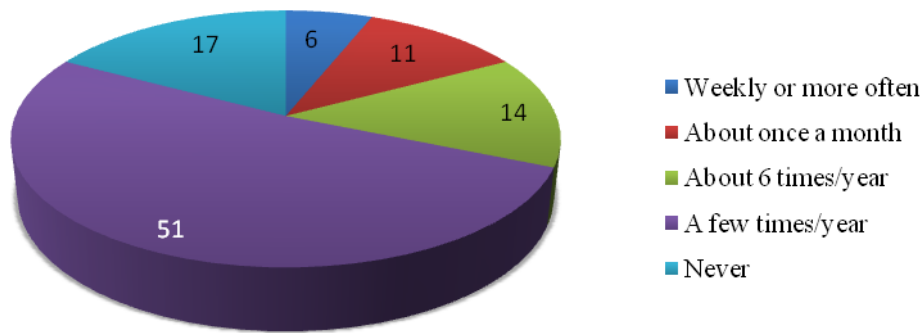
**Exhibit D-4:**  
**Engagement in Jewish Culture (%)**



## 10. Religious Practices and Holiday Celebration

Most young adult alumni are not regular religious service attenders. Only 17% attend services at a synagogue, temple, or independent *minyan* as often as once a month—about 12 times a year—on average (Exhibit D-5). About half attend a few times a year (like many other Jews, probably mostly during the High Holidays). Approximately one in six alumni (17%) never attend services.<sup>vi</sup> BBYO involvement appears to make a small positive difference in the frequency of religious service attendance.

**Exhibit D5**  
**Attendance at Religious Services (%)**



Religious observance plays a very important role in the lives of only 17% of young adult alumni (Table D-12), but it plays a very or somewhat important role for 56%. The importance of religious observance is unrelated to prior BBYO experience. Notwithstanding this finding, one-fifth of alumni feel that BBYO had a major impact on enhancing its role in their life. Responding to a similar question, somewhat fewer (13%) answered that BBYO has meaningfully increased their interest in performing Jewish rituals. Some alumni, however, do refer to BBYO’s impact in this area:

*BBYO taught me about Judaism, as I'd never been exposed to formal Jewish education. As a result, I went on to learn more, work for BBYO and eventually become an observant Jew, subsequently working for Orthodox organizations. BBYO lead me to Torah. (New Jersey female)*

*I knew nothing of my faith before [BBYO]. And I never would of been Bar Mitzvahed if it wasn't for BBYO. (Arkansas male)*

**Table D-12**  
**Religious Observance and Holiday Celebration**  
 ('+' denotes a positive association; '0' denotes no association.)

	%	Invol ve	Tenure
How important of a role does Jewish religious observance including praying play in your life? (very important)	17	0	0
How much impact, if any, do you feel that BBYO has had on strengthening or enhancing your interest in religious observance including praying? (major impact)	<b>20</b>	+	+
How important of a role does celebrating Jewish holidays play in your life? (very important)	58	+	+
How much impact, if any, do you feel that BBYO has had on strengthening or enhancing your interest in celebrating Jewish holidays? (major impact)	<b>20</b>	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your interest in prayer or performing Jewish rituals? (yes-very much)	<b>13</b>	+	+

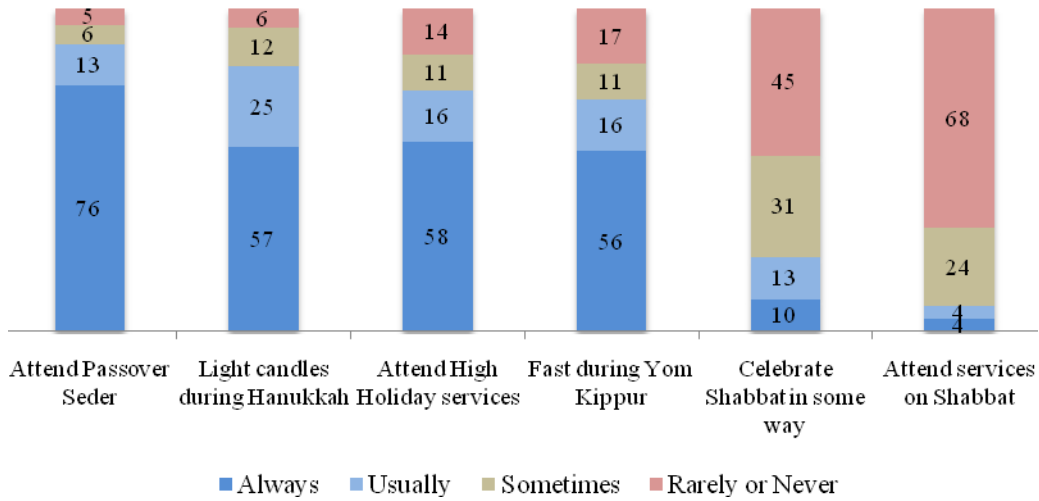
Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

As with the two younger BBYO segments, celebrating Jewish holidays is much more central to the lives of these older alumni than prayer and other religious service attendance. But the importance of holiday celebration seems for these alumni seems to pre-date their BBYO experience, as the same low proportion (20%) believes BBYO had a major impact increasing holiday celebration and feel it increases religious observance.

As a group, young adult alumni perform four of the six rituals shown in Exhibit D-6 at a fairly high level of participation.<sup>vii</sup> It is only Shabbat service attendance and other forms of Shabbat observance or celebration that garner little involvement. Not shown is the incidence of keeping Kosher, which stands at 11% among 24-35 year-old alumni. Another 28% indicated that they avoid some non-Kosher foods such as shellfish and pork.

Additional analysis reveals that all seven of these religious practices are correlated with past BBYO participation and number of years of affiliation with the organization. This pattern is consistent with the inference that the organization has exerted *some* degree of influence over alumni's religious practices.

**Exhibit D-6  
Ritual Participation**



**11. Community Service and Social Action, Philanthropy and Voluntarism**

*It has opened my eyes to community service and social action.*  
(Arizona male)

*It provided a sense of pride in Judaism and the values of repairing our world from a Jewish context.* (Oregon male)

**11.1 Community Service and Social Action**

Despite the fact that most young adult alumni 24-35 years old are busy with their career and some are beginning the process of raising a family, community service still plays a very important role for one-third of them (Table D-13). When those answering that it plays a somewhat important role are counted, the proportion grows to 80%. Slightly lower percentages respond the same way about involvement in social or political causes (26% very important role, 47% somewhat important role).

Two-fifths feel that BBYO had a major impact in strengthening/enhancing their interest in community service, and almost three in ten (29%) feel that way about their involvement in social/political causes. Finally, in response to a similar but separate question, about one-third believe that BBYO had a major impact on strengthening or enhancing their interest in social action or community service. All of these assessments of BBYO’s impact are positively correlated with amount or prior participation and number of years of affiliation with the organization.

**Table D-13**  
**Community Service and Social Action**  
 ('+' denotes a positive association; '0' denotes no association.)

	<u>%</u>	<u>Involve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
How important of a role does commitment to community service play in your life? (very important)	34	+	0
How much impact, if any, do you feel that BBYO has had on strengthening or enhancing your commitment to community service? (major impact)	<b>40</b>	+	+
How important of a role does involvement in social and political causes play in your life? (very important)	26	+	+
How much impact, if any, do you feel that BBYO has had on strengthening or enhancing your interest in social action or community service? (major impact)	<b>29</b>	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your commitment to social action or community service? (yes, very much)	<b>34</b>	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

Commented an alumnus from Connecticut: *Serving as regional Shaliach my senior year instilled in me a commitment to pursue social justice work.*

## 11.2 Volunteerism and Philanthropy

Over half of all young adult alumni have held leadership positions in Jewish organizations or in other (not specifically Jewish) organizations since graduating from high school (Exhibit D-7). (A leadership role or position was defined as leading a particular activity or event for the organization, serving as an officer of the organization, or being on the board of an organization—not including for your employer or business.) Many (39%) have performed leadership roles in both Jewish organizations and other organizations. Female and male BBYO alumni are about equally likely to have served in leadership positions. Playing a leadership role in either or both types of organizations is strongly related to amount of prior involvement in BBYO.

**Exhibit D-7  
Organizational Involvement (%)**



An Arizona woman commented:

*BBYO prepared me for holding leadership roles in college, grad school, and in my Jewish Federation.*

Almost half of young adult alumni (45%) have done volunteer work for a Jewish organization in the past 12 month—which appears to be much higher than among the 24-35 year-old Jewish population<sup>viii</sup>— and over half have done so for organizations which are not specifically Jewish (Exhibit D-7). Gender differences are again not significantly different. However, amount of prior BBYO participation *is* a differentiating factor, with those who had participated more being more likely to have volunteered in the past 12 months for Jewish and other non-profit organizations. A BBYO alumna from Illinois wrote:

*Since my time in BBYO I have volunteered countless hours to BBYO and work in a Jewish not-for-profit.*

Over seven in ten young adult alumni (71%) contributed money in the past year to charities or other non-profit organization which are not specifically Jewish, while fewer (57%) gave money to Jewish causes. The incidence of past-year contributing to Jewish organizations (but not to other organizations) also appears to be higher than average for all 24-35 year-old Jews.<sup>ix</sup> As above, there are no meaningful gender differences in the incidence of contributing, but those who participated in BBYO more when they were in high school are more likely to have contributed money. The relationship holds for both Jewish and other beneficiary organizations.

The consistency of the connection between the intensity of prior BBYO participation and more proximate organizational involvement, including serving as leaders, suggests that the

BBYO experience has been successful in inculcating norms of volunteerism and philanthropy which are later put into practice.

## 12. Leadership

*The leadership skills it provided are indescribable. It's just not possible to learn as much about yourself through any other Jewish youth group, strictly due to the fact that everything we did was youth-led. We learned from our own mistakes and triumphs. (California female)*

*And, another woman in New York wrote: [It provided] an enormous boost in my leadership skills - I completely attribute that to BBYO (regional board and Kallah-summer program). This led me to start community service groups in college and become president of a student organization in college*

The leadership behavior demonstrated by over half of young adult alumni is consistent with the finding that 72% feel that being a leader in one’s community plays either a very important or somewhat important role in their life (one-third regarding it as very important)—a view that is linked to prior BBYO involvement and tenure. Table D-14 also documents the very large proportions who believe that their BBYO involvement has:

- Strengthened their interest in being a leader in the community,
- Meaningfully improved their leadership skills, and
- Meaningfully increased their self-confidence.

These beliefs too are linked back to alumni’s BBYO experience. The survey results on leadership motivations, the previously presented data on post high school leadership experiences, and their beliefs about BBYO’s influence on developing relevant skills and dispositions lead to the conclusion that the organization has had a very dominant impact in the domain of leadership.

**Table D-14**  
**Leadership, Self-Confidence, and Getting into College**  
 (+’ denotes a positive association; ‘0’ denotes no association.)

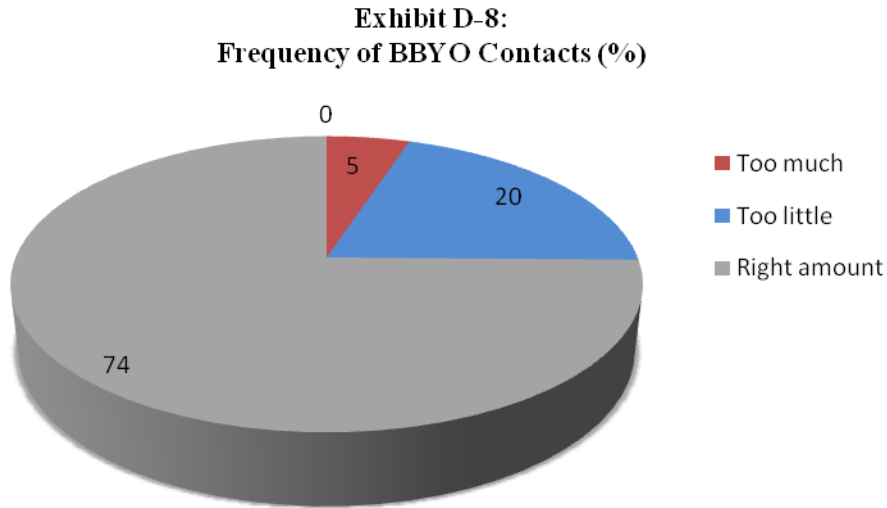
	<u>%</u>	<u>Invol</u> <u>ve</u>	<u>Tenure</u>
How important of a role does being a leader in your community play in your life? (very important)	33	+	+
How much impact, if any, do you feel BBYO has had on strengthening or enhancing your interest in being a leader in your community? (major impact)	<b>61</b>	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your leadership skills? (yes-very much)	<b>75</b>	+	+
Do you feel your involvement in BBYO has meaningfully increased or improved your self-confidence? (yes-very much)	<b>68</b>	+	+

Note: **The bolded percentages and + signs are evidence of BBYO impact.**

Wrote a Texas woman: *I think the self confidence and leadership skills it gave me impacted me the most. I held leadership positions in college that I never would have had I not been a part of BBYO.*

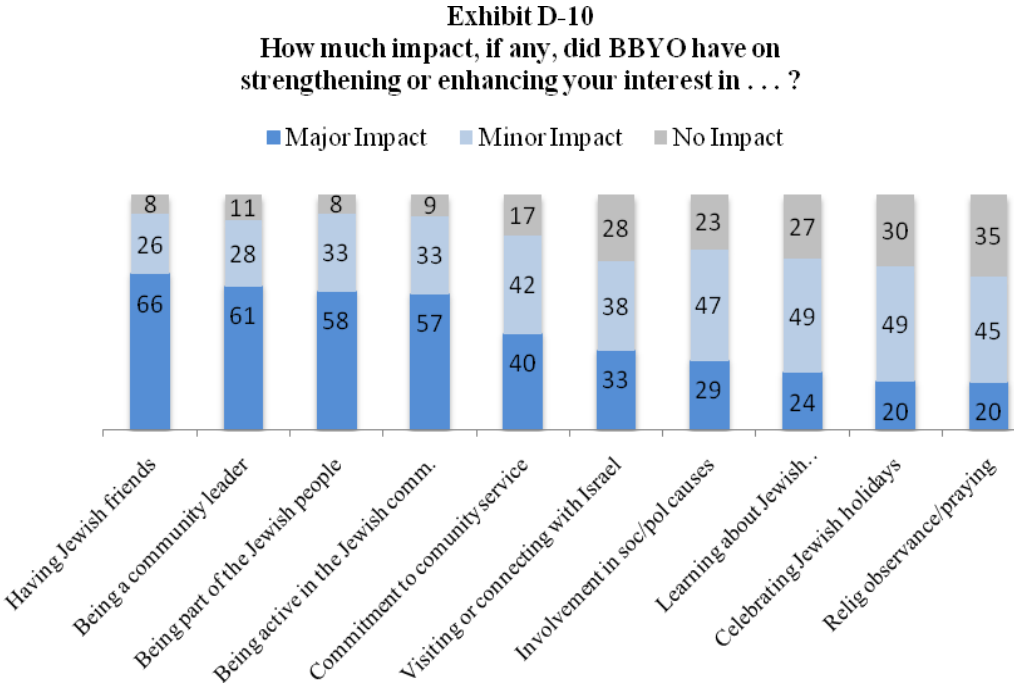
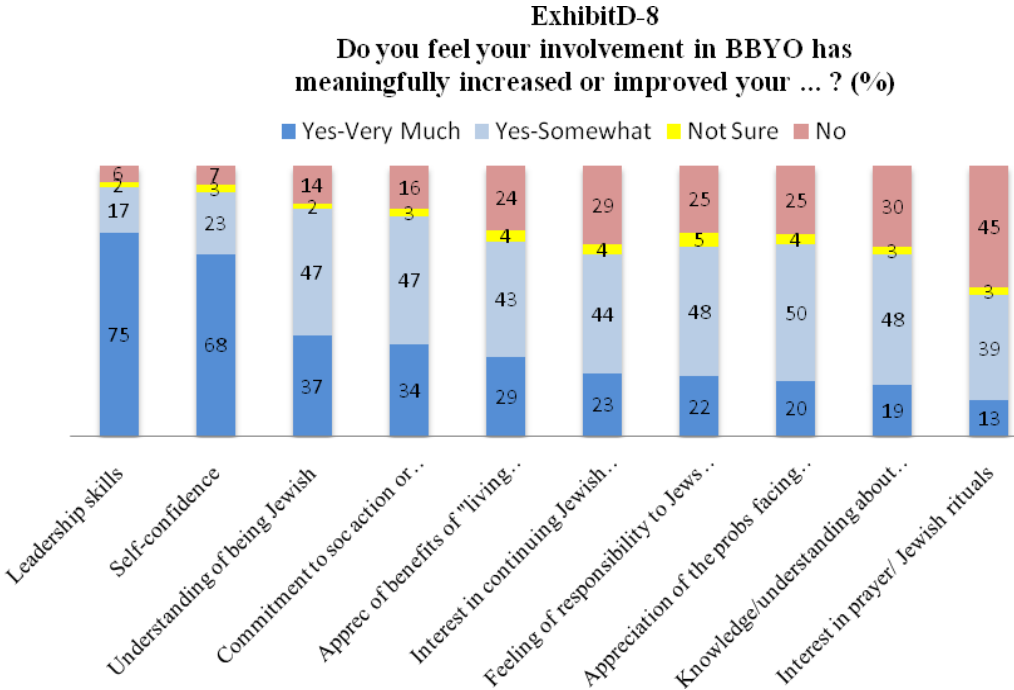
### 13. Being Contacted by BBYO

As in the survey of college-age alumni, few young adult alumni feel that they hear from BBYO too often. Most think they are contacted the right amount (Exhibit D-8).



14. Charts Summarizing the Direct Impact Measures

The last two graphs summarize young adult alumni’s assessments of the various BBYO impacts, irrespective of category. (The item labels had to be abbreviated. For the exact wordings, see the appropriate preceding table or the Young Adult Alumni survey questionnaire.)



## ENDNOTE

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<sup>i</sup> The only difference in weighting procedure compared to the two previous surveys is the use of respondent's *current* region of residence. It was believed that most of the address listings represent the state where young adult alumni now live rather than the state where the person lived when participating in BBYO while in high school.

<sup>ii</sup> It could be that (1) the older alumni have been harder for BBYO to keep track of, making their address listings incomplete or out of date and/or (2) they have responded to the survey at a lower rate because of the greater elapsed time since they were active in the organization.

<sup>iii</sup> Other respondents wrote in that they are a student, parent, homemaker, or other types of jobs.

<sup>iv</sup> Excluding those with fewer than two living parents from the base results in 93% of the respondents having in-married parents and 7% with parents who inter-married (one Jewish parent, one not Jewish).

<sup>v</sup> As in the college-age survey analysis, this severe skew in the distribution of reported BBYO involvement makes analysis of the outcome measures by level of participation less effective.

<sup>vi</sup> Other research that one of the authors conducted based on a composite of nine local Jewish population surveys between 2002 and 2007 found the proportion of 24-35 year-olds reporting never attending services to be much lower (17%) (Groeneman and Smith, op cit).

<sup>vii</sup> In the Groeneman and Smith analysis, 77% of 24-35 year-olds reported always or usually attending seders, 32% reported always or usually fasting on Yom Kippur, and 64% reported that they or someone in their household always or usually lights candles on Hanukkah.

<sup>viii</sup> Analysis based on the composite of nine local Jewish population surveys found that a sharply lower proportion of 24-35 year-olds had volunteered for a Jewish organization in the 12 months preceding the survey (less than half as many: ~17%), but the percentage that had done volunteer work for other types of non-profit organizations (~43%) was about the same as among the BBYO alumni (Groeneman and Smith, op cit).

<sup>ix</sup> Approximately 35% contributed money to a Jewish organization in the past 12 months. We label this as approximate because the question wording varied slightly across the nine surveys and the weighting is not exactly equivalent. This assessment also comes from the Groeneman and Smith data analysis referenced above.

## E. Comparison Sample Analysis

### 0. Understanding Differences with non-BBYO Alumni and Measuring BBYO Impact

While the surveys of young BBYO alumni show a very high level of appreciation for BBYO and a belief among alumni that BBYO played a big role in their lives, the powerful impact of BBYO is even more evident when comparing its young alumni to a sample of Jews who are the same age but did not participate in BBYO. This comparison reveals that the BBYO experience results in young adults who are more inclined to have Jewish friends, believe that being Jewish plays an important role in their lives, and hold leadership roles in their community. In fact, this study's findings provide BBYO with compelling evidence that it is largely succeeding within its existing network when it comes to key aspects of the organization's mission.

BBYO is clearly having a serious impact on the people who participate, but it is also very important to understand that BBYO is attracting an audience that is more involved in the Jewish world than those who are not participating in BBYO. In fact, there are several notable differences between BBYO alumni and other young Jews – BBYO participants have more years of Jewish education, their families place more emphasis on the importance of being Jewish, they are more connected to Jewish cultural activities such as attending Jewish camp, and they are less Orthodox and more Conservative than Jews their age.

This presents both a strategic consideration for BBYO (which we will address later in this analysis) and a methodological question for how we approach the data and BBYO's impact. In order to properly assess the impact, it was necessary to control for the Jewish background differences between BBYO non-BBYO participants. This enabled us to produce a comparison sample with numerous common background features, so we could more effectively isolate the attitudes and behaviors that may or may not have been impacted by BBYO participation. We controlled for these differences by weighting the comparison sample's results on Jewish background measures to the BBYO samples' results on these same measures. This weighting included Jewish denomination, parental expectations for living an "actively Jewish life," religion of one's spouse (if married), and the amount and frequency of different religious practices. (For a complete explanation of the weighting, see page 14 of this report).

This chapter of our report is divided into two main parts. First, we examine the *differences* between BBYO participants and non-participants. All data citations in this part will refer to the "unweighted sample." After reporting these differences, we will address the *impact* of BBYO, and all data citations in this part will refer to the "weighted sample."

## 1. Key Differences Between BBYO Alumni And Non- BBYO Alumni

BBYO alumni between the ages of 18 and 35 have a rather different Jewish background than most Jews of the same age. The primary differences center on religious denomination, level of involvement in Jewish community institutions, and the role that being Jewish played in their own family when they were growing up.

### 1.1 Denomination and Identity

Nearly 3-in-4 young BBYO alumni identify themselves as either Conservative (39%) or Reform (32%), which is a sharp contrast from non-BBYO alumni who are much less Conservative and considerably more Orthodox and not affiliated with any denomination.

	<b>BBYO</b>	<b>Comparison (unweighted)</b>
Orthodox	3	16
Conservative	39	23
Reform	32	29
Reconstructionist	3	2
Unaffiliated/Just Jewish	18	28
Other	5	3

These differences by denomination produce some interesting results on other measures of Jewish identity as young BBYO alumni are less religious than their peers, but they are also more connected to many Jewish traditions and activities. For example, young BBYO alumni attend religious services less frequently than young non-BBYO alumni, and 47% of young alumni fit the stereotypical “high holiday only” level of religious observance, reporting that they only attend services a few times a year. But these same BBYO alumni went to Jewish camp in much greater numbers (68% among alumni compared to 43% among non-alumni) and they nearly all had a Bar or Bat Mitzvah (93% compared to 68% among their non-BBYO alumni counterparts).

**Table E-2**  
**Jewish Background Characteristics of the Non-Alumni Sample (%)**

		<b>BBYO</b>	<b>Comparison (unweighted)</b>
Had a Bar/Bat-Mitzvah:	Yes:	93	68
	No:	7	32
Attend services at synagogue/temple:	Almost every week or more:	9	15
	About once a month:	13	14
	About 6 times a year:	16	11
	A few times a year:	47	37
	Never:	14	23
Jewish camp experience:	Attended as a camper:	37	23
	Worked on staff:	5	6
	Both:	26	14
	Neither:	32	57

Looking at other areas of Jewish observance, we see a similar pattern. BBYO alumni participate more than non-alumni when it comes to activities which can be characterized as having family or cultural connotations, such as attending a Passover seder or lighting Hannukah candles. However, non-BBYO alumni have higher participation levels when it comes to attending services or celebrating Shabbat, which can be seen as a greater religious commitment. The table below illustrates the many differences between these two audiences and the interesting breakdown along religious and cultural lines.

**Table E-3  
Holiday Observance and Practice (%)**

		<b>BBYO</b>	<b>Comparison (unweighted)</b>
Attend a Seder during Passover:	Always/Usually:	90	67
	Sometimes:	5	15
	Rarely/Never:	5	17
Light candles during Hanukkah:	Always/Usually:	84	75
	Sometimes:	9	15
	Rarely/Never:	5	9
Attend services during the High Holidays:	Always/Usually:	78	54
	Sometimes:	10	20
	Rarely/Never:	12	26
Fast during Yom Kippur:	Always/Usually:	74	54
	Sometimes:	10	17
	Rarely/Never:	16	29
Do anything special to observe or celebrate the Sabbath:	Always/Usually:	25	39
	Sometimes:	33	24
	Rarely/Never:	42	37
Attend services on Shabbat:	Always/Usually:	10	27
	Sometimes:	26	25
	Rarely/Never:	64	49

## 1.2 Family

The tendency among young BBYO alumni to be more connected to the Jewish community and cultural world is reflective of the kinds of families that participate in BBYO. In nearly all BBYO families, both parents are Jewish (95% have a Jewish mother and 90% have a Jewish father compared to 84% of non-BBYO alumni who have a Jewish mother and 74% who have a Jewish father), and these parents place a much greater emphasis on Jewish identity than the non-BBYO alumni parents.

On a variety of measures, young BBYO alumni reported that their parents instilled a strong sense of identity in them, raising their kids to be proud of being Jewish (82%) and making their kids feel that their parents would be very disappointed if they married someone unwilling to raise our children Jewish (55%). This is considerably higher than how non-BBYO alumni describe their parents' views (56% say they were raised to be proud of being Jewish and 30% say their parents would be disappointed if they married someone unwilling to raise their kids Jewish.)

**Table E-4**  
**Statements about Parents (%)**

		<b>BBYO</b>	<b>Comparison (unweighted)</b>
My parents raised me to be proud of being Jewish	Very much applies to parents	82	56
	Very much /Somewhat applies to parents	98	85
My parents would be disappointed if I married someone unwilling to raise our children Jewish	Very much applies to parents	55	30
	Very much /Somewhat applies to parents	82	63
My parents are involved in the Jewish community	Very much applies to parents	38	34
	Very much /Somewhat applies to parents	74	65
My parents expect me to live an actively Jewish life	Very much applies to parents	36	32
	Very much /Somewhat applies to parents	76	61

### 1.3 Jewish Education

Related to the family emphasis on Jewish identity, BBYO alumni have spent much more time invested in Jewish education than the overall population of Jewish young adults. This study used a very broad definition of Jewish education which included Jewish day school, Hebrew school, Sunday school, and Yeshiva as examples for the respondent to consider. The differences between the BBYO world and the rest of the Jewish world are remarkable – 76% of BBYO alumni spent 6-8 years in Jewish education compared to 35% of the non-BBYO alumni, and 5 times as many non-BBYO alumni (29%) as BBYO alumni (6%) had at most 1 year of Jewish education.

**Table E-5**  
**Differences in Jewish Education (%)**

	<b>BBYO</b>	<b>Comparison (unweighted)</b>
6-8 years:	76	35
2-5 years:	18	36
1 year or less:	6	29

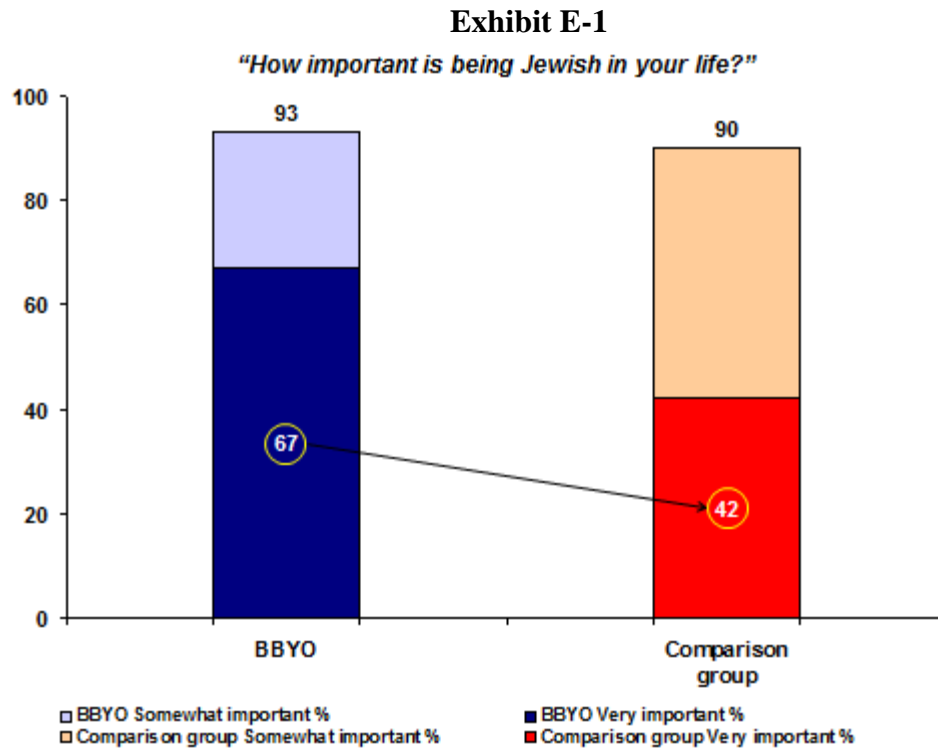
## 2. The BBYO Impact

This study provides compelling evidence that BBYO is having an impressive impact in four specific areas: 1) Jewish identity, 2) lasting friendships with other Jews, 3) leadership and service, and 4) raising Jewish families. Clearly, many aspects of these four areas are related – and even reinforce each other – but we broke out these areas because they speak to specific priorities of the organization and the data show important distinctions in the degree to which BBYO’s impact is felt.

## 2.1 Jewish Identity

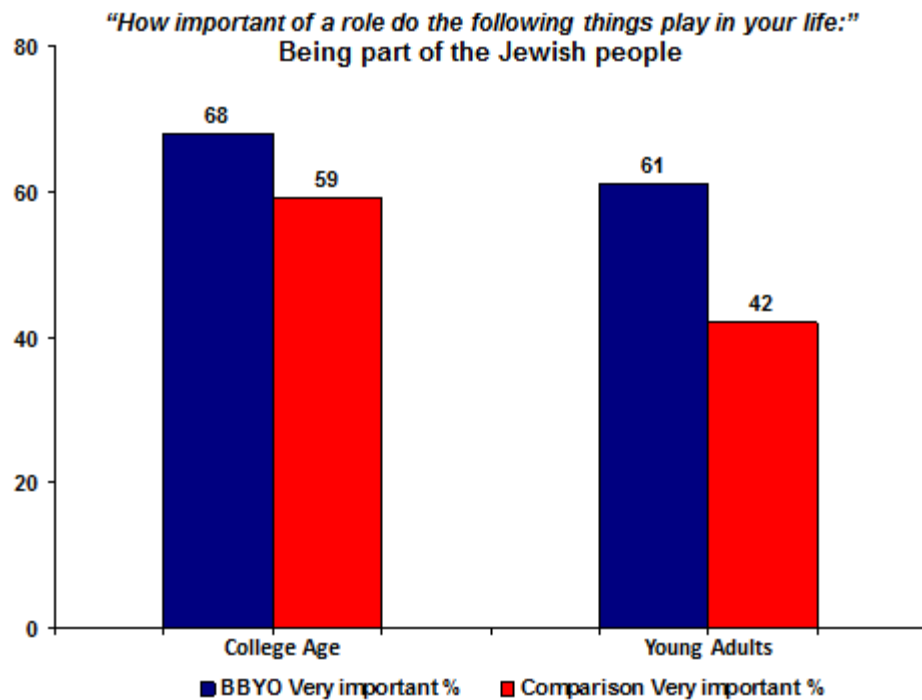
Perhaps the most important finding in this study is the clear impact that BBYO has on how important a Jewish young adult feels about being Jewish. Both BBYO alumni and other Jewish young adults in our comparison overwhelmingly say that being Jewish is an important component in their lives. Our surveys of BBYO college students and young adults out of school show that 93% believe being Jewish is very or somewhat important to them in their lives. Similarly, in our comparison study, 90% of young adults agree.

But the difference between BBYO alumni and other Jewish young adults is drawn when looking at how many say being Jewish plays a *very important* role in their life – a striking 67% among BBYO alumni, compared to 42% of non-BBYO alumni. Clearly, it is easy for most Jews to say that being Jewish is important for them – and they do say this – but the stronger and more relevant measure is the intensity of their Jewish identity. This is where BBYO is making its mark.



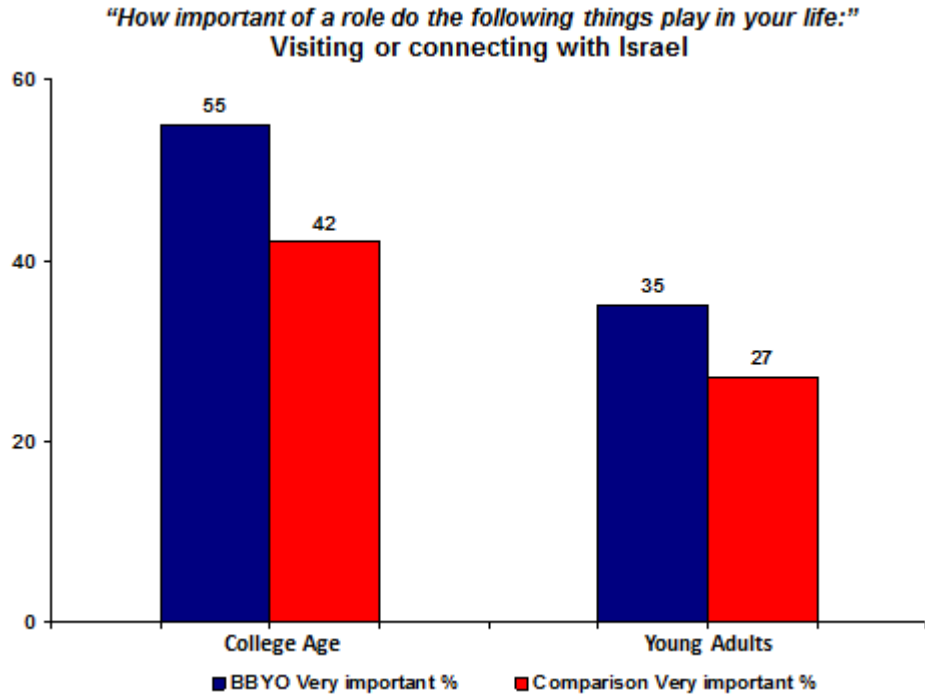
In addition to the positive impact that BBYO has on Jewish identity, we also see evidence that the BBYO experience results in people having a stronger connection with the Jewish people than among those who do not participate in BBYO. This is particularly noticeable among Jewish young adults after their college years, as 61% of BBYO alumni between 24 and 35 years say that being part of the Jewish people plays a very important role in their lives (compared to 42% of non-BBYO participants). This difference with young adults is much larger than the difference among Jews between 18 and 23 years, and it suggests that BBYO provides “stickiness” on this measure. That is, both the BBYO sample and comparison sample showed a decline in connectedness to the Jewish people from the college years to post-college years, but the drop among BBYO alumni (68 to 61%) was significantly less than the drop among non-BBYO alumni (59 to 42%).

**Exhibit E-2**



The data do not suggest stickiness on the issue of connecting with Israel. When asked whether visiting or connecting with Israel plays a very important role in their lives, a 13-point gap (55 to 42%) between college age BBYO alumni and college age non-BBYO alumni slightly shrinks to an 8-point gap (35 to 27%) among young adult alumni and non-alumni. There may be many outside factors contributing to this phenomenon and we should not draw firm conclusions from this data point, but it does bear mentioning when discussing young American Jews’ connection to the Jewish people.

**Exhibit E-3**



Finally, there is one more measure on Jewish identity and community worth mentioning. While one of the higher profile Jewish community organizations for college students is Hillel, it is very notable that college age BBYO alumni participate in Hillel activities at a much higher rate (63%) than non-BBYO alumni (42% in the weighted sample; 36% in the unweighted sample). This is not an exact comparison because the questions were asked slightly differently in the BBYO and comparison surveys, but the wording is comparable and it underscores the larger point that is evident throughout the data – BBYO alumni have a strong Jewish identity and they are much more connected to the Jewish world than non-BBYO alumni.

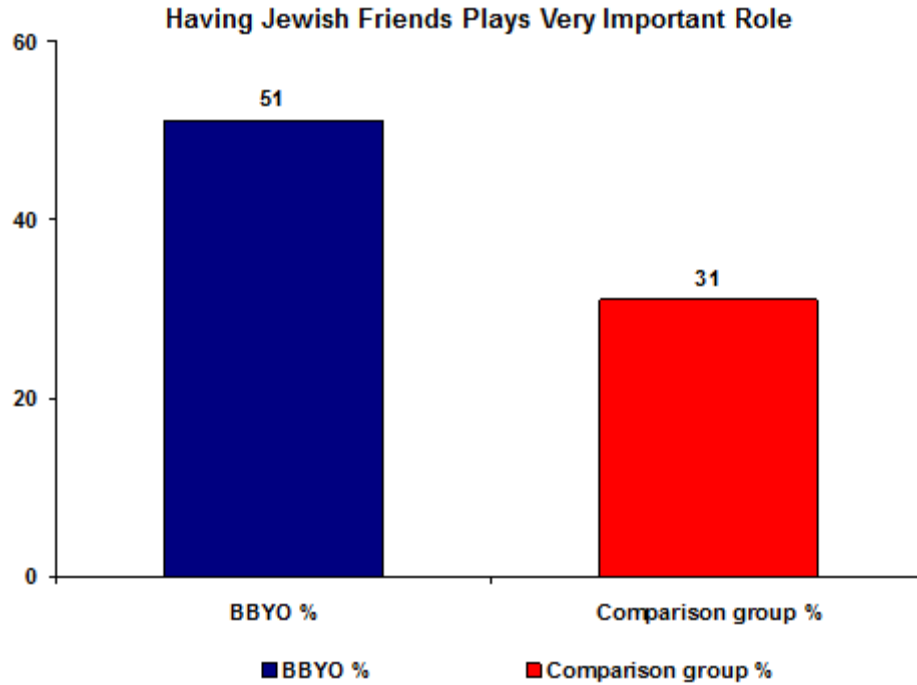
**2.2 Jewish Friendships**

One of the most striking ways in which BBYO makes an impact on its participants is their friendships. As noted in earlier chapters, nearly all young BBYO alumni (91%) say that the organization strengthened their interest in having Jewish friends, and 66% of young alumni feel that BBYO had a major impact on this interest. The consequence of this dynamic becomes crystal clear when we asked people how many of their 6 closest friends are Jewish and how important it is for them to have Jewish friends and. On both these measures, the results are extraordinary. For 61% of BBYO alumni, at least 4 of their closest 6 friends are Jewish, compared to just 23% of non-BBYO alumni. And perhaps even more important, 4% of BBYO alumni say that none of their 6 closest friends are Jewish, whereas 20% of non-BBYO alumni say that none of their 6 closest friends are Jewish.

	<b>BBYO</b>	<b>Comparison (weighted)</b>
6 friends:	28	5
5 friends:	16	7
4 friends:	17	11
3 friends:	14	19
2 friends:	12	25
1 friends:	8	14
0 friends:	4	20
4 or more:	61	23

This remarkable result is consistent with the finding that 51% of BBYO alumni believe that having Jewish friends plays a very important role in their lives, compared to just 31% of non-BBYO alumni.

**Exhibit E-4**



### 2.3 Leadership and Service

As noted in prior chapters of this report, nearly all BBYO alumni say their BBYO participation in high school meaningfully increased their self-confidence and leadership skills, with more than two-thirds reporting that BBYO helped them “very much” to improve these

aspects of their life. In the comparison data, we see the empirical evidence of this impact as BBYO young alumni place greater importance than their peers on leadership and service.

When asked how important a role “being a leader in my community” plays in their lives, 79% of young BBYO alumni say it is important. This is 20 points higher than the 59% of young non-BBYO alumni who believe being a leader is important for them. These trends carry over to volunteering and a commitment to community service. Interestingly, this gap between BBYO alumni and non-alumni is isolated to leadership and service, and it does not apply to whether they are involved in social or political causes

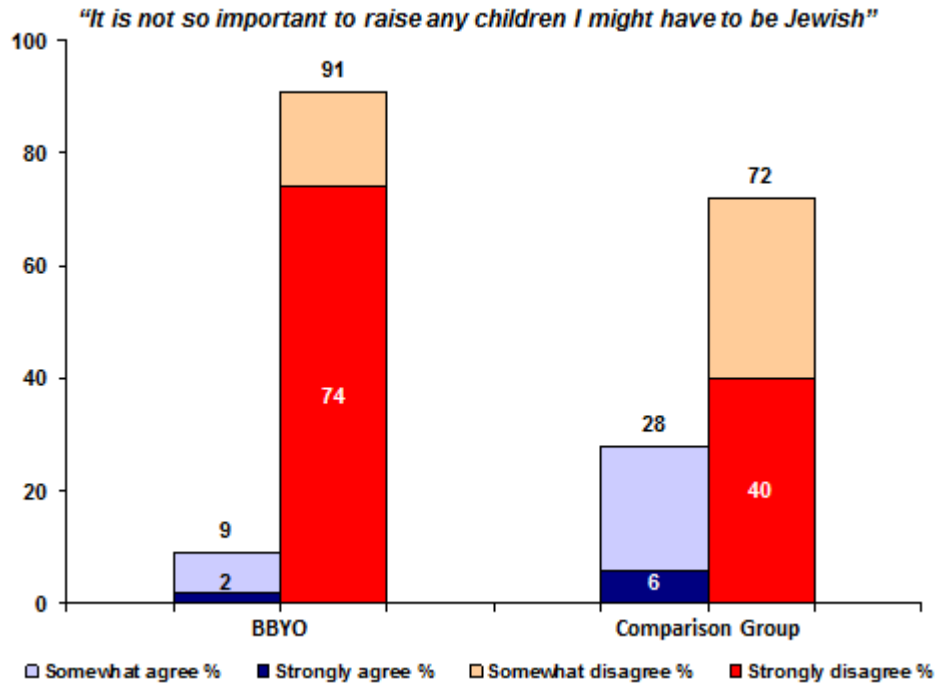
**Table E-7**  
**Importance of Leadership and Service – (% very/somewhat important)**

	<b>BBYO</b>	<b>Comparison (weighted)</b>
Volunteering / Commitment to community service:	84	72
Being a leader in my community:	79	59
Involvement in social or political causes:	76	68

## 2.4 Raising Jewish Families

With Jewish continuity at the center of American Jewish organizational priorities, it is particularly noteworthy that one of BBYO’s biggest impacts is on the greater importance that BBYO young alumni place on raising Jewish families. Only 9% of BBYO young alumni agree with the statement that, “it is not so important to raise any children I might have to be Jewish.” By contrast, three times as many Jews (28%) in our comparison sample feel this way.

**Exhibit E-5**



In practice, BBYO young alumni who have become parents are raising their children Jewish at a higher rate than non-BBYO alumni (89 to 77%), though this disparity evens out if we include families that are raising their kids partly Jewish and partly something else.

**Table E-8**  
**Raising Children Jewish (% , asked only among parents)**

	BBYO	Comparison (weighted)
Jewish:	89	77
Partly Jewish and partly something else:	8	20
Neither Jewish nor partly Jewish:	3	2

More compelling evidence for the impact of BBYO on whether a family raises its kids Jewish centers on whether their kids are currently or will become exposed to various forms of Jewish education. When it comes to Hebrew school and Sunday school, young BBYO alumni with kids are committed to this education in much higher numbers than young non-BBYO alumni (62% to 29% for Hebrew school and 58% to 35% for Sunday school).

This pattern does not hold when looking at Jewish day school and private tutoring, as the differences between alumni and non-alumni are insignificant (25% to 19% for Jewish day school and 11% to 14% for private tutoring). This result may be linked to the dynamic reported earlier – BBYO alumni appear to be more connected to the Jewish community than their peers, but BBYO alumni are less religious. We cite these figures on education with a note

of caution because while some of this reporting is current participation, some of it is expected participation.

**Table E-9**  
**Current or Expected Participation in Different Forms of Jewish Education (% , asked only among parents)**

	BBYO	Comparison (weighted)
Hebrew School:	62	29
Sunday School:	58	35
Jewish Day School:	25	19
Private Tutoring:	11	14

### 3. Limits OF BBYO’S Influence

Despite the clear impact that BBYO has on people who participate in its programs, the data also provide evidence of areas where BBYO participation has little or no impact. Most of these areas center on cultural activities and actions. For example, when looking at how often Jewish young people engage in activities like reading about Jewish topics and attending Jewish cultural performances, we see relatively low incidence among BBYO participants, which is not really out of line with the numbers we see in our controlled comparison sample of other Jewish young people. The rate at which BBYO alumni and non-participants visit Jewish websites and talk about Jewish concerns is nearly identical. The same holds true for visiting Jewish organization websites and discussing Israel or Jewish values.

The only activity that BBYO alumni engage in beyond their counterparts is wearing a Jewish star or other Jewish sign. It is important to note that this is only true for BBYO college students and does not extend to young adults. But this is perhaps not surprising given that wearing a star or other signs is much more an expression of Jewish identity or pride rather than participation in cultural activities.

**Table E-10**  
**Engagement in Activities – (% very or fairly often)**

	College students		Young adults	
	BBYO	Comparison (weighted)	BBYO	Comparison (weighted)
Visit Jewish organization websites:	24	24	25	24
Read about Jewish topics or interests in books/magazines/newspapers:	35	38	37	32
Attend Jewish cultural performances such as concerts, theatre, or lectures:	16	22	10	19
Talk about Jewish concerns, values, anti-Semitism, Israel or related topics:	47	41	39	35
Wear a Jewish star, chai, Jewish t-shirt, or other sign that you are Jewish:	54	41	26	28

Another area where BBYO does not have impact is religiosity, specifically synagogue attendance. As noted earlier, BBYO alumni do not attend services as frequently as non-BBYO alumni. This is driven by the lower number of Orthodox Jews who participate in BBYO, as well as the fact that BBYO’s Conservative Jews attend formal services less often than Conservative Jews who are not BBYO alumni. While BBYO draws people who are generally less religious, its programming appears to do little in this area. Even after weighting the non-BBYO alumni data to match BBYO’s denominations and Jewish involvement, the non-BBYO respondents still exhibit slightly higher attendance rates than BBYO alumni.

**Table E-11**  
**How often, if at all, do you attend services at a synagogue/temple or with an independent minyan? (%)**

	BBYO	Comparison (weighted)
Almost every week or more often:	9	13
About once a month:	13	16
About 6 times a year:	16	17
A few times a year:	47	38
Never:	14	16

It is clear from the data – both within the BBYO surveys and the comparison with the non-BBYO participants – that BBYO’s programming focuses on friendship, leadership, and Jewish identity, and it is not focused on the more religious aspects of the Jewish experience. Based on participants’ background and interests, this focus appears to be what people are seeking when the sign up for BBYO.

## F. Concluding Thoughts and Strategic Considerations

As is evident throughout the data analysis, there is a great deal of positive news for BBYO. Participants are very pleased with their BBYO experience, and the organization has executed programming that is having the desired impact on priorities such as Jewish friendships, leadership, and Jewish identity. BBYO is largely achieving its top goals with the people it currently reaches.

The large increase in the number of BBYO participants over the past 10 years – more than doubling since 2001 – is also impressive and points to important progress in the organization’s effort to reach more teens and provide more meaningful Jewish experiences. However, as noted in the analysis, BBYO currently reaches an audience that tends to be more connected to the Jewish world and that places a higher priority on their own Jewish identity prior to their BBYO experience.

As BBYO considers the strategic direction of the organization, these findings raise key questions to address:

- Should BBYO seek greater impact in areas beyond friendship, leadership, and Jewish identity or does the organization feel it is achieving the right balance that is revealed in the data?
- How does BBYO stay ahead of the curve and maintain its effectiveness?
- As BBYO continues efforts to reach more teens and increase the number of people who participate in BBYO activities, how much focus should be paid to the “lower hanging fruit” that is consistent with its existing audience, and how much should be invested in the harder-to-reach audience of Jewish teens who are less involved in the Jewish world?

### 1. Addressing Key Questions

The *first question* presented above is primarily an internal issue can only really be answered by the organization as it defines its own mission and objectives. The data do suggest that BBYO has room to grow in certain areas which are consistent with the other priorities where the organization is doing well. Specifically, enhancing BBYO’s programs on volunteerism and social activism may be an area worth exploring. Other work that we have conducted has underscored the importance of helping young Jews connect to service through a Jewish lens, and this may be an area where BBYO can play a key role since it has positioned itself at the intersection of leadership, social interaction, and Jewish identity.

Other areas where BBYO’s impact is not as strong initially appear to be harder to influence due to various factors. This observation seems most applicable to the issue of religious observance. Although BBYO participants and alumni actively observe major Jewish holidays, they are generally not very religiously observant, and their BBYO experience does

not result in greater religious observance. This dynamic does not adversely affect their own Jewish identity or desire to raise Jewish families, and it would seem that this is not necessarily an area for BBYO to emphasize. Moreover, this does not serve as an entry point for the less engaged Jews that are underrepresented in BBYO. It is worth noting that Orthodox Jews are also underrepresented in BBYO, and religious programming would potentially be an important way to make BBYO more attractive to them. Again, these are all considerations that are ultimately decided by the objectives that the organization prioritizes.

Another area where BBYO impact is less apparent and may be hindered by other factors is the issue of Israel. This is complicated by the ambivalence among young Jews toward existing debates over Israeli government policy. Even among BBYO alumni, many express a lack of confidence in discussing the situation in Israel – including half of college aged BBYO alumni. There may be a variety of factors contributing to this dynamic, but BBYO can help its participants navigate this terrain by shaping its programming in a manner that helps Jewish teens become more acquainted with and connected to the Jewish State as part of building their own Jewish identity.

The *second question* – how does BBYO maintain its effectiveness – is also best answered by the internal team that has witnessed first hand which programs and tactics are received the best by participants. The study findings do shed some light on the effectiveness of different BBYO programs, though the evaluation is provisional because of the many other factors that may be affecting the overall impact.

With the exception of sports programs, all the programs exhibit associations with some of the different impact measures examined in the survey. After controlling for total BBYO involvement and strength of Jewish background, the Israel Advocacy Program is the most effective of the programs evaluated, and it is followed by J-Serve, International Kallah, and Teen Connection. Perhaps, the most important finding in this evaluation is that the programs generally have an impact in the areas where they are designed. For example, Local Leadership Training shows a positive impact on being a school or community leader, while J-Serve impacts whether someone feels a responsibility to do community service.

Because the study did not have the opportunity to do an extensive examination of individual programs and isolate them to more fully determine their impact, staying ahead of the curve to maintain BBYO's effectiveness will be most effectively assessed by the people who are personally witnessing BBYO's programming. But they should approach this from the starting perspective that the programs are generally working well.

The *third question* is probably the biggest strategic question for BBYO to confront. That is, should BBYO be focused on growing its numbers by reaching out to Jews who are connected to the Jewish community and are more likely to participate, or should the focus be more directed toward Jews who are disconnected from the Jewish community but constitute the audience which is arguably the most in need of BBYO exposure.

This may turn out to be a false choice if resources allow for sufficient efforts to be made in reaching out to both audiences. Regardless of which audience BBYO chooses to



*“I had a lot of friends growing up who participated in it, talked about it, and liked it very much.”*

*“I am an educator that works in the middle school setting I find that students who are involved in organizations that send positive messages to kids and get them involved in their community do better in all areas of their lives I especially appreciated their recent anti-bullying campaign.”*

*“I just feel that BBYO does a lot of good for the Jewish communities.”*

*“Provides a place for Jewish kids to socialize and learn with other Jewish kids.”*

*“I’ve had friends involved though I never was They help keep Jewish kids actively Jewish.”*

A consistent theme that appears in these responses is that people heard about BBYO from friends who had participated in the organization. This suggests the importance of BBYO alumni and families to serve as ambassadors of the organization and help promote it to prospective families as BBYO seeks to reach new people.

Unlike the positive comments expressed by non-BBYO alumni, the negative comments that were conveyed by the small number of non-alumni who had unfavorable opinions of BBYO lacked a common theme and appeared to be isolated to an individual’s experience of impression. This provides evidence that BBYO’s barriers to reaching new people are not rooted in a bad image or negative feelings toward the organization.

## **2. Strategic Considerations**

Although the study was not designed to develop a strategy for reaching new participants and engaging Jews who are less involved with the Jewish world, we can draw notable insights based on the participants’ responses about *why* they like BBYO and the responses among non-BBYO alumni who provided their general impressions of BBYO. These insights are also informed by learning in our research and work with other Jewish organizations which are grappling with how to reach new audiences.

The unique circumstances facing young American Jews – such as the unprecedented diversity of their generation and their connection to multiple communities in ways that are much deeper than older generations – present difficult challenges for the organized Jewish community as it seeks to strengthen Jewish identity. Taking this dynamic into account, three specific strategic considerations emerge from the data analysis.

First, BBYO needs to convey inclusiveness. Participants often cited BBYO’s inclusiveness and the sense that they could be themselves as real positive aspect of their BBYO experience. This is an essential ingredient in communicating to prospective BBYOers who are clearly looking for a Jewish experience that is welcoming of all people, regardless of their

denomination or “Jewishness.” It will also help differentiate BBYO from other Jewish youth organizations which are denominationally homogeneous.

Second, BBYO should consider reaching into geographic areas with lower Jewish density. While this likely consists of people who would tend to be less engaged with the Jewish community, several BBYO participants and alumni commented that BBYO provided them with a valued Jewish community because they grew up in areas where there were few Jews. This clearly warrants more investigation, but the point they are making should be well-taken. That is, Jews who do not live near other Jews are seeking community and want to find Jewish friends and do enjoyable activities with them. There may be practical challenges in establishing AZA/BBG chapters in lower density areas, but this effort would enable BBYO to reach markets with fewer options and fill a clear vacuum.

Third, BBYO ought to have confidence in its programs, which are not in need of a major overhaul. Certainly, it is important to update programs and appropriately respond to participants’ feedback. But as changes are considered, it is important to keep in mind that the overall BBYO experience is producing the desired outcomes, and there are associations between specific programs and these outcomes.

### **3. Final Note**

Enrollment shows that participation in BBYO has increased over the last ten years, and the study shows that BBYO is having impact. The questions facing the organization center on how to dramatically increase growth and who BBYO wants to reach. These raise questions about communications strategy and message which were not addressed in the study. But we do know that – through its quality programs and a proud alumni network – BBYO starts from a position of strength.