



LEADERS ASSEMBLY 2016
PLENARY: I Belong to Jewish Camp
Design Theory Breakout: YOUNG FAMILIES

Question 1: How can I build our understanding about families with young children?

- Partner/hold meetings with Jewish pre-schools
- Start as many conversations as you can
- Ask them the questions
- Collaborate with camping field
- Hold parlor meetings/in home events
- Engage the under engaged
- Give them opportunity to talk
- Go into community spaces. Go where they are (mommy & me, baby conventions, coffee shops, museums, zoos, theaters, libraries)
- Determine why they are awake at night
- Learn new trends
- PJ Library
- Determine what is holding them back
- Get on Listservs
- Engage professionals in the field
- Find ambassadors - camp fairs, open houses
- Find out what they want for their kids and what they hope to get from the experience
- Invite them for educational programs
- Remove barriers
- What does “too young” mean?
- When does introducing Jewish camp make sense
- Engage non-camp going parents
- Hold Focus Groups - parents, kids, new members. Get ideas, listen
- Attend pre-existing programs targeting this group
- Visit social media groups for this group (blogs and facebook groups)
- Survey Monkey
- Talk to the mohelim in the areas
- Provide more programming for them
- One on one engagement



- Find community partners (synagogues, etc.)
- Home Visits
- Hold welcoming events (on or off site)
- Visit/outreach to communities – feeder pre-schools, day cares, day camps
- Use connections (alumni, staff, board members)
- Be a sponsor of a community event – get on their agenda
- Read Parenting magazines and blogs
- Tap resources (pre-school directors, PJ Library, JCC, day camps, federations, sports leagues, publications)
- Gather information from communities of practice
- Seek out professionals from schools or organizations that train/educate educators of young kids
- Find the babysitters/babysitting programs
- Ask pre-school teachers about their definition/understanding of families with young children

Question 2: How could I open camp and invite families with young children?

- Family Camp weekends/Holiday retreats/Specialty Retreats (target niche groups)
 - Offer more low-cost weekend events for these niche groups – with a Jewish focus
 - Hire pre-school teachers from congregations to work these retreats
- Picnics
- Music/storytime
- Discount coupons
- Use the winter/off-season
- Gather in the nearest city
- Create a mini-camp to give them a taste
- Join existing infrastructure
- Utilize networks – distribute swag early! (at birth)
- Place big signs by camp
- Newsletters
- Place Swag in synagogues, pre-schools
- Blogging/articles
- Spider web out – use connections



- Send birthday cards
- Ask the right questions - what does your child do during the day?
- Family camps
- Activities to do at home - Shabbat kits, holiday kits
- Group Video Chats
- Create opportunities for families with young children to connect
- List servs - online exchange
- Partnership with pre-school programs
- Daily tours
- "Tour of Camp" Day(s) - free event, free food provided
- Provide opportunities for adults to meet
- Partner with stores, libraries, pediatricians, art studios, programs in the park, local schools
- Partner with PJ Library, congregations, day schools and day camps
- Involve parents in planning a camp event/retreat
- Recruitment Event; Concert in the City
- Offer a babysitting night
- Figure out what the issues are before we can know how to serve them
- Connect parents with other parents and kids with/peer group
- Open the definition of "family". Let the "family" define the word "families"
- Create partnerships with nearby or like-minded organizations
- Tot Shabbat/Parenting series
- Provide "safe the date: time to go to camp" follow ups and reminders
- Share camp outcomes
- Have current campers, in summer, send letters to "Pre-K" potential campers
- Video grams
- Bring in /sponsor child development speakers - position your org as child experts
- Be visible
- Provide camp staff babysitters

Question 3: What is the experience I want families with young children and our existing population to have?

- Welcomed
- Safe



- Sense of community & connection
- Right fit/sense of belonging
- Feel comfort at camp
- All senses appealing experience (food, beds, easy parking, etc.)
- Each One Reach One
- Value
- Valued
- Premier Jewish Educational experience
- A good experience; a “wow” experience
- Ability to be ambassadors
- Make the experience easier
- They have access
- Social inclusion for parents
- Friendship circles
- Safe space with understanding
- Easy to use language
- Feel a low barrier to entrance
- Differences are the norm
- Opposite of public shaming, so publically celebrate
- To choose to return
- Want them to leave an event or camp meeting wanting more
- To stay engaged
- Key words: fun, warm & fuzzy, memorable, inclusive, happy, secure/safe, Jewish, Educational, Spiritual, motivating, energizing, “wow” moments, strengthening confidence, engaging, community, interactive, enriching, connecting with other families with young children, continuity, experiential, unique, journey, guiding, immersive, lasting impact, part of a family

Other

What is success? How is it measured?

- Pointed questions about how/why did this “work for you” and did it accomplish what you wanted?
- Returning & continuing, desire to come back
- Recruiting & referrals
- A buzz (real, social media)
- Sending next Kid



- Sad when experience is over
- Public Recognition
- Public Endorsement
- Bring a renewed or new desire to do “it” at home (never too late to start a new experience/practice for/with your family)
- Mentorship with new families
- New friendships
- Joyful Jewish Life