



Rooted in Love: Investing in the Future of Jewish Peoplehood at Scale

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To strengthen the Jewish community, we must do more than respond to external challenges. We must invest in experiences that help young people build a strong Jewish identity and develop a deep sense of connection and responsibility to the Jewish people.

Jewish camp is one of the most effective, scalable, and proven investments we can make in that future. At camp, young people experience the joy of Jewish community, strengthen their Jewish identity, and discover that they are part of something larger than themselves. These experiences lay the foundation for lifelong Jewish engagement and a vibrant, connected Jewish people.

That foundation does not end when summer does. It shapes the leaders young people become, strengthens the communities they build, and equips them with the resilience to navigate an increasingly complex world.

The Ultimate Leadership Lab

Jewish teens consistently report that camp is the place where they feel most comfortable being their full, authentic selves. Surrounded by an immersive Jewish community, they experience the joy of Jewish life and a deep sense of belonging. That foundation of confidence and connection gives young people the courage to step forward, take responsibility, and begin to see themselves as leaders.

Camp is where leadership comes to life. Where young people first learn to lead a group, facilitate a tradition, and take responsibility for their community. These leadership skills are not just theoretical; they are practiced daily through peer mentorship and communal living, creating a pipeline of capable, confident leaders for the Jewish world and beyond. An investment in Jewish camp is an investment in the communal leadership of tomorrow.

Building Communal Resilience

While some environments can feel isolating, Jewish camp fosters connection. Campers develop enduring friendships and peer networks that form an emotional infrastructure

for life. These relationships create communal resilience, instilling the confidence to stand proud and stay connected to one's heritage.

The importance of those relationships became especially clear after October 7. At a time when many Jewish teens felt isolated or uncertain, they turned to their camp friends, counselors, and communities for comfort, understanding, and support. The connections formed at camp became a source of resilience, reminding young people that they were not alone. By focusing on collective strength rather than defensive posturing, camp ensures that Jewish identity is rooted in a positive, self-assured sense of belonging.

Jewish camp also fosters broad cultural literacy among staff, families, and peer communities. With 20% of day camp participants coming from non-Jewish households and 18% of overnight staff being non-Jewish, including international counselors, camp becomes a hub for shared humanity. These individuals are immersed in a joyous, lived Jewish environment. They observe Shabbat, participate in Jewish learning, and build deep relationships with Jewish peers. The result is a generation of individuals who return to their own communities with a baseline of respect and firsthand understanding. Jewish camp is one of the only settings that nurtures this level of cross-cultural empathy at scale, building a global network of people who value and celebrate the Jewish story.

A Scalable Solution

FJC supports a network of more than 300 overnight and day camps across North America, reflecting the full diversity of the Jewish people: religious, cultural, and geographic. With nearly 200,000 campers and staff participating each summer, the infrastructure is already in place. The opportunity before us is not to build something new, but to strengthen and expand what we know works. The field of Jewish camp is ready to meet this moment, and Foundation for Jewish Camp is uniquely positioned to strengthen, support, and grow camps so they can continue serving as one of the most powerful engines of joyful Jewish life and peoplehood.

By investing in Jewish camp, we are investing in generations of young people who will lead with confidence, build resilient communities, and carry forward a deep love for the Jewish people. In a world that too often pulls people apart, Jewish camp brings them together. That may be one of the most important investments we can make in the future of Jewish peoplehood.

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