



LEADERS ASSEMBLY 2016
PLENARY: I Belong to Jewish Camp
Design Theory Breakout: INTERFAITH/MULTI-ETHNIC

Question 1: How can I build our understanding about Interfaith/Multi-ethnic Families Experiences?

- Talk with them
- Find in community places (food co-ops, grad programs)
- Leverage organizations that exist (eg JOI/Big Tent - holiday programs)
- Other Interfaith organizations, both national and local
- What to learn:
 - What does being Jewish mean to them
 - What they want their experience to be (what are their expectations?) and what do they want for their kids, their partners, etc.
 - What concerns do they have and what makes them feel welcome
 - What do they need?
 - What do they want from us?
 - What makes them feel comfortable?
 - Take interest to learn - each experience and person is different
 - “You are the expert on you”
- Get into relationships with these families
- Bring Lacey or other presenters to staff training
- Meet people where they are
- Read about these individuals/groups via websites, autobiographies, etc.
- Share your own story first
- Listen in an honest way

Question 2: How could I open camp and invite Interfaith/multi-ethnic Families in?

- Specialty weekends
- Be where they are - they may not be at synagogues (Sukkah in Home Depot?)
- Create Interfaith/multi-ethnic advisory committee
- Hire from these communities
- Staff training to help break down barriers without tokenizing
- Connect families of similar experiences



- Recruitment by types of families
- Joint family camp with non-Jewish camp
- Review communications – visual reps and words
- Get listed on Interfaith Family’s Resource of Interfaith Family-friendly camps
- Reflect diversity in marketing materials
- Be careful with language (eg Interfaith – honor non-Jewish people vs. highlighting dating/marrying Jewish)
- Transform from accommodation to celebration
- People bring in people – just a few families can start the change
- Look at colleges that have stated strategies saying “we want more Jews”
- State “We welcome Interfaith Families” – call it out!
- Attract a more diverse staff – Kids need to see themselves in the staff
- (Berkshire Hills) – “Interfaith” bunk family – some staff there is Interfaith
- Question... Is the Orthodox Community having this conversation?
- Diversity is leadership
- Inclusivity statements in staff manuals, HR manuals, Websites, etc.

Question 3: What is the experience I want interfaith/multi-ethnic Families and our existing population to have?

- Broaden horizons
- Acceptance - a time when we won’t need these sessions and it “Just is”
- Blur lines
- Safe space – people who want to share do so, other people who just want to be can do that as well
- Same experience for all – no need for conscious differentiation
- Feeling welcomed
- Feeling of belonging
- See themselves as part of the community

Next Steps/Action Plan

- Give selves mandate/plan
- Connect with non-Jewish groups
- Ask non-Jewish organizations what they are doing



- Communication Audit (How are you talking about it? How do you allow people to talk about themselves?)
- Recruit Staff that children can see themselves in /Role-models
- Deep Dive: Why Be Jewish?
- Open to ways your camp may change
- Involve Board Members
- Introduce whole families to camp experiences
- Say directly/make obvious & blatant who is welcome