


# Understanding the Behaviors, Needs, and Interests of the Southern Arizona Jewish Community

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July 22, 2020



# Outline

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- 1 What Was True When We Began
  - 2 How We Designed the Process
  - 3 Findings
  - 4 Opportunities and Recommendations
  - 5 What's Next



What Was True  
When We Began...

## Trends & Issues

### Realities at the **National** Level

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- Legacy organizations shrinking
- Burgeoning innovative engagement sector
- Talk of mergers to respond to economic realities
- Shrinking synagogues and a general move away from affiliation and membership
- Jewish day school education is difficult to sustain financially



## Trends & Issues

### Realities at the **Local Level**

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- Synagogue membership is down and maintaining aging buildings is prohibitive
- Synagogue leadership will be turning over in the next few years
- Donor base is aging and eager for next generation to step up
- Dearth of collaboration and strategic synergetic efforts in development
- Some populations are feeling disenfranchised and young people move away

# Questions Animating the Study

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What Jewish **communal assets and activities** are most appreciated and by whom?



What are the various ways in which people want to **participate in Jewish life**?



How do various **sub-populations** of the community differ in their needs and interests?



What are the **barriers** to participation?

# Ideas Animating the Consultancy

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To develop a road map that truly reflects the needs and realities of **as inclusive as possible** a group of Southern Arizona Jews, who need to be heard from and validate the approaches taken.



To orient around **change**—in the form of consolidation, mergers, or reimagining—is likely, and therefore **communal leaders**, both lay and professional, will be **critical thought partners**.



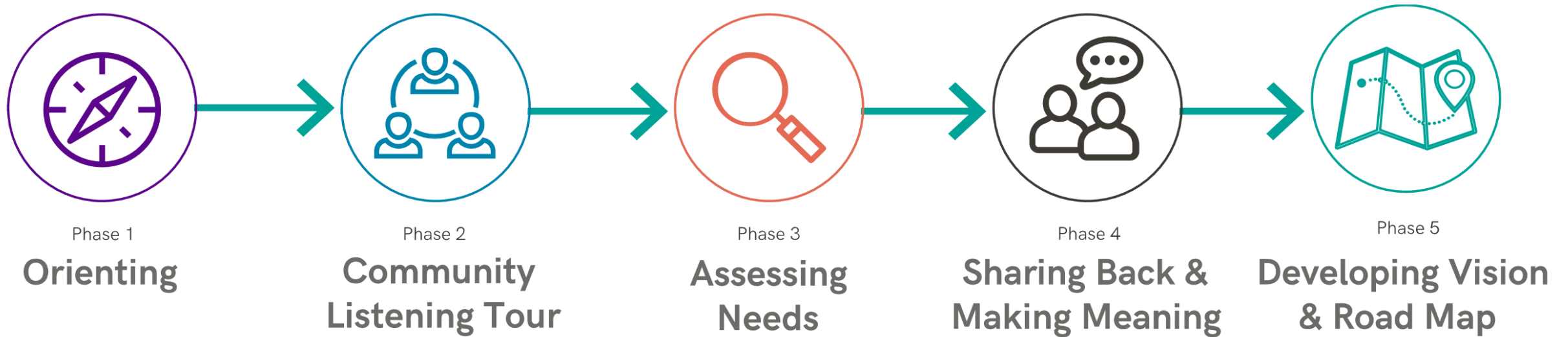
Moving forward with a **single CEO** for both the Federation and the Foundation creates opportunity for new **synergies**, **collaboration**, **efficiency**, and **coordination**.



# How We Designed The Process



# The Overall Design





# Who Did We Hear From?

## Stakeholder Group Meetings, Focus Groups, & Interviews

### VISITS TO TUCSON | 2019

June 20-21

September 22-23

November 10-11

December 8-9

### Stakeholder Groups

Agency/Synagogue  
Professionals

Agency/Synagogue  
Volunteers

Young Leaders

Major Donors

### Special Interest Groups

Families with children  
ages 0-5

Families with children  
ages 6-15

Teens

College Students

Retirees

Boomers

LGBTQ

Newcomers

Outlying Areas

Young Adults No-Children



~150 total informants

# Survey Development

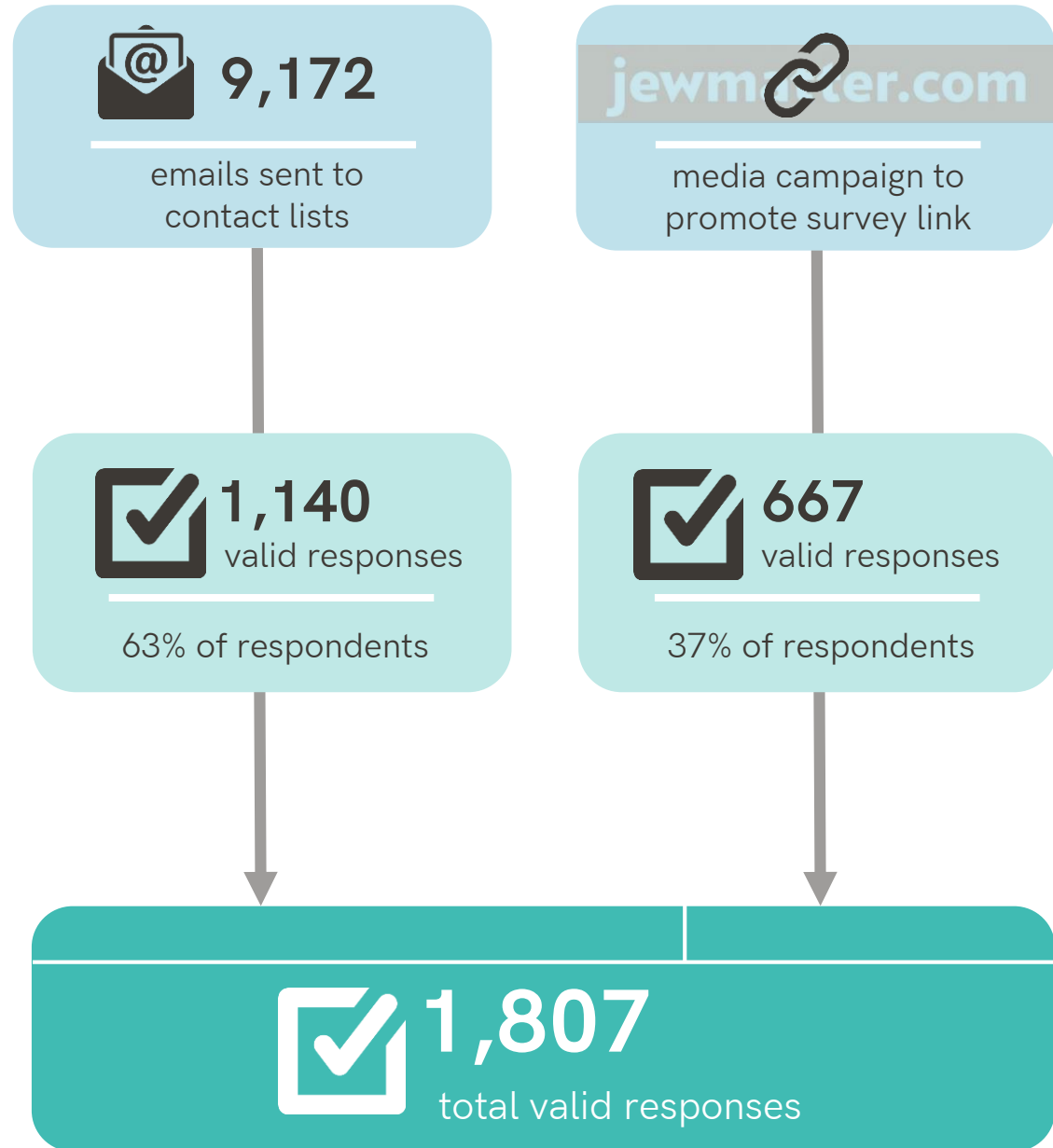
Use of validated items where possible

Co-constructed with Rosov and Tucson team

## SURVEY IN THE FIELD | 2020

F	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
							1
E	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
B	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29

M	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
R	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	29	30	31				

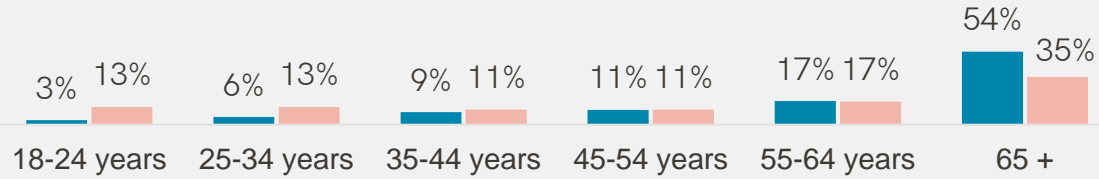


# Survey Demographics

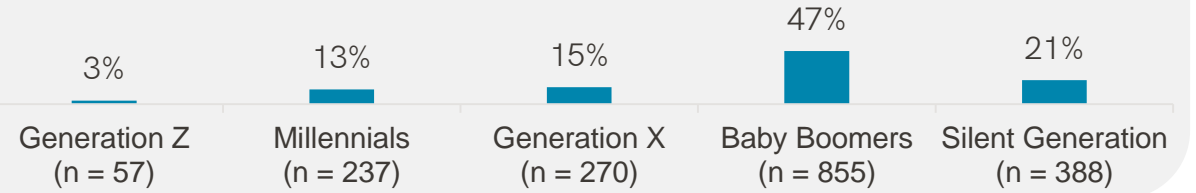
KEY ● Survey Sample

● Tucson Jewish Population Estimates  
Source: American Jewish Population Project

## Age



## Generation



## Gender



**64%** female

**51%**



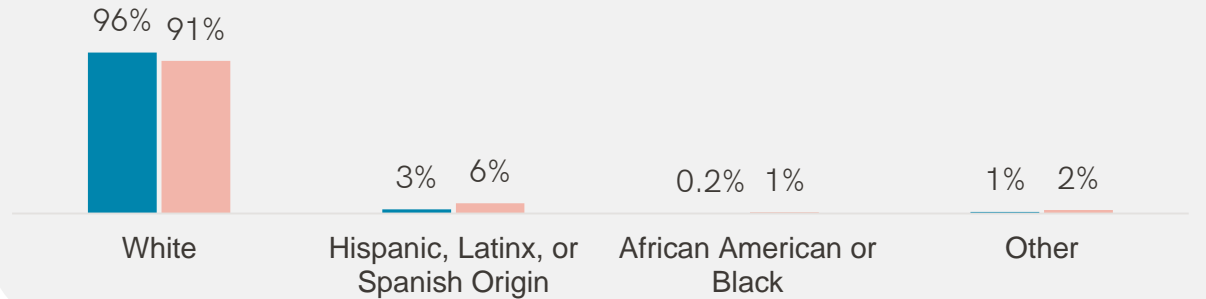
**34%** male

**49%**

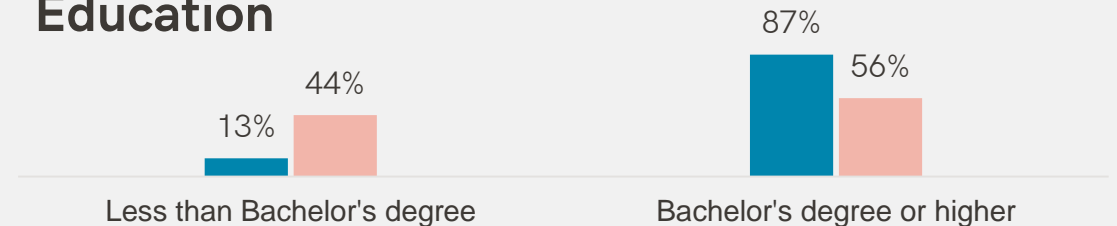


**2%** gender fluid/non-binary

## Ethnicity



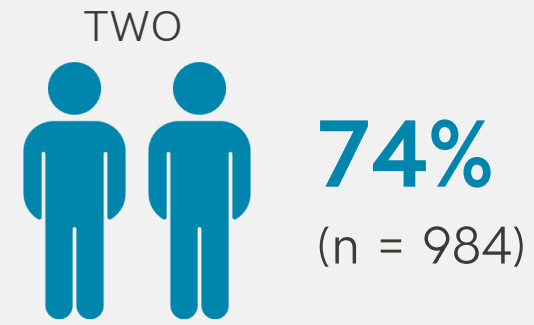
## Education



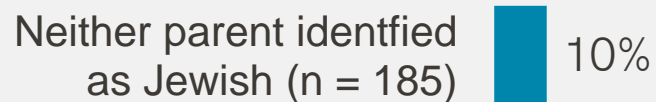
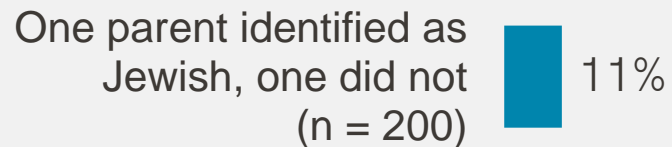
# Survey Demographics



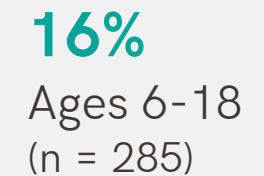
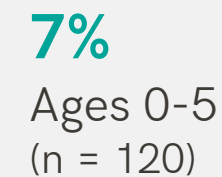
## Partner is Jewish



## Parents' Identification

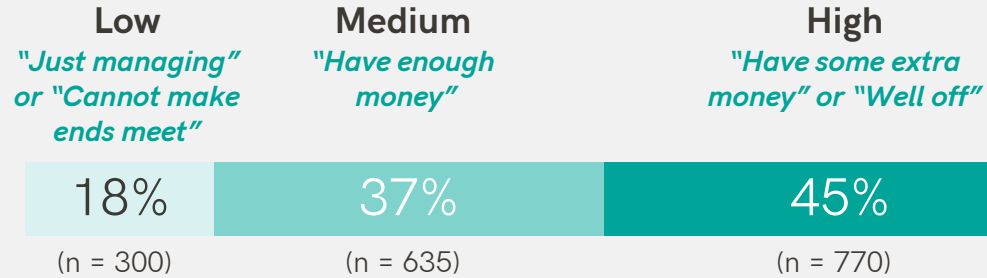


## Families with kids

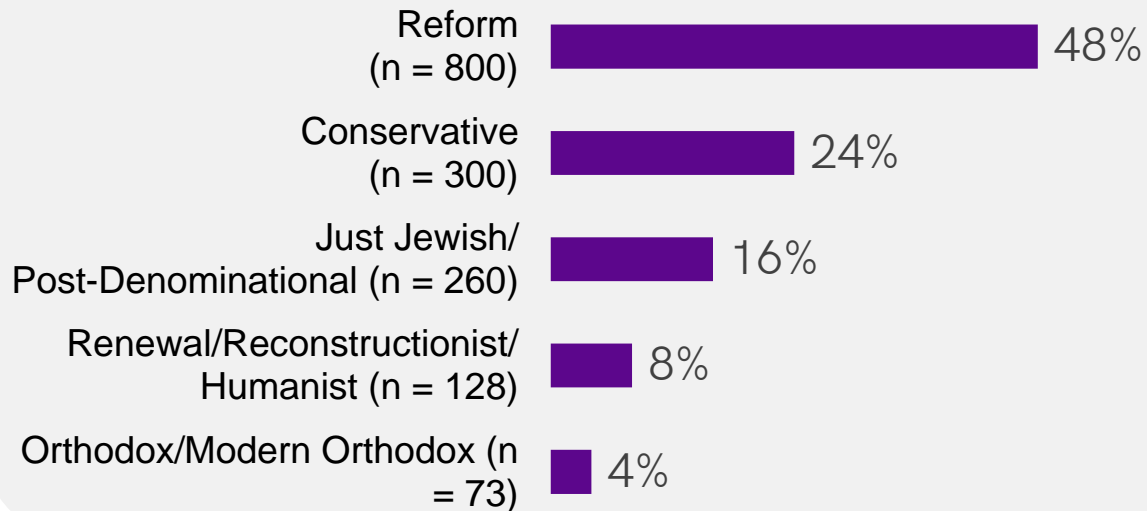


# Survey Demographics

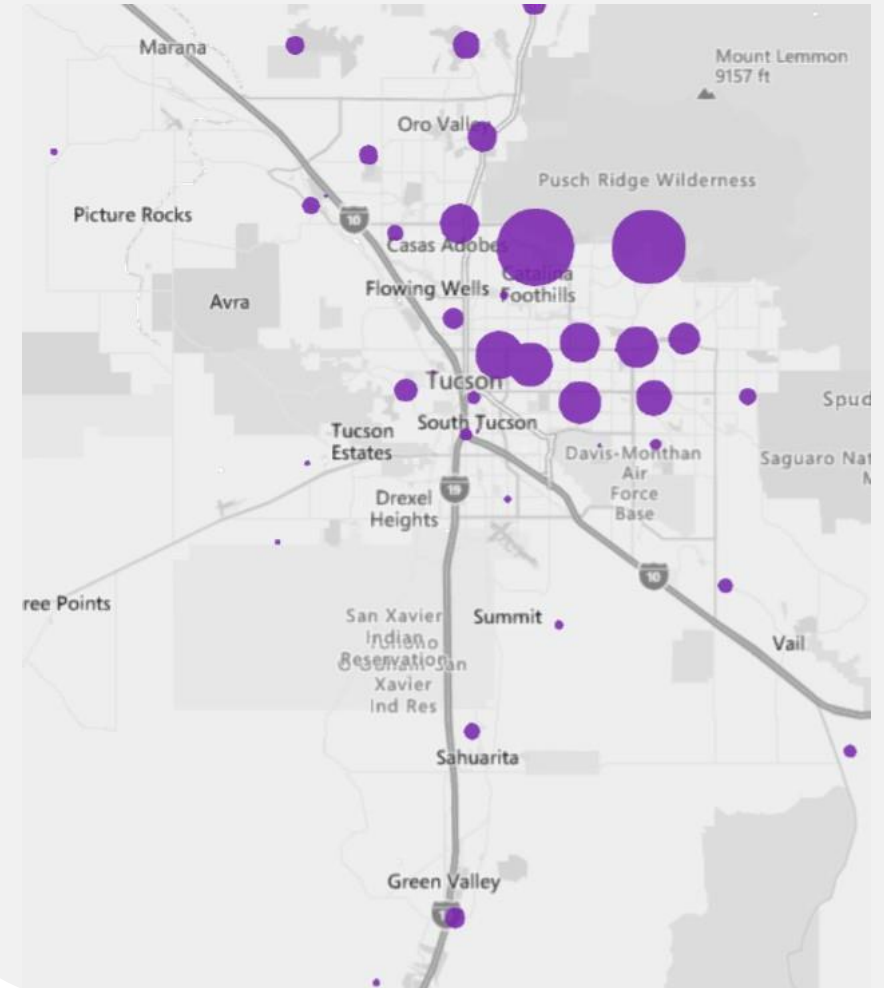
## Socioeconomic Status



## Denomination



## Geographic Areas



# Segmenting Groups to Develop Actionable Findings

## Generation Groups

Gen Z  
Millennial  
Gen X  
Boomer  
Silent

## Special Groups of Interest

LGBTQ  
Low SES  
Newcomers  
Families with Children  
Interfaith Families  
College-age  
Young Adults





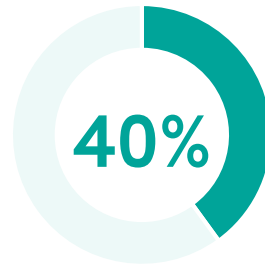


# Findings

What Do People Want (or Want More of)?



The good news is that people want to be **participating more** in Southern Arizona Jewish activities



would like to participate more frequently

### GENERATIONS

Gen Z  
**39%**

Millennials  
**59%**

Gen X  
**46%**

Boomers  
**36%**

Silent  
**31%**

### SPECIAL GROUPS OF INTEREST

Newcomers  
**70%**

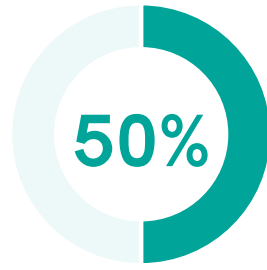
Low SES  
**59%**

LGBTQ  
**55%**

Families  
w/Children  
**50%**

Young Adults  
**50%**

Strong  
desire for  
**social and  
cultural  
connection**



*agree/strongly agree* they would like to expand their Jewish social network



**GENERATIONS**

Gen Z  
**61%**

Millennials  
**72%**

Gen X  
**60%**

Boomers  
**50%**

Silent  
**42%**



**SPECIAL GROUPS OF INTEREST**

Newcomers  
**77%**

LGBTQ  
**62%**

## Strong desire for **social and cultural connection**

“ Like if there was a social forum of Jewish people with kids, and we could log on and find activities or set up play dates, etc. And have someone actually moderate it, both for active communication and also for security. ”

—Families with Children (0-5)

“ It would be cool to meet a bunch of people. [A] networking or social [event]. Similar to a Jewish singles meet up. A Jewish mingle. ”

—College Age

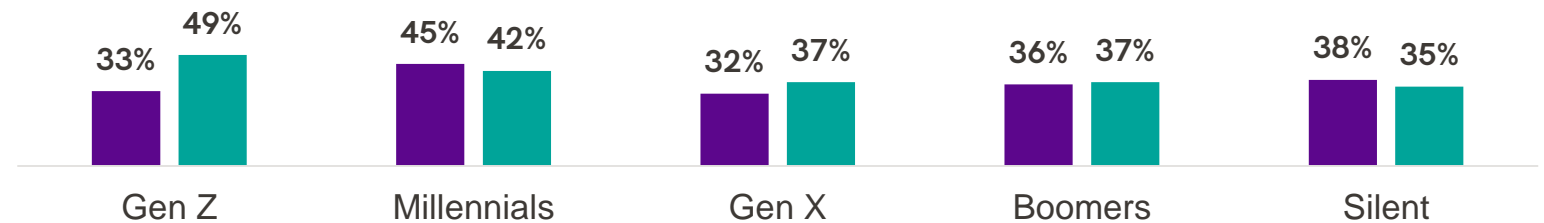
Strong interest in **social justice** and **community service** activities organized by Jewish community



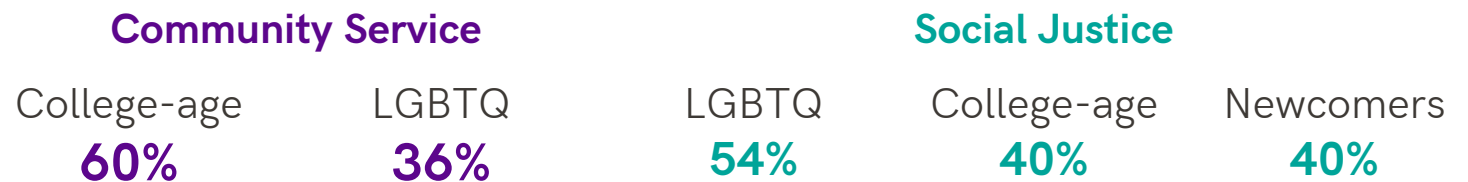
*very/extremely interested* in both types of activities

### GENERATIONS

● Community Service ● Social Justice



### SPECIAL GROUPS OF INTEREST



Strong interest  
in **social justice**  
and **community**  
**service**  
activities  
organized by  
Jewish  
community

“ My [ideal] Jewish community would have a social component. [Like] “free your clothing,” a clothing drive. Expressing Jewish in fun new ways, and also connected to social action.

”

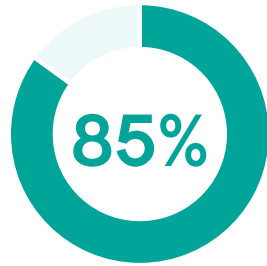
—Young Adult (Non-Parent)

“ Social justice is super important to me, and aligning my values with a cause and being amongst other like-minded people. We talk so much about community, it’s effecting change in that community, giving back. I have a heart for service and want to give back to this new family.

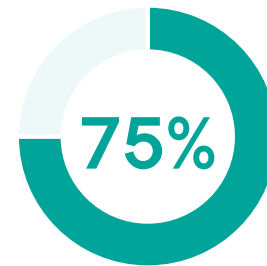
”

—Newcomer

Families with children want to **raise their children Jewish**—both culturally and religiously



say it's *important/very important* for children to have **social/cultural** Jewish upbringing



say it's *important/very important* for children to have a **religious** Jewish upbringing



Families with children want to **raise their children Jewish**—both culturally and religiously

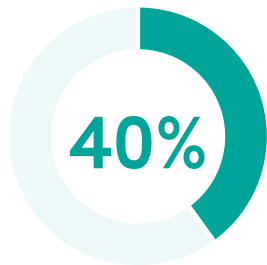
“ I’m not that religious, but growing up Jewish ... The core values and beliefs and traditions, it was always a fun way to grow up, and I wanted to my son to learn something about that. ”

—Families with Children (6-15)

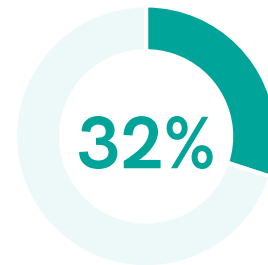
“ My ex was raised very Catholic, was against religious anything, and it’s been a lot of years explaining the difference between Catholicism and Judaism... But it’s deep in my family and very important. ”

—Families with Children (0-5)

# Jewish learning, holiday celebrations, and Israel among top interests



*very/extremely interested in Jewish learning and holidays*



*very/extremely interested in Israel travel and learning*

## GENERATIONS

	Millennials	Gen X	Boomers	Silent
Holiday celebrations	56%	42%	34%	33%
Jewish learning	38%	36%	40%	44%
Travel to Israel	44%	35%	32%	27%
Learning about Israel	25%	29%	31%	36%

Interest in alternative spiritual experiences strongest for younger generations



*very/extremely interested in a Chavurot*



*very/extremely interested in alternative spiritual experiences*



### GENERATIONS

● Chavurah    ● Alternative Spiritual Experiences



### SPECIAL GROUPS OF INTEREST



Interest in  
**alternative  
spiritual  
experiences**  
strongest for  
younger  
generations

“ I’ve been here for four years, but the one thing I missed from a Jewish perspective here was getting involved in a chavurah ... they get together and they are family for each other... It’s hard to find, the older we get. If there is a chavurah, they’re not really looking for new people. ”

—Newcomer

“ It doesn’t have to be a formal event, it can just be getting together with Jewish people and knowing them, knowing Jews in your area and being social with them, more than coming to a specific thing at a specific time. ”

—Families with Children (0-5)

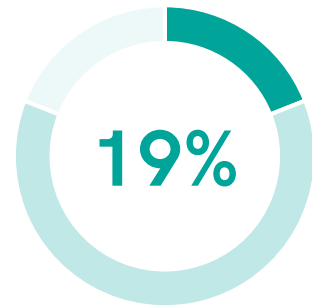
What is Working (or Not) and for Whom?



# Quality and Variety of Jewish Activities and Events

■ *Very satisfied* ■ *Satisfied*

**Overall satisfaction is low**



*very satisfied with variety*



*very satisfied with quality*

## GENERATIONS

	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Boomers	Silent
<b>Quality</b> ( <i>very satisfied</i> )	8%	12%	17%	20%	29%
<b>Variety</b> ( <i>very satisfied</i> )	9%	9%	14%	20%	26%

## SPECIAL GROUPS OF INTEREST

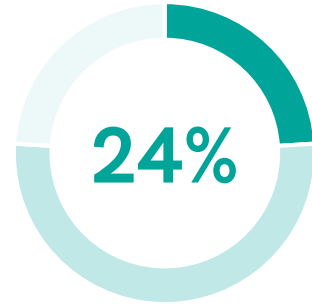
	Young Adults	Families w/Children	LGTBQ	Low SES	Newcomers
<b>Quality</b> ( <i>very satisfied</i> )	10%	13%	14%	12%	10%
<b>Variety</b> ( <i>very satisfied</i> )	17%	13%	17%	14%	11%



# Synagogues

■ *Very satisfied* ■ *Satisfied*

**Overall satisfaction is low**



*very satisfied* with **quality of synagogue offerings**

**2/3** of sample are **synagogue members**

## GENERATIONS

Gen Z  
**15%**

Millennials  
**16%**

Gen X  
**17%**

Boomers  
**25%**

Silent  
**31%**

## SPECIAL GROUPS OF INTEREST

Newcomers  
**24%**

Low SES  
**24%**

LGBTQ  
**28%**

Families w/Children  
**17%**

Young Adults  
**13%**



# Synagogues

“ The majority of our [synagogue’s] population is over 65 and they’re dying... It’s **by no means a portal into the Jewish community for my kids** that I hoped it would be.”

”

—Families with Children (0-5)

“ Being gay in Tucson is easier than being trans. There’s not a lot of education on non-binary pronouns—rabbis here have never had to go through pronoun training or anything... In the synagogues... I’m **constantly misnamed and misgendered.**”

”

—LGBTQ

“ I went to a temple to ask about young families, they said they’d hook me up with the person in charge of that, and I never heard back... **Communication is an issue.** They don’t notify or remind people about events [either].”

”

—Families with Children (0-5)

“ **I wish there was more unity among the rabbis...** There seems to be personality conflicts among the rabbis, which shouldn’t exist. It’s not even denominational.”

”

—Boomers





# Jewish Institutions – Satisfaction for Program Attendees

For people who said they attended a program at the organization in the past 12 months:



**69% very satisfied**

(n = 704)



**59% very satisfied**

(n = 1,077)



**55% very satisfied**

(n = 312)



**50% very satisfied**

(n = 798)



# Jewish Institutions

“

Another bloom in our community is the Jewish History Museum... **That place is truly inclusive...It's a beautiful cause.**

”

—Boomers

“

I'm totally partial to the JCC, but it's the one place in Tucson we have **where it doesn't matter what form of Judaism you come from, this is neutral territory** and it doesn't matter here.

”

Families with Children (6-15)



# Health and Human Services – Satisfaction for Service Users

For people who used these services provided by the Jewish community in the past 12 months:



**56% very satisfied**

(n = 146)



Private transportation services

**43% very satisfied**

(n = 69)



**51% very satisfied**

(n = 99)



Home health care

**39% very satisfied**

(n = 82)



# Quality of Educational Offerings

For people who have children or grandchildren (**age 0-5**) in Southern Arizona community (n = 140):



**55%** *very satisfied*



Preschools

**40%** *very satisfied*

For people who have children or grandchildren (**age 6-15**) in Southern Arizona community (n = 141):

TUCSON  
HEBREW  
ACADEMY



**17%** *very satisfied*



Religious  
Schools

**19%** *very satisfied*



# Quality of Educational Offerings

“ For me, I can't identify other Jewish families on my own. I think **PJ Library getting people together is a good thing.** They get that people want more interaction that's not just going to temple or go to some formal event. ”

—Families with Children (0-5)

“ We hoped that going to the **ECE** we'd get community there, but with all full-time working parents, we go and pick them up and that's it, **there's no opportunity for community.** ”

—Families with Children (0-5)

“ I like our **religious school** even though there aren't that many young kids in it. **It's being continuously reworked, which doesn't look great,** but I think they're continually trying to improve. ”

—Families with Children (6-15)

“ They [**THA**] need **to shift their attitude and be more understanding...** They need to think about Reform Jews and less observant Jews. It feels more directed toward super Orthodox kids. ”

—Families with Children (6-15)



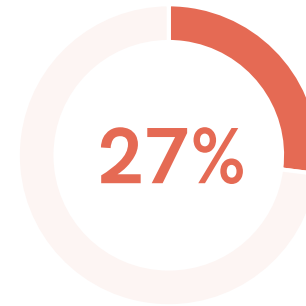
# Challenges to Address



# Challenges to Address – Social Cliques

“When I first got here, the women were so cliqued into each other and their families already, there was no space. You either have to be new and get introduced to people, or you have to have lived here since kindergarten. There’s not much inclusiveness or responsibility to include people.”

—Boomer



cite as barrier

## GENERATIONS

Gen Z  
**42%**

Millennials  
**34%**

Gen X  
**34%**

Boomers  
**26%**

Silent  
**19%**

## SPECIAL GROUPS OF INTEREST

Young Adults  
**40%**

Low SES  
**36%**

Interfaith Families  
**30%**



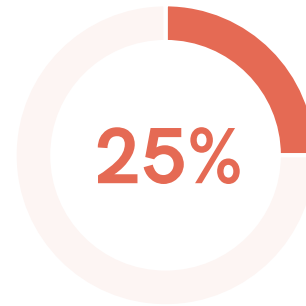
# Challenges to Address - Cost

“

The sore point is charging for events. It can be very frustrating to want to be involved, but having events cost \$50, \$60, which is a lot for someone just starting out, paying off student loans, etc.

”

—Newcomer



cite as barrier

## GENERATIONS

Gen Z  
**29%**

Millennials  
**39%**

Gen X  
**31%**

Boomers  
**23%**

Silent  
**20%**

## SPECIAL GROUPS OF INTEREST

Low SES  
**60%**

LGBTQ  
**40%**

Families w/Children  
**35%**

Newcomers  
**32%**

Interfaith Families  
**30%**





# Additional Challenges to Address

Allegiance to what was rather than what could be (e.g., historically valuable institutions that may no longer be meeting communal needs).

Professional expertise and capacity – Do we have the right people in the right places to actualize our plans?



# Deep Dive into Selected Sub-groups



# Emerging Generations – Gen Z and Millennials

*Compared to the overall sample, they are:*

- ↓ Less likely to feel connected to Jews around the world, to the local Jewish community, and to Israel
- ↓ Less likely to give to Jewish causes
- ↓ Less satisfied with Jewish activities and synagogues, even though 47% are synagogue members
- ↓ Less likely to think a Jewish day school is important
- ↑ More interested in expanding social networks
- ↑ More interested in alternative spiritual expressions
- ↑ More interested in celebrating Jewish holidays with the community and participating at JCC or Young Jewish Tucson
- ↑ More interested in traveling to Israel
- ↑ More interested in learning about events through social media



# Families with the Preschool Set (0-5)

*Compared to the overall sample, they are:*

- ↓ Less satisfied with Jewish activities and synagogues
- ↓ Less likely to find out about Jewish activities
- ↓ Less likely to feel connected to Israel

- ↑ More interested in expanding their social network
- ↑ More likely to want their children to be more active participants in Jewish community
- ↑ More interested in alternative spiritual expressions



# Young Adults with No Children (Single or Partnered)

*Compared to the overall sample, they are:*

- ↓ Less satisfied with Jewish offerings and synagogues
- ↓ Less likely to give to Jewish causes
- ↓ More likely to feel that social cliques are a barrier to engagement
- ↓ More likely to feel ignored by Jewish community
- ↑ More likely to want to participate in Jewish activities
- ↑ More interested in alternative forms of spiritual expression
- ↑ More interested in arts and culture, professional networking, community service and social justice, and outdoor recreation activities
- ↑ More interested in travel to Israel



# Interfaith Families

*Compared to the overall sample, they are:*

- ↓ Less likely to feel connected to the Jewish people, Israel, or the local Jewish community
- ↓ Less likely to give to Jewish causes
- ↓ Less likely to want a Jewish cultural or religious upbringing for their kids
- ↓ Less likely to think it's important to attend High Holiday services
- ↑ More likely than most to see social justice as their most important expression of Jewish values
- ↑ More likely to be satisfied with JFCS
- ↔ As likely to want alternative spiritual experiences
- ↔ As likely to want to expand their social network
- ↔ As likely to want to be engaged in social justice and community service



*Compared to the overall sample, they are:*

↓ Less likely to feel connected to Israel

↑ More interested in participating more in Jewish life

↑ More interested in expanding their social network

↑ More interested in alternative forms of spirituality

↑ More interested in social justice activities





# Opportunities and Recommendations



## Note about Impact of COVID-19

○ Need to revisit some assumptions — societal norms around gathering are in flux and will be for some time.

○ Need to accelerate some decisions — financial realities for organizations, agencies, and individual community members dictates acting now.

○ This **study is still relevant and informative** regarding next steps — even in this new reality.

# Opportunities – Overall, Strong Interest in...

Jewishly organized social justice/community service opportunities

Expanding Jewish social network

Spiritual experiences outside synagogues

Raising children Jewishly  
(culturally/religiously)

Holiday celebrations

Learning about and traveling to Israel

# Recommendations to Explore

Take advantage of **places and spaces** that people are very satisfied with (Jewish History Museum, JCC, etc.) and strengthen educational, social, spiritual, and community service offerings

Reimagine Jewish **educational offerings** building on bright spots and looking at ways to upgrade existing assets

Consolidate or collaborate across **synagogues** and other organizations in the service of meeting religious/ritual needs and community building outside of synagogue environs

Revisit current **infrastructure** to build relationships with newcomers and support their Jewish connections and journeys

Elevate initiatives that are designed to build **social fabric** and break down silos

Experiment with **innovative initiatives** in areas of interest to subpopulations: spirituality, social justice, etc.



# Q&A

