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MAPPING
THE FIELD OF
Teen Israel Travel

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

RAMIE ARIAN

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Ramie Arian

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The iCenter understands that travel to Israel is one of the strongest, most effective means of educating about Israel. The iCenter seeks to understand the existing field of teen Israel travel, in order to determine how most effectively to make a positive impact on the field. In its initial exploration of the field of teen Israel travel, iCenter staff noted that the most basic information about the field was lacking. For example, no comprehensive list of providers of Israel trips for North American teens previously existed. Similarly, there existed no authoritative information on how many teens travel to Israel annually, the range of programs through which they travel, nor the educational missions, programs and methods of those programs.

Determined to make an impact on the field that is driven by data, the iCenter engaged Ramie Arian Consulting to conduct an Environmental Scan of the field of teen Israel travel from North America. That study was carried out over a 4½ month period, from mid-April through late August, 2011.

The present summary presents key findings, beginning with an executive overview which is found on the next two pages.

Ramie Arian is an independent consultant working primarily with organizations that utilize experiential education to build Jewish identity and commitment in young people. Such organizations often work through summer camps, Israel travel, youth groups, and engagement of young Jews in their 20s and 30s. Many of his assignments focus on project management and/or research. www.ramiearian.com.

I. Executive Overview

METRICS AND QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

- We identified approximately 130 agencies which send North American teens on travel programs to Israel. This is at least four-times the previously-assumed number.
- Utilizing parameters that prevailed in previous studies in order to enable an apples-to-apples comparison, we identified 6,384 discrete high school students on teen Israel programs of at least 2-weeks duration from North America during our benchmark year. Our census is not totally complete; it would be reasonable to guesstimate an annual participation of 6,500-7,000. This is 30-35% fewer than previously reported.
- Where program registration is voluntary, girls outnumber boys by almost 2-to-1.
- While there are many kinds of trips sponsors, by far the largest number of participants travel on programs sponsored by “traditional” youth movements, organizations and summer camps. Demographics by type of sponsor are as follows:
 - 57.4%—youth movements, organizations, summer camps
 - 23.7%—day school trips
 - 59.6%—Middle school trips (mainly 8th grade)
 - 40.4%—High school trips (mainly 12th grade)
 - 18.9%—community-based trips
- Of those teens who go to Israel, the overwhelming majority travel with a pre-existing group or community to which they belong outside of the Israel trip itself: a school class, a youth movement, a summer camp, a geographic community, etc. Few register and travel solely as individuals who “shop” to find the best trip for them.
- In contrast to Birthright Israel, which makes a 10-day trip to Israel normative, most teen travelers spend much more time in Israel. Two thirds are there for more than 10 days. Half are there for a month or more. Demographics by trip duration are as follows:
 - 6.5%—2½ months to 4 months
 - 43.5%—4 weeks to 2 months
 - 17.0%—12 days to 4 weeks
 - 33.0%—7 to 10 days

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS:

- The key educational aim of trip organizers is to build Jewish identity and commitment in participants
 - Some organizers mean this in religious terms (esp. denominational groups)
 - Some define this mainly in terms of peoplehood (esp. community groups)
- A small number of programs are devoted to developing teen leadership.
- The *Mifgash* is becoming a normative part of the teen Israel travel experience, with a few select groups extending it to the full length of their programs.
- Participating in this study served as an encouragement for trip sponsors to think about how to do pre- and post- work in a more serious way than they had previously.
- Far more groups invest significant resources in pre-trip preparation than in maximizing the impact of the program upon participants' return.

OPPORTUNITIES TO ADVANCE THE FIELD

There are many needs to be addressed in advancing the field of teen Israel travel. The following are key needs that are recommended areas for the iCenter's consideration:

- Serve as a **central address** for the field: convener, advocate, repository of resources and information, and much more.
- Field-wide marketing and central support for individual sponsors' **marketing** efforts.
- Establish and promulgate field-wide **norms and best practices**.
- Support development of **quality post-trip engagement** programs.
- Provide **liaison with Birthright** and the larger Jewish community (Masa, Jewish Agency, Government of Israel, Federations).
- Generate **scholarship** funds for incentive and need. Gather scholarship information.

These areas of need and opportunities to advance the field are described in greater detail in the body of this summary under the heading "How to Advance the Field of Teen Israel Travel," on pp. 12-14, below.

II. Methodology

- We used the membership roster of the Lapid Coalition (for high school Israel trips) as a starting place, and networking outward from there to identify organizations that sponsor, support and/or organize Israel trips for teens from North America.
- We chose July 2010 – June 2011 as our benchmark year. This was selected because:
 - It is recent enough to be relevant.
 - We did not want to include programs conducted during summer 2011, as much of the research took place before that time, and the census of participants would therefore be speculative.
 - It was a “typical” year, with few exceptional circumstances such as major terrorist events or other security threats.
- We defined the parameters of our study as “teens” (from grade 7 through high school graduation) from North America (United States and Canada). Significantly, this meant that the study did NOT include “gap year” programs for participants after high school and before college.
- We identified a broad group of leaders as “key informants” and interviewed 48 of them, representing 43 different organizations (list of key informants interviewed is appended in two formats, as Appendices A and B).
- Interviews were conducted by telephone, lasted an average of 40 minutes, and were conducted between April 14 and August 25, 2011.
- Interviews revolved around four questions involving educational aims, pre-trip preparation and post-trip follow-up, and a census of participants. In order to maximize the thoughtfulness of respondents’ answers, the questions and a set of FAQs were sent to interviewees in advance (appended hereto as Appendix C and Appendix D, respectively).
- To the extent possible, findings were based on a precise listing of trips, groups and demographics. Every effort was made to resist reliance on estimates and guesses, almost all of which tend to be significantly overstated.
- Basing findings on a precise listing of trips enabled us to avoid double-counting the same group if they were listed, for example, both by their organizer and by their logistics provider. This has been a common source of inflated statistics in previous studies.
- In our census of participants, we were interested ONLY in North American teens visiting Israel. Thus, if a (hypothetical) trip included participants from the US, Ukraine and Israel traveling together for a week in Poland followed by a week in Israel, we counted ONLY the Americans and ONLY their week in Israel.

Findings are reported below in four categories, corresponding to the four key questions around which the study was organized, as follows: demographics, diversity of educational agenda, connecting to what comes before and after the trip, and how to advance the field of teen Israel travel.

III. Demographics

- We identified approximately 130 agencies¹ which send North American teens on travel programs to Israel. This is at least four-times the commonly-assumed number, and represents youth movements, camps, day schools, federations, family foundations and others. We are certain that this list is not exhaustive, but are confident that it represents the overwhelming majority of Israel teen travel activity.²
- Previous studies have estimated that 10,000 or more North American teens per year participate in Israel travel. These counts have generally been based on estimates of the number of high schools students participating in programs of 2-week duration or longer. ***Utilizing these same parameters***, in order to enable an “apples-to-apples” comparison, ***we identified 6,384 North American teens who traveled to Israel during our 2010-2011 benchmark year***. Understanding that our census is not totally complete, it would be reasonable to guesstimate an annual participation of 6,500-7,000 high school students participating on Israel travel programs of 2-week duration or longer. ***This is 30-35% fewer than previously estimated.***

Utilizing the broader set of parameters that prevailed in our study, we identified 10,208 discrete teens (***7th grade*** through high school graduation) who traveled to Israel on organized educational programs ***of any length*** from North America during our 2010-2011 benchmark year. Understanding that our census is not totally complete, it would be reasonable to guesstimate an annual participation of 10,500-11,000 teens from North American on Israel travel programs.

- We distinguished among participants traveling with different kinds of groups:
 - The lion’s share of participating teens—57.4%—went on programs sponsored by Jewish youth movements or organizations, including summer camps.
 - The remaining teens were split between groups traveling with the Jewish day schools they attend (23.7%) and community trips organized by agencies based in specific geographic locales (18.9%). This latter category includes Federation or BJE groups (often organized in connection with communities’ Partnership 2000 partner

¹ These included trips sponsored by 35 youth organizations and camps, 17 community trips sponsored by Federations or Boards of Jewish Education, 5 programs organized by philanthropic foundations, 10 trips sponsored by individual synagogues or consortia or synagogues, 20 school-sponsored programs for high school students, 47 school programs for middle school students, and a small number of programs organized by sponsors devoted to special themes (Israel advocacy, Holocaust commemoration, etc.).

² Following the methodology of Taglit-Birthright Israel, we distinguished between trip “organizers” (the agencies which recruit the participants for trips) and trip “providers” (the agencies which handle arrangements such as educational venues, hotels, buses, etc. on-the-ground in Israel). Our census is based on statistics gathered according to trip organizers only. It is worth noting that prior estimates may have been artificially inflated by inadvertent double-counting of participants, since statistics were gathered from ***both*** trip organizers ***and*** trip providers.

communities in Israel), trips sponsored by local philanthropic foundations, and increasingly, trips sponsored by local synagogues or consortia of local synagogues.

- Of the day school participants,
 - Most (59.6%) traveled with a middle school class (generally in 8th grade)
 - A significant minority (40.4%) traveled with a high school class (generally in 12th grade, but sometimes in 11th)
- The data above make clear that the overwhelming majority of teens who traveled to Israel did so as part of some kind of group or community to which they belong outside of the Israel trip. They travel with their school or their youth movement or their camp or their community. Very few register solely as individuals. That is, relatively very few make the decision to travel to Israel, and then “shop” among various providers to determine which program is best for them.
- We were able to ascertain the duration of the trips in which the great majority (84.8%) of the participants traveled. We determined for how long the various programs visited Israel, and grouped the participants as follows:
 - A small number (6.5%) participate in programs from 2.5 months to 4 months in duration. These included semester-length programs sponsored by two denominational youth organizations (NFTY and Ramah) and by seven different Jewish day schools. All participants are in the latter part of the high school years.
 - The largest group (43.5%) travel with programs of 4 weeks to 2 months in duration. This includes the summer programs of most of the Jewish youth organizations and overnight camps, plus a few community groups and day high school groups, specialty groups such as the Bronfman Youth Fellowships, and the “core” program of the Alexander Muss High School in Israel.
 - A relatively small group (17.0%) join in programs lasting 12 days to 4 weeks. These include many community-based trips, some youth organization trips (e.g. all the trips of BBYO and one Young Judaea trip), and a number of day school trips, with a particular sub-group of 8th grade trips lasting 12-14 days.
 - A significant proportion (33.0%) participate in programs which are in Israel for 7-10 days. The bulk of these (74%) are in Israel with March of the Living. The remainder are divided among some high school community trips, specialty trips such as Write on for Israel, and a significant number of day school 8th grade trips.
- Girls greatly outnumber boys among participants in teen Israel programs. Except in programs where participation is mandatory (such as many school trips) and selective programs that intentionally keep the number of boys and girls equal, most trips are 60-65% female.

IV. Diversity of Educational Agenda

Given the broad range of trip sponsors, it is not surprising that we found programs which boasted a wide diversity of educational goals, targets and curricular aims. The following list is illustrative but does not purport to be exhaustive:

OVERALL TRIP AIMS

- The overwhelming majority of trips aim to build Jewish identity and commitment, by instilling love for Israel and familiarity with the land and its people. Some trip organizers are particularly thoughtful about this and can articulate in detail how these aims translate into the specific details of their programs, but many are much less educationally savvy, clear and articulate. Most youth organizations and many other programs are organized in this way, and their focus is on touring the country from north to south, with extensive time spent in Jerusalem.
- Among those trips whose core aim is to build Jewish identity and commitment, it is possible to discern two sub-strata: those that define Jewish identity mostly in religious terms, and those that define Jewish identity mostly in terms of Jewish peoplehood. Not surprisingly, the former group consists principally of denominationally-sponsored programs (under Reform, Orthodox, Conservative or Reconstructionist sponsorship). The latter group includes many community groups, especially those organized by Federations, BJE's, and pluralistic bodies such as philanthropic foundations.
- A small number of programs articulate aims which organizers identify as "Zionist", often as distinct from relating to "Jewish identity". These programs—specifically those sponsored by some Zionist youth movements and some Orthodox youth organizations—generally place an emphasis on exposure of participants to segments of Israel which reflect and reinforce the sponsor's overarching ideological point of view, or which encourage discussion of the sponsor's key principles. Some of these groups openly adopt a stance of encouraging *aliya*, and view their Israel trips as an important element of *aliya* preparation for participants.

SCHOOL TRIPS

- Many school groups utilize the Israel trip as a capstone experience to conclude the educational experience in their institutions. Depending on the school, this experience may take place at the end of 8th, 9th or 12th grade.
- A few high schools prefer, rather, to utilize the power of the Israel experience as a centerpiece and climactic (but not final) point of their curriculum, utilizing both extensive in-class preparation, and extensive in-class follow-up. These schools schedule the trip earlier, either during 11th or at the beginning of 12th grade. Such schools report that the enthusiasm and energy of the students who have returned from Israel exerts a strong positive influence throughout the school.

- School programs generally utilize a touring-based itinerary in Israel. School programs of long duration are an exception to this generalization; often they focus on academic activities, and utilize touring to illustrate and deepen classroom-based learning.

CAMP TRIPS

Summer camp trips generally have an agenda which fulfills multiple purposes. First, it enables participants of a certain cohort defined by the camp (often entering 11th graders) to participate in a camp-sponsored program that is physically outside of camp, creating a capstone experience to many summers of in-camp activity. Such an experience helps the group to bond. Second and more important, it greatly deepens participants' Jewish- and Israel- connections, so that they return to camp the following summer able to serve as powerful role models for younger campers. Third, the trip enables the beginning of leadership training for the cohort, who will generally return to camp the following summer as counselors-in-training. Finally, it takes the 11th grade cohort out of camp for a summer, creating a more distinctive age separation in camp between campers and the CIT and staff group.

COMMUNITY TRIPS

Community-based groups often adopt a community-to-community partnership model, where Americans travel to an Israeli city with which they have a partnership (often but not always organized through Partnership 2000). Often, they are matched with a group of peers affiliated with a community center in that city in Israel, and together the groups engage in volunteer projects for the betterment of the Israeli community. Usually, this is a summer program. Occasionally, it includes a mid-year reciprocal visit of the Israeli teens to the American partner community. In one case, involving a community center catering to teens in the NY area whose families come from the FSU, the program involves a 3-way exchange of teens from New York, Israel and Ukraine. Such community programs are based in Israel in their respective partner communities, and engage in relatively limited touring, as time permits.

LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS

A small number of programs are designed especially to build leadership in specialized communities. Although these programs include touring, their focus is rather on meetings with prominent Israeli leaders in thought, politics, culture and other areas, and are rich in opportunities to explore opposing points of view and points of tension in Israel. Such programs include, for example, the Diller Teen Fellows, The Bronfman Youth Fellowships, Write on for Israel, and Nesiya.

MIFGASHIM

Mifgashim—organized and structured encounters between North American participants and Israeli peers—have become relatively normative in teen Israel travel. The overwhelming majority of trips include a component in which Israeli peers (teens of similar age and, to the extent possible, of similar background) join the group and participate side-by-side with North Americans in touring, cultural events, political discussion and debate, and informal conversation that often focuses on the similarities and differences between the respective cultures.

We were able to identify three different ways in which North American teen Israel travel programs related to structured encounters with Israeli peers:

- For a small number of programs, the Mifgash is at the center of the program’s philosophy and experience. North Americans participate side-by-side with Israeli peers for the entire duration of the program. Put differently, the entire program is an extended Mifgash among the teens from North America and Israel. In general, leadership programs such as the Diller Teen Fellows and community-exchange programs are most likely to be rich in Mifgash experience.
- For most trips, the Mifgash is a significant, but discreet component of the program. The Israelis join the North Americans for a limited portion of the program, most often a week or ten days.
- For some programs, no Mifgash is included at all. School-sponsored programs, especially those for younger (Middle school) children, are least likely to include a Mifgash component.

V. Connecting to What Comes Before and After the Trip

One agenda for this study was to identify how well trip sponsors take advantage of the peak experience represented by the Israel trip, by connecting it organically with what comes before and after the trip in the Jewish journeys of their participants. This whole avenue of inquiry was more relevant for some kinds of trip sponsors than for others. In general, this is an area in which many of the sponsors could do more, and **participating in this study served as an encouragement for them to think about how to do so.**

- In general, far more groups invest significant resources in pre-trip preparation than in maximizing the impact of the program upon participants' return.
- Pre-trip preparation often takes the form of a series of periodic seminars that often span several months before departure. These seminars are often devoted to providing background to what participants are likely to see, hear and experience during the Israel trip. They may cover overviews of Israel's history, geography, political system, social dilemmas, etc.
- For camp-related Israel trips, the return to camp (generally the following summer) serves as a powerful follow-up and continuation of participants' Jewish journeys.
- For those schools where the Israel program is other than a capstone experience, the return to school provides the opportunity for maximizing the impact of the Israel trip.
- A few other trip sponsors organize post-trip gatherings, assign post-trip projects, or otherwise use effective follow-up to maximize the trip's educational impact upon participants. This is more the exception than the rule, and is sometimes dictated by the realities of geography and the calendar. The most serious and effective follow-up is conducted by the few programs that revolve around leadership development, as noted above.

VI. How to Advance the Field of Teen Israel Travel

Informants were asked to think about how to advance the field of teen Israel travel as a whole, and in particular to relate to the question of how practitioners and the iCenter might work together to advance the field. A number of significant ideas emerged:

- **CENTRAL ADDRESS:** Many informants noted that the field would be greatly served by the presence of a trusted, impartial agency to sit at its center. Such an agency could serve several important functions:
 - *Convener* of practitioners, funders, interested community partners and more.
 - *Advocate* for teen Israel travel within and throughout the Jewish community.
 - *Central repository* of information, knowledge and research about the field. An additional function might be to identify lacunae in our knowledge of the field, and to commission appropriate research.
 - *Central resource* for common functions, such as staff training, marketing, curriculum development:
 - One school-based informant noted the need for theme-based curricula for study while in Israel, which might include such themes as *hasbara* (Israel advocacy), ecology, the arts.
 - One informant suggested the need for a pre-vetted database of quality programmatic modules (speakers, debates, experiences, culture, etc.) that trip sponsors could utilize in building the programs of their trips.
 - One informant suggested that a central agency could negotiate better business arrangements, especially airfares, than providers operating separately.
 - *Creator and sustainer* of a Community of Practice among trip organizers.
 - *Sponsor* of special programs to capture important opportunities and fill lacunae in trip offerings. Such special programs might include, for example:
 - Developing a common leadership curriculum for summer camps' pre-CIT programs in Israel.
 - Funding pre- and post- convenings for participants from trips sharing common but unconnected settings (e.g., non-movement summer camps).
- **MARKETING:** The iCenter might play a significant role in the marketing of teen Israel travel. Suggestions included the following:
 - Helping to market to teens the idea that a trip to Israel is exciting, worthwhile, and potentially within reach.
 - Helping to market to parents the idea that a trip to Israel in the teen years can be potentially much more valuable than delaying such a trip to the college years (and that such value justifies the considerable expense involved in thereby becoming disqualified from participation in a free Birthright trip).
 - Establishing the idea of a trip to Israel in the teen years as a rite of passage as powerful and universally accepted as Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

- Providing grants to providers that would enable them to enhance marketing to their own constituencies in ways that they would consider most productive.
 - Generating programming to train teen participants—while they are in Israel—about how to talk about their trip upon return, how to be effective recruiters.
- **BEST PRACTICES:** The iCenter might work to establish norms and/or best practices for the field of teen Israel travel. Such norms would be worth articulating, even if there were no way to enforce them other than through voluntary compliance on the part of trip sponsors. Various informants mentioned the potential value of norms in such areas as:
 - Qualifications of educators leading or accompanying trips
 - Including some time in each trip for participant-chosen activities
- **FOLLOW-UP PROGRAMS:** Since relatively few trip sponsors do extensive post-trip programming, several informants suggested the need for more attention to such efforts. They suggest several roles the iCenter might play in strengthening this area:
 - Offer grants to subsidize follow-up programming. This could enable providers to better capture the enthusiasm generated by the Israel trips. Funding might be provided, for example, to bring Israeli staff to the US for trip reunions. Reunion programming might be utilized to recruit for follow-up Israel trips, say, on gap-year programs.
 - Establish a follow-up framework organized on a regional basis for program returnees, particularly those outside of movement frameworks. This would create a social context with Jewish and Israel-related content. One informant suggested the greater San Francisco Bay Area as a good pilot location.
- **LIAISON WITH OR COUNTER-WEIGHT TO BIRTHRIGHT (AND MASA):** Many key informants noted the extent to which Taglit-Birthright Israel’s entry into the Israel travel marketplace has influenced the nature and scope of their programs.
 - The Lapid coalition and the two dozen of its member organizations that are active in North America take the position that the Jewish community (Federations, the Jewish Agency, the Government of Israel) should not privilege collegiate and young adult Israel programs (Birthright and Masa) over high school programs. They urge the iCenter to join them in lobbying for extension of the subsidies provided by these agencies—generally in the range of up to \$2500 per person—to high school programs as well.
 - One informant asserted that Birthright has built such a strong brand that it essentially monopolizes the Jewish community’s attention with regard to Israel travel for young people, and suggested that the iCenter could provide an important voice and counter-weight in community forums.
 - One informant asserted that Birthright disqualifies people who have been on peer educational programs of more than a week in length, and said that he is accordingly frequently pressured by potential trip sponsors to design programs of 7 days duration or shorter so that participants would not lose Birthright eligibility. He urges that the iCenter utilize its clout to lobby Birthright to modify its eligibility criteria.

- **SCHOLARSHIP:** Many informants noted the need for more philanthropic investment in providing scholarship assistance for teen Israel travel.
 - Several felt the iCenter might organize a system of incentive scholarships in the range of \$1,000 to encourage teen Israel travel. Such incentives might be organized on the model of the One Happy Camper program of summer camp incentives sponsored and coordinated by the Foundation for Jewish Camp for the field of Jewish overnight camps.
 - Some informants suggested the iCenter might take a leading role in greatly increasing the amount of need-based scholarship available to support teen Israel travel.
 - One informant suggestion that the iCenter create a database centralizing information about existing scholarship resources.

Mapping the Field of Teen Israel Travel

APPENDIX A

KEY INFORMANTS CONSULTED

(alphabetical by agency)

1. Alexander Muss High School in Israel—Jonah Geller, CEO
2. American Hebrew Academy—Glenn Drew, Executive Director
3. BBYO—Rabbi David Kessel, Chief Program Officer
4. Bnei Akiva—Steven Frankel, Israel Program Director
5. The Bronfman Youth Fellowships—Rebecca Voorwinde, Director of Strategy and Community Engagement
6. Bukharian Teen Lounge (Forest Hills, NY)—Zhanna Beyl, Coordinator
7. Camp JRF and Noar Chadash (Reconstructionist Movement)—Rabbi Isaac Saposnick, Director
8. Canada Israel Experience—Michael Soberman, National Director
9. Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School—Aileen Goldstein, Chair of Jewish History and Israel Engagement Department
10. Combined Jewish Philanthropies (Boston)—Will Corrdin, Senior Israel Program Associate
11. Community Foundation for Jewish Education of Metropolitan Chicago—
 - William J. Rubin, Executive Director and Chief Professional Officer
 - Ety Dolgin, Master Educator
12. Foundation for Jewish Camp—
 - Alina Bitel, Program Director, Engagement Initiatives
 - Rebecca Leibowitz, Program Manager
 - Rabbi Avi Katz Orlow, Jewish Education Specialist
 - Rabbi Eve Rudin, Director, Camp Excellence and Advancement
13. Friends of Israel Scouts—Maya Avitan, Director of Israel Summer Programs
14. Gann Academy (Waltham MA)—Shoshanah Zaritt, Director of Junior and Senior Programs
15. Golda Och Academy (W. Orange NJ)—Lilach Bluevise, Director of Israel Programming
16. Habonim Dror North America—Talia Spear, Mazkira
17. Hadassah (Young Judaea)—Diana Diner, Senior Manager, Short-Term Israel Programs
18. Hashomeir Hatzair—Yaniv Sagee, Central Shaliach for North America

19. HeChalutz—Shawn Guttman, Partner
20. Independent Education Management Professional—Elan Ezrachi,
21. International Diller Teen Initiative—Nicole Miller, Director
22. International March of the Living—Yosef Kedem, CEO and Chair, Operations Committee
23. Israel Celebration Tours—Rabbi Lee Diamond, Co-Founder
24. Israel Experience Ltd.—Meir Hoyzman, Director for English-Speaking Countries
25. Israel Experts—Joe Perlov, President
26. Israel Sci-Tech Schools Network—Allison Lyons, Development Officer
27. Israel Way (Egged Tours & Oranim)—Gadi Ben-Dov, Director of North American Department
28. JCC Maccabi Experience, JCCA—Dan Deutsch, Director
29. Jewish National Fund—Rabbi Eric M. Lankin, Chief of Institutional Advancement and Education
30. Keshet—Yitzhak Sokoloff, Founding Director
31. Lapid Coalition for High School Programs in Israel—Gideon Shavit, Chairman
32. Marks JCH of Bensonhurst (Brooklyn)—Violetta Shmulenzon, Director of Camping and Leadership Development
33. NCSY—Rabbi Steven Burg, International Director
34. Nesiayah—Charles Herman, Founder and Executive Director
35. Ramah National Commission—
 - Amy Skopp Cooper, National Ramah Assistant Director
 - Dr. Joe Freedman, Director of Ramah Programs in Israel
36. Robert I. Lappin Charitable Foundation—Deborah Coltin, Executive Director
37. Schechter Day School Network--Dr. Elaine R. S. Cohen, Executive
38. Shorashim—Adam Stewart, Director
39. Shorefront YMHA (Brooklyn NY)—Anna Bronfman, Director of Youth Services
40. Tlalim (Authentic Israel)—Avi Green, Managing Director, North America Office
41. Union for Reform Judaism (NFJY)—Paul Reichenbach, Director Camp and Israel Programs
42. United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USY)—Aviva Tilles, Projects Director, Israel Pilgrimage, Department of Youth Activities
43. Write on for Israel—Carl Schrag, Chicago Director

APPENDIX B

KEY INFORMANTS CONSULTED

(alphabetical by informant)

1. Maya Avitan, Director of Israel Summer Programs, Friends of Israel Scouts
2. Gadi Ben-Dov, Director of North American Department, Israel Way (Egged Tours & Oranim)
3. Zhanna Beyl, Coordinator, Bukharian Teen Lounge (Forest Hills, NY)
4. Alina Bitel, Program Director, Engagement Initiatives, Foundation for Jewish Camp
5. Lilach Bluevise, Director of Israel Programming, Golda Och Academy (W. Orange NJ)
6. Anna Bronfman, Director of Youth Services, Shorefront YMHA (Brooklyn NY)
7. Rabbi Steven Burg, International Director, NCSY
8. Dr. Elaine R. S. Cohen, Executive, Schechter Day School Network
9. Deborah Coltin, Executive Director, Robert I. Lappin Charitable Foundation
10. Amy Skopp Cooper, National Ramah Assistant Director, Ramah National Commission
11. Will Corrdin, Senior Israel Program Associate, Combined Jewish Philanthropies (Boston)
12. Dan Deutsch, Director, JCC Maccabi Experience, JCCA
13. Rabbi Lee Diamond, Co-Founder, Israel Celebration Tours
14. Diana Diner, Senior Manager, Short-Term Israel Programs, Hadassah (Young Judaea)
15. Ety Dolgin, Master Educator, Community Foundation for Jewish Education of Metropolitan Chicago
16. Glenn Drew, Executive Director, American Hebrew Academy
17. Elan Ezrachi, Independent Education Management Professional
18. Steven Frankel, Israel Program Director, Bnei Akiva
19. Dr. Joe Freedman, Director of Ramah Programs in Israel, National Ramah Commission
20. Jonah Geller, CEO, Alexander Muss High School in Israel
21. Aileen Goldstein, Chair of Jewish History and Israel Engagement Department, Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School
22. Avi Green, Managing Director, North America Office, Tlalim (Authentic Israel)
23. Shawn Guttman, Partner, HeChalutz
24. Charles Herman, Founder and Executive Director, Nesiya
25. Meir Hoyzman, Director for English-Speaking Countries, Israel Experience Ltd.
26. Yosef Kedem, CEO and Chair, Operations Committee, International March of the Living

27. Rabbi David Kessel, Chief Program Officer, BBYO
28. Rabbi Eric M. Lankin, Chief of Institutional Advancement and Education, Jewish National Fund
29. Rebecca Leibowitz, Program Manager, Foundation for Jewish Camp
30. Allison Lyons, Development Officer, Israel Sci-Tech Schools Network
31. Nicole Miller, Director, International Diller Teen Initiative
32. Rabbi Avi Katz Orlow, Jewish Education Specialist, Foundation for Jewish Camp
33. Joe Perlov, President, Israel Experts
34. Paul Reichenbach, Director Camp and Israel Programs, Union for Reform Judaism (NFTY)
35. William J. Rubin, Executive Director and Chief Professional Officer, Community Foundation for Jewish Education of Metropolitan Chicago
36. Rabbi Eve Rudin, Director, Camp Excellence and Advancement, Foundation for Jewish Camp
37. Yaniv Sagee, Central Shaliach for North America, Hashomeir Hatzair
38. Rabbi Isaac Saposnick, Director, Camp JRF and Noar Chadash (Reconstructionist Movement)
39. Carl Schrag, Chicago Director, Write on for Israel
40. Gideon Shavit, Chairman, Lapid Coalition for High School Programs in Israel
41. Violetta Shmulenzon, Director of Camping and Leadership Development, Marks JCH of Bensonhurst (Brooklyn)
42. Michael Soberman, National Director, Canada Israel Experience
43. Yitzhak Sokoloff, Founding Director, Keshet
44. Talia Spear, Mazkira, Habonim Dror North America
45. Adam Stewart, Director, Shorashim
46. Aviva Tilles, Projects Director, Israel Pilgrimage, Department of Youth Activities, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USY)
47. Rebecca Voorwinde, Director of Strategy and Community Engagement, The Bronfman Youth Fellowships
48. Shoshanah Zaritt, Director of Junior and Senior Programs, Gann Academy (Waltham MA)

APPENDIX C

STUDY QUESTIONS IN DETAIL

1. **What is the place of Israel in your organization’s educational philosophy?** In order to answer this question, we’ll want to understand something about where the kids who are attracted to your Israel trips come from. Are they mostly part of a single movement or parent organization? Or do they come from many places? If the former, are they part of a long-term educational program or process? If so, when and how does your organization start putting Israel on their “radar screen”? What’s the educational agenda for your trips, and how does it connect with what your kids have experienced before (and will experience after) the trip?
2. **What is your thinking or experience regarding how to leverage the power of your teen trip alumni upon their return home?** Are there opportunities for returning participants to talk about their experiences with peers? With younger kids? With parent groups? With educators (teachers/ counselors/ etc.). What about returning counselors? Parents of returning participants?
3. **What are the key demographics of your teen Israel programs?** How many participants did you have in the last year (in the summer of 2010 and/or the 2010-2011 school year). How do they break down in whatever key demographic divisions are important to you (for example, are they mostly 8th graders? Mostly juniors? Mostly from certain movements? Mostly from certain geographic areas? What’s your male/female breakdown? Etc.)
4. **What are your thoughts on how to advance our collective efforts in this critically important field?**

APPENDIX D

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the iCenter?

Strong Jewish communities are built on the bedrock of strong, positive, personal engagement with Israel.

The iCenter’s mission is to ensure a Jewish educational system that places Israel at the center of the Jewish identity of young people. We dedicate our work to igniting passion for—and commitment to—Israel in the hearts and minds of young Jews. Serving as a national address for the field of Israel education, we strive to ensure that every Jewish educational program—from pre-K through high school and from Jewish day school to summer camp—includes compelling, age-appropriate, identity-building exposure to Israel. www.theicenter.org

What is this survey about?

The iCenter focuses on the field of Israel education from pre-K through the high school years. A teen Israel experience is a powerful element of Jewish identity development. We are interested in understanding the field of teen Israel travel, in order to help grow and build the field.

Through this project, we hope to learn:

- What organizations sponsor teen Israel programs?
- How does teen Israel travel fit within the larger educational vision of the sponsoring organizations?
- How are returning participants empowered to become ambassadors for the Israel experience?
- How many young people are participating currently?
- Who are the participants and where do they come from?
- What potential interventions have the most promise to grow and expand the field?

How will our agency’s data be identified in the survey report?

Statistics will never be reported individually. Statistics will be utilized in aggregate form only, in such a way that individual reporting agencies will not be identifiable. For example:

- xx,000 teens traveled to Israel on organized programs in 2010
- The gender balance among teen travelers was xx% boys and yy% girls
- aa% of teen travelers were on programs sponsored by synagogue movements; bb% were on programs sponsored by Jewish day schools; cc% were on trips offered by private companies, and dd% came with other kinds of programs.

But we will **NEVER** say:

- The organization sending the most participants in 2010 was xx.
- The largest program provider is yy.
- The finest programs are offered by zz.

Does anyone tell the truth about their registration statistics?

Although we know that “padding” registration statistics is common, **it is extremely important to report accurate numbers.** Our goal is not to compare agencies; rather it is to understand the field. There is no advantage in exaggerating numbers. We need accurate reporting in order to produce data that can drive meaningful and successful policy changes moving forward.

How will the survey results be utilized?

Findings will be utilized to provide the iCenter with a broader understanding of the field of teen Israel travel. Findings may be reported to the iCenter’s board and to its funders, as well as to agencies with which it works collegially, and to other, potential funders. It is possible that some findings may be published.

What does participation in the survey involve?

You will be contacted by Ramie Arian, who is conducting this survey on the iCenter’s behalf. He’ll schedule a telephone conversation with the person in your organization best equipped to discuss these questions.

Ramie Arian is a consultant who works with non-profits in the Jewish community. He was founding Executive Director of the Foundation for Jewish Camp and has served as National Director of Young Judaea and as Vice President of the Wexner Heritage Foundation. More information is available at www.ramiearian.com.