



Conservative Judaism

A Sociodemographic Overview of Conservative Jewry in the Metropolitan New York Area

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Data sources

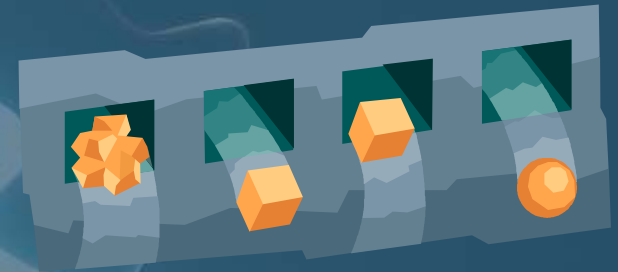
- National data are from the National Jewish Population Surveys (NJPS), sponsored by United Jewish Communities.
 - Recent information is from special NJPS reports: *Conservative Jews: A Presentation of Findings*, February 2004 and *American Jewish Religious Denominations*, February 2005.
 - Data from the 1991 Study is taken from "Conservative Jewry: A Sociodemographic Overview" by Sidney and Alice Goldstein in *Jews in the Center*, edited by Jack Wertheimer. This chapter is based on NJPS 1990-1991.
- New York data are from the Jewish Community Study of New York: 2002 and *The 1991 New York Jewish Population Study*, both sponsored by UJA-Federation of New York.
- The analyses are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the JCRC, UJA-Federation or UJC.





Denominational definitions

- Types of Conservative Jews
 - **Nominal** – Jews who *consider* themselves to be Conservative Jews.
 - **Affiliated** – Jews reporting to be members of Conservative congregations.



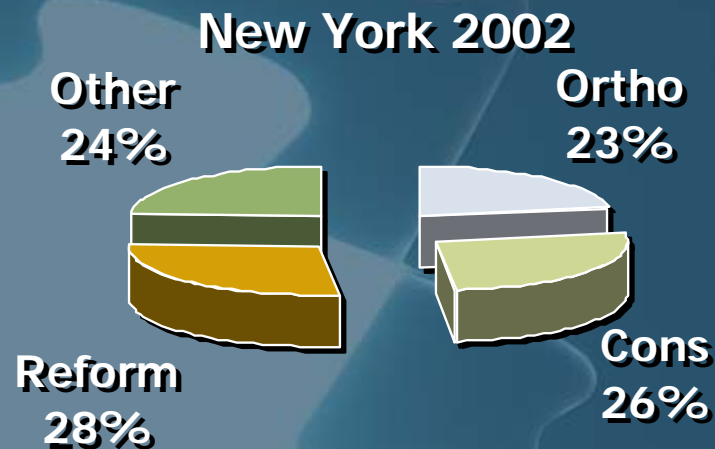
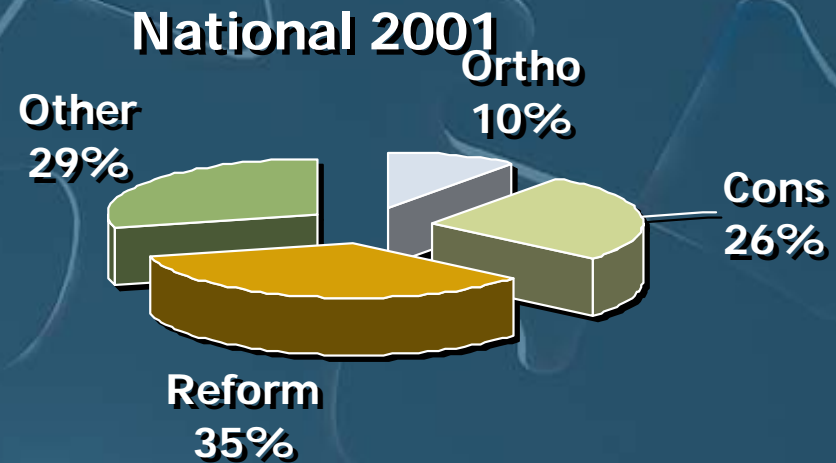
Population: 2001-2002

- Nationally, there are 1,077,000 Jewish persons in households with a Conservative respondent.
- In the New York metropolitan area there are 317,900 Jewish persons in households with a Conservative respondent.
- Approximately 30% of the nation's Conservative Jews live in the 8 counties of the metro area.

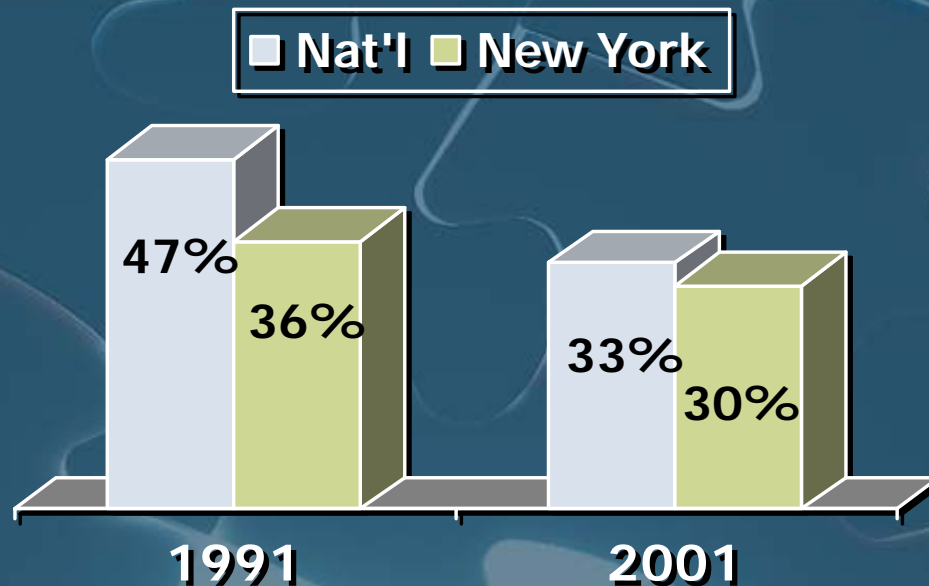


Nominal Conservative Jews

- As of 2002, approximately one-quarter of American Jewish adults and New York Jewish adults consider themselves to be Conservative Jews.
- In 1991, 35% of adult Jews nationwide and 33% of the Jews in New York considered themselves to be Conservative.



Affiliated Conservative Households



- Only about one-third of Conservative respondents report that they are synagogue members – 33% nationally and 30% in New York.
- Congregational membership dropped by 30% in the 1990's.
- Only 10% of nominal Conservative Jews say that the cost kept them from joining a synagogue.



Denominational switching

Nationally, generational retention is a challenge

- Nationally, more than one-fourth (28%) of those raised as Conservative Jews now consider themselves as Reform.
- About half of those raised as Conservative Jews (56%) currently identify as such.
- In-switching from Orthodox (29%) occurred several decades ago while out-switching to Reform (28%) is more recent.

	National statistics			
	Raised Ortho	Raised Cons	Raised Reform	Raised Other
Current Ortho	42%	3%	2%	3%
Current Cons	29%	56%	7%	11%
Current Reform	17%	28%	78%	17%
Current Other	12%	13%	14%	70%



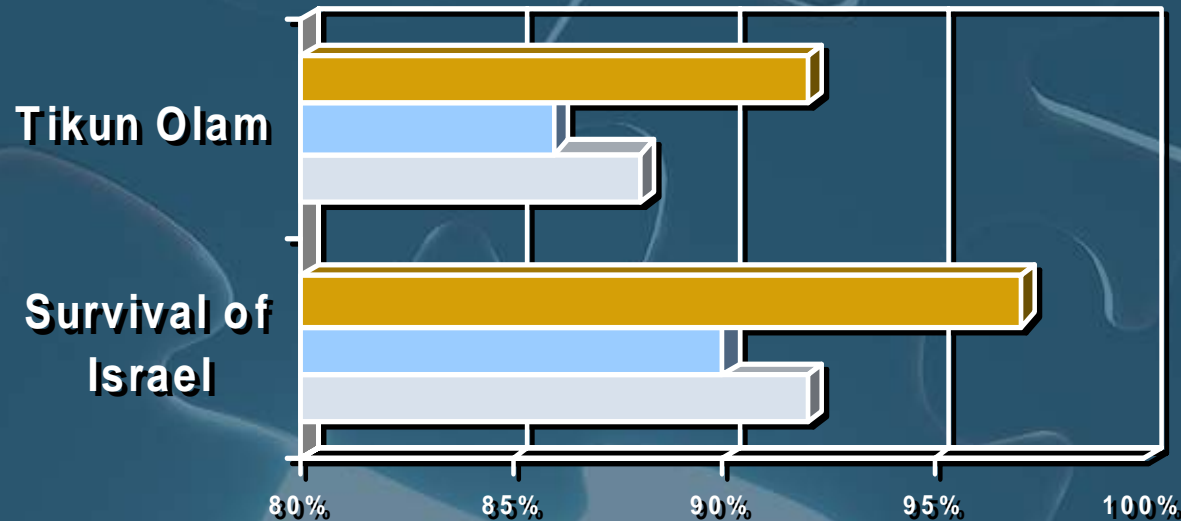
Jewish Practice Indicators

Conservative Jews

	Metro NY		Nat'l
	Nominal	Affiliated	
Usually Attends Passover Seder	81%	96%	95%
Usually Lights Chanukah Candles	78%	95%	83%
Usually Lights Shabbat Candles	49%	79%	50%
Keeps Kosher at home	21%	44%	30%
Fasts on Yom Kippur	76%	94%	82%
Attends services monthly	7%	33%	16%
Attends services weekly/daily	2%	20%	na

Jewish Values

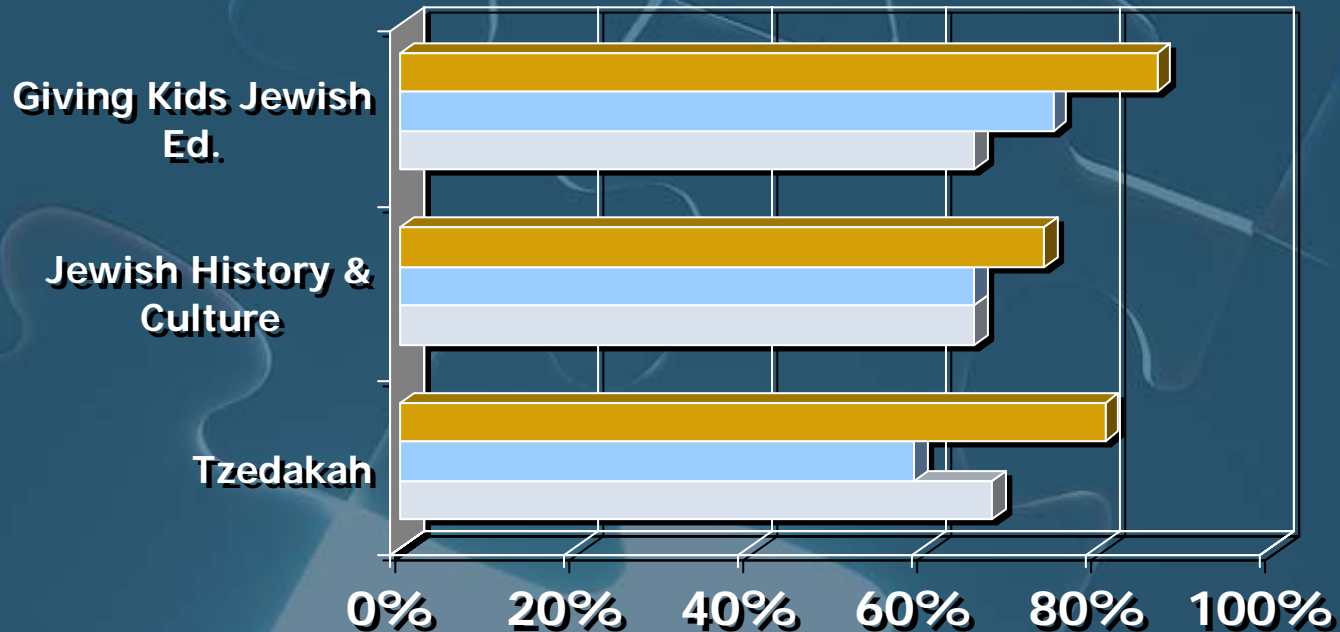
Basic issues



	Survival of Israel	Tikun Olam
■ Affiliated Conservative	97%	92%
■ Nominal Conservative	90%	86%
■ New York	92%	88%

Jewish Values

Action-based



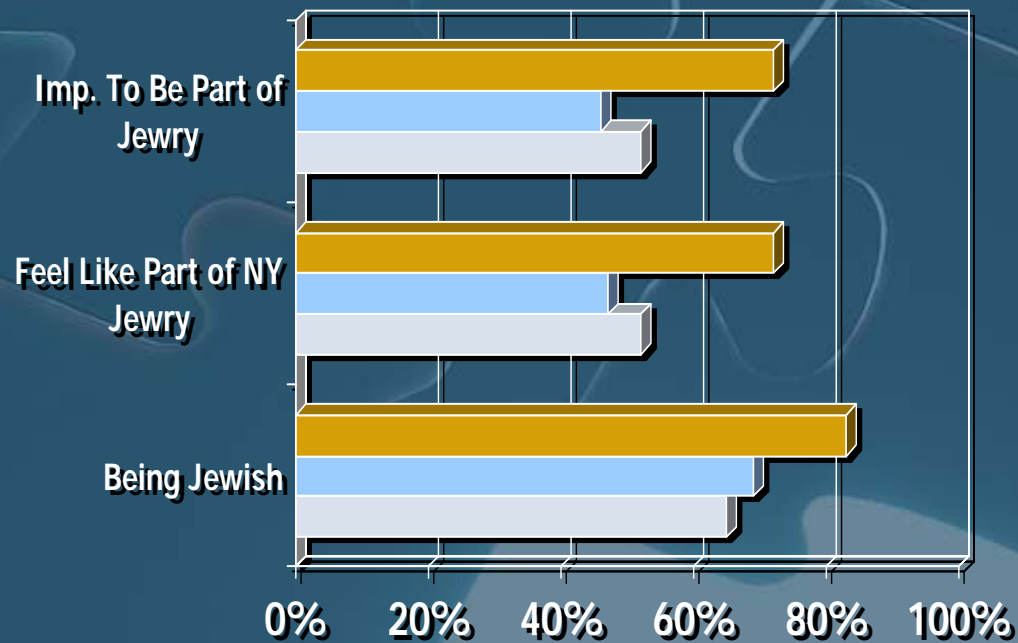
	Tzedakah	Jewish History & Culture	Giving Kids Jewish Ed.
■ Affiliated Conservative	81%	74%	87%
■ Nominal Conservative	59%	66%	75%
■ New York	68%	66%	66%

Philanthropy

- 88% of affiliated Conservative Jews give to Jewish causes. Only 56% of the nominal Conservative Jews do.
- 51% of Conservative congregational members gave to UJA-Federation compared to 27% of the non-members.



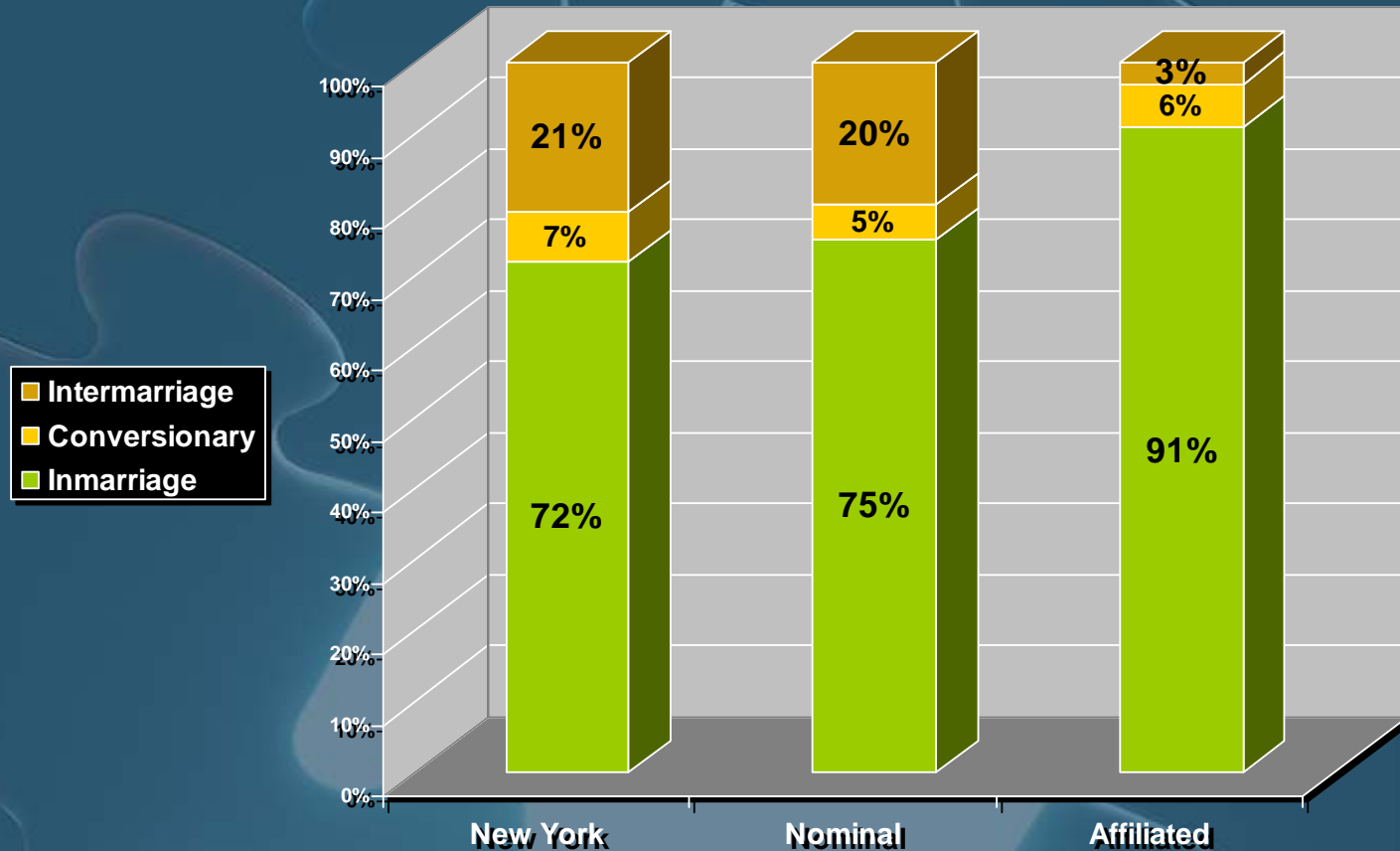
Jewish Social Connections




- Affiliated Conservative Jews say that:
 - being Jewish is an important part of their lives;
 - they feel like they are part of a Jewish community; and
 - that it's important to be part of a Jewish community.

	Being Jewish	Feel Like Part of NY Jewry	Imp. To Be Part of Jewry
■ Affiliated Conservative	83%	72%	72%
■ Nominal Conservative	69%	47%	46%
■ New York	65%	52%	52%

Intermarriage Rates



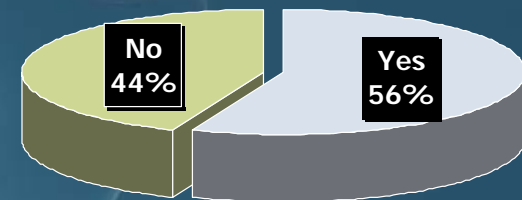
Note: Intermarriage data for all New York Jews is somewhat skewed by the low intermarriage rate among Orthodox Jews.



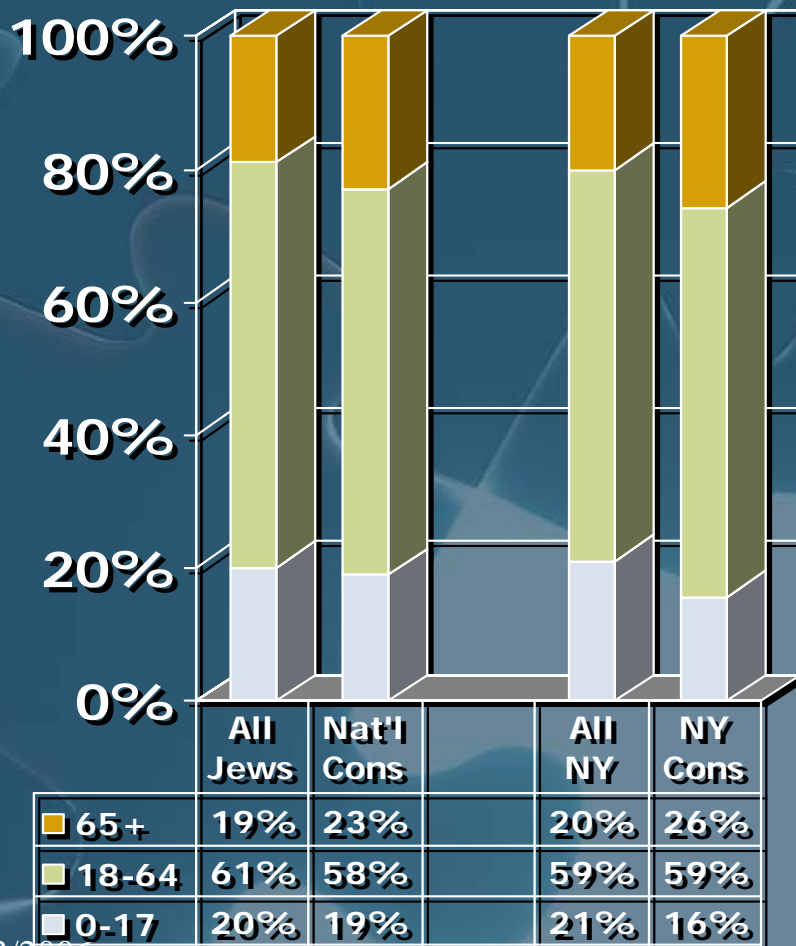
Russian-speakers

- Approximately 24,000 Russian-speakers consider themselves to be Conservative Jews (about 15.4%)
- Pockets of nominal, Russian-speaking Conservative Jews:
 - Southern Brooklyn (5,800)
 - Rego Park/Forest Hills (2,900)
 - Fresh Meadows (1,800)
 - Mid Staten Island (2,200)
 - Great Neck (2,200)
 - Southwestern Westchester (2,000)

Synagogue Membership



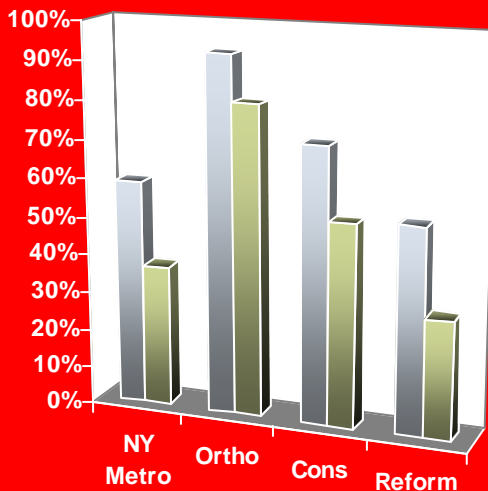
Age Distribution: 2002



- On average, New York Conservative Jews are both older and have fewer children than New York's Jewish population, Conservative Jews nationwide or all Jews nationwide.

Synagogue Membership: The Influence of Children

Percent of Affiliated Households
(with Synagogue Membership)



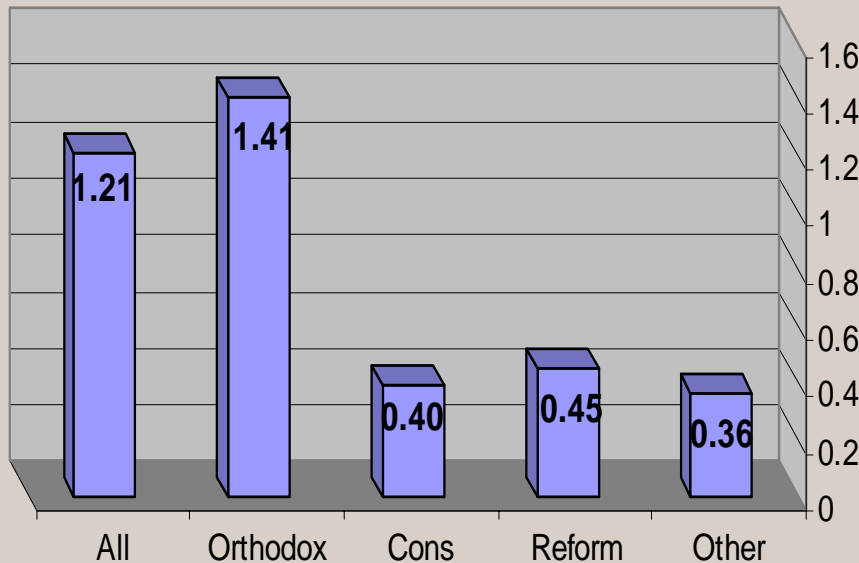
	NY Metro	Ortho	Cons	Reform
Children	59%	93%	72%	54%
No Children	37%	81%	53%	31%

Children No Children

- Households with children are more likely to be synagogue members.
- Conservative households with children are 36% more likely to be synagogue members than a Conservative household with no children.

Children

Average Number of Children per Household
By Denomination



- New York Jews have an average of 1.2 children per household.
 - Half of all households have no children.
 - Conservative Jews average .4 compared to 1.41 for Orthodox and .45 for Reform.



Jewish Education

- Approximately 17% of the Conservative Jewish children 6-17 years of age attend full-time Jewish day schools.
- Only 13% have not had any Jewish education.
- 37% have attended a Jewish overnight camp.
- 27% have traveled to Israel.
- 35% of the Conservative Jewish children under the age of 6 are enrolled in a Jewish pre-school or daycare.
- The METNY Long Range Planning Committee found that -- over a period of 5 years -- the percentage of congregations with religious schools fell from 85% to 77%.

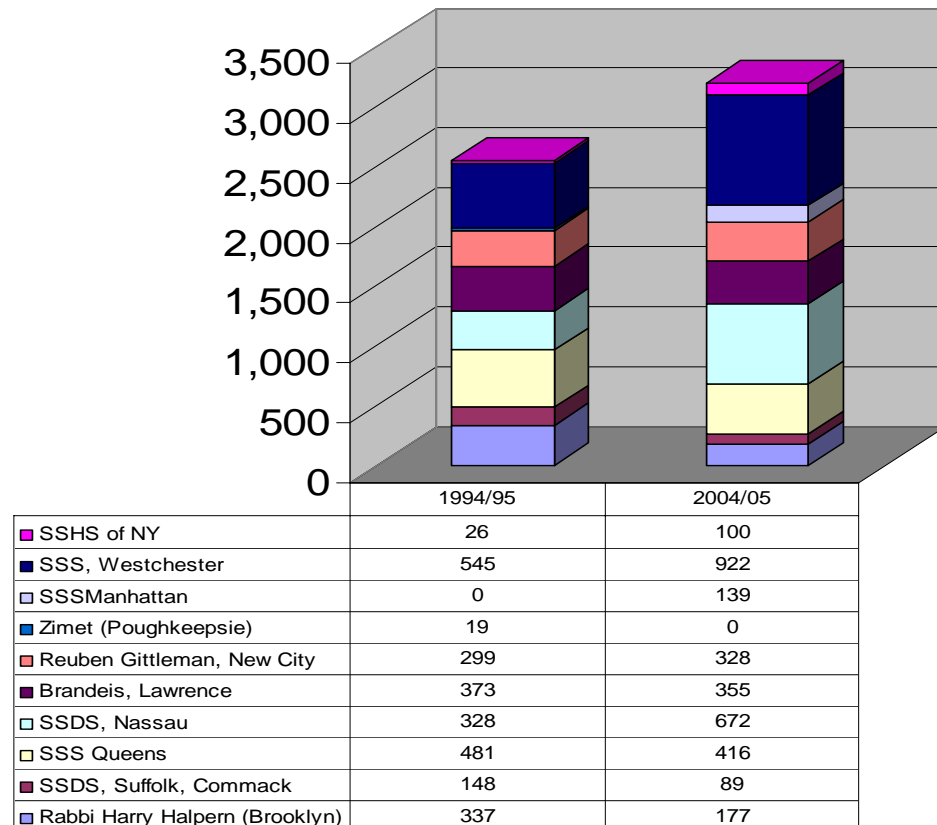


Building for the Future

Metro Area Solomon Schechter Schools

- Over the past 10 years the system grew from 2,556 to 3,198 or by over 20%.
- Increases came from new schools and in areas of marked Jewish growth.

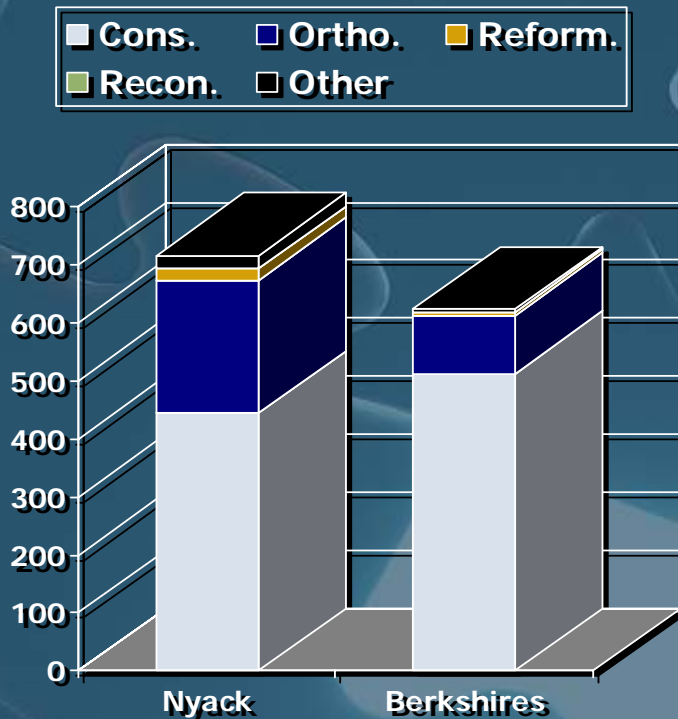
METNY Solomon Schechter Enrollment



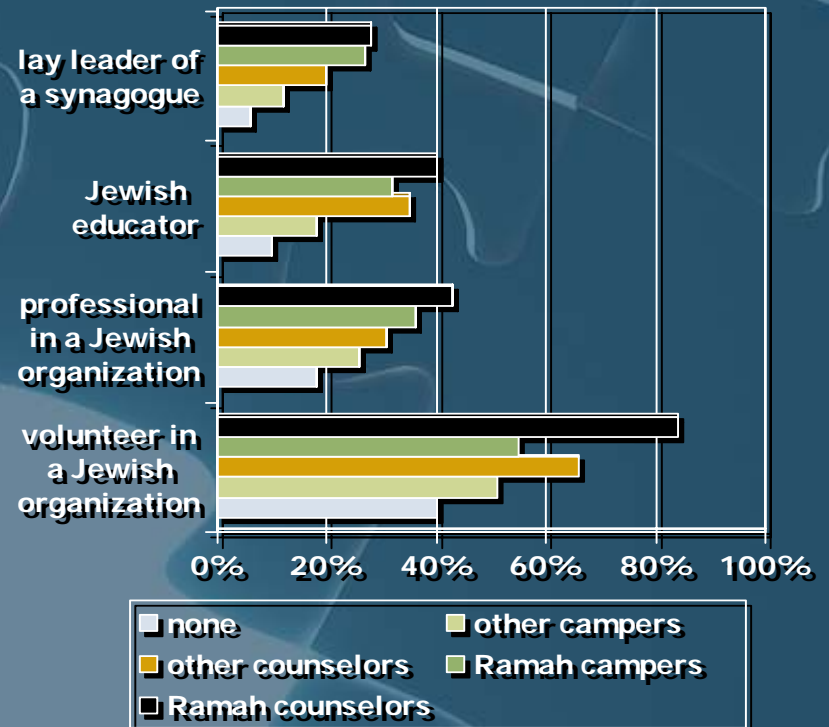
Building for the Future

Ramah Camps

Ramah Campers 2005



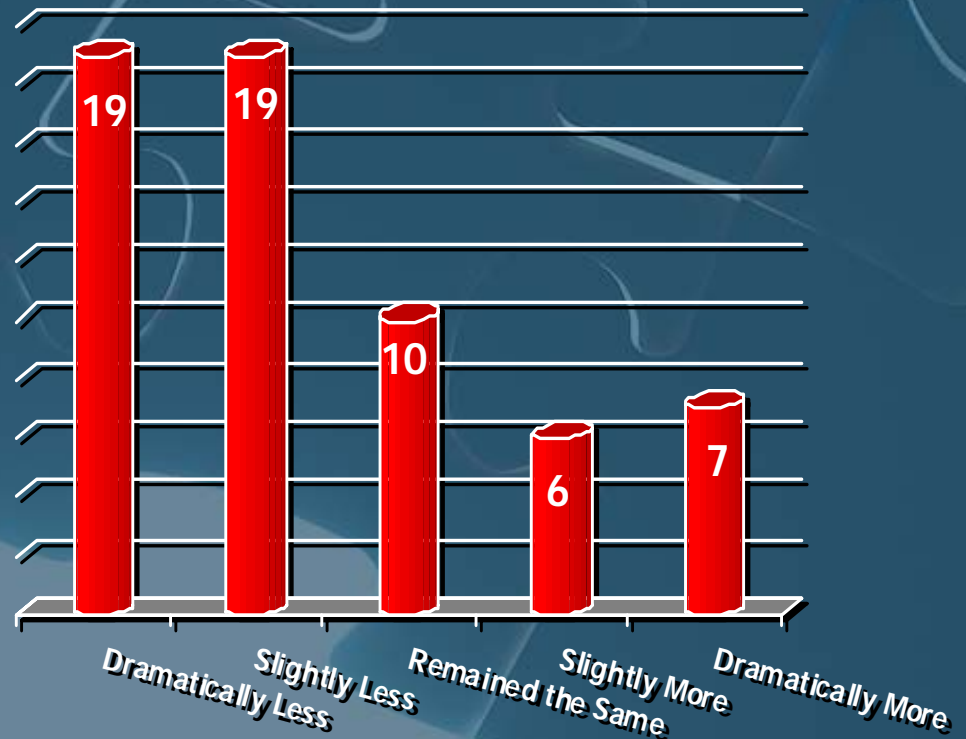
Do you see yourself becoming a . . . ?



Ramah enrollment data is from the National Ramah Commission. College student attitude data from **Research Findings on the Impact of Camp Ramah: A Companion Study to the 2004 "Eight Up" Report** by Dr. Ariela Keysar and Dr. Barry A. Kosmin

Congregational Membership

- The increase or decrease in synagogue membership can be related to many factors.
- The most critical factor may be the general demographic trend and Jewish demographic trend of the neighborhood.



Data from METNY Long Range Planning Committee Survey



Regional Considerations

- The number of Conservative Jews is often dependent on broader demographic and geographic developments.
 - The number of Conservative Jews has dropped slightly nationally and in the New York metropolitan areas.
 - Changes in neighborhoods and regions often reflect demographic trends there.

	All Jews			Conservative Jews			
	Jewish Persons 2002	Jewish Persons 1991	Change 2002-1991	Nominal 2002	Nominal 1991	Affiliated 2002	Affiliated 1991
United States	5,200,000	5,500,000	-5%	1,077,000	1,588,000	656,000	747,000
NY Metro Area	1,412,000	1,420,000	-1%	317,900	454,255	195,000	252,210

Regional Considerations

Bronx

Neighborhood	All Jews			Conservative Jews			
	Jewish Persons 2002	Jewish Persons 1991	Change 2002-1991	Nominal 2002	Nominal 1991	Affiliated 2002	Affiliated 1991
Kingsbridge/Riverdale	20,900	36,700	-43%	4,700	10,000	2,850	7,900
Northeast Bronx	13,200	29,700	-56%	3,450	11,300	1,600	4,100
Bronx Total	45,100	82,000	-45%	10,100	25,400	4,550	13,100

- The number of Jews in all areas of the Bronx dropped.
- The decrease was most dramatic outside of Riverdale/Kingsbridge.

Regional Considerations

Brooklyn

Neighborhood	All Jews			Conservative Jews			
	Jewish Persons 2002	Jewish Persons 1991	Change 2002-1991	Nominal 2002	Nominal 1991	Affiliated 2002	Affiliated 1991
Bensonhurst/Gravesend	38,000	28,300	34%	3,450	6,880	2,100	1,900
Boro Park	70,100	64,600	9%	1,000	2,590	700	3,100
Coney Is/Brighton/Sheepshead	47,200	36,300	30%	11,600	13,400	6,400	2,400
Flatbush/Midwood/Kensington	94,800	79,000	20%	5,400	11,500	3,100	10,600
Kings Bay/Madison	32,000	27,800	15%	5,600	6,860	2,300	3,300
Bklyn Heights/Park Slope	22,800	7,150	219%	5,500	6,000	1,900	2,700
Brooklyn Total	456,000	371,000	23%	41,300	78,300	19,900	36,600

- Conservative Jews have virtually disappeared from areas with overwhelmingly Orthodox populations (Boro Park, Williamsburg and Crown Heights).
- Significant numbers of Russian-speaking Jews in southern Brooklyn report to be both nominal and affiliated Jews.
- The "Brownstone Belt" seems to be a fertile field for growth.

Regional Considerations

Manhattan

Neighborhood	All Jews			Conservative Jews			
	Jewish Persons 2002	Jewish Persons 1991	Change 2002-1991	Nominal 2002	Nominal 1991	Affiliated 2002	Affiliated 1991
Grammercy Park/Murray Hill	30,700	48,800	-37%	11,700	18,500	4,400	5,200
Lower Manhattan	40,000	54,800	-27%	9,800	13,400	5,500	5,300
Upper East Side	61,000	75,100	-19%	18,300	23,900	10,800	15,500
Upper West Side	56,800	68,700	-17%	13,100	18,100	6,800	9,000
Manhattan Total	243,300	308,000	-21%	63,400	111,200	30,800	45,000

- Families with children often move out of Manhattan when their children are young due to housing and school costs.

Regional Considerations

Staten Island

- Staten Island's Jewish population grew by 26% between 1991 and 2002.
- Affiliated Jews increased while nominal Jews remained constant.

Neighborhood	All Jews			Conservative Jews			
	Jewish Persons 2002	Jewish Persons 1991	Change 2002-1991	Nominal 2002	Nominal 1991	Affiliated 2002	Affiliated 1991
Mid-Staten Island	27,700	24,600	13%	8,400	9,000	4,900	4,300
Staten Island Total	41,600	33,000	26%	10,100	12,050	5,800	5,800

Regional Considerations

Queens

- The 20% Jewish population decline in Queens would be much greater were it not for the influx of Russian-speaking Jews.
- Northeast Queens' Conservative population drop is reflects the reality of congregational mergers.

Neighborhood	All Jews			Conservative Jews			
	Jewish Persons 2002	Jewish Persons 1991	Change 2002-1991	Nominal 2002	Nominal 1991	Affiliated 2002	Affiliated 1991
Fresh Meadows	26,200	39,300	-33%	4,250	16,200	3,900	4,500
Northeast Queens	23,000	48,100	-52%	11,600	28,000	6,800	12,100
Rego Park/Forest Hills	36,900	38,100	-3%	9,800	16,600	5,300	7,900
Rockaways	10,700	10,100	6%	2,000	4,500	900	1,600
Queens Total	185,800	233,000	-20%	54,600	87,600	31,600	39,900

Regional Considerations

Nassau

- Nassau is generally strong, especially among affiliated Conservative Jews.
- Gains among affiliated Conservative Jews on the North Shore outpace the broader demographic trends and the number of nominal Conservative Jews.

Neighborhood	All Jews			Conservative Jews			
	Jewish Persons 2002	Jewish Persons 1991	Change 2002-1991	Nominal 2002	Nominal 1991	Affiliated 2002	Affiliated 1991
Bellmore/E. Meadow	29,400	28,500	3%	11,100	13,200	7,700	7,200
Five Towns	39,100	34,100	15%	12,300	15,200	8,730	6,200
Great Neck	46,100	39,000	18%	16,700	10,400	14,800	8,200
Northeast Nassau	36,400	27,000	35%	15,300	11,500	12,600	4,700
South Shore	24,400	24,200	1%	7,000	13,100	5,500	6,600
Nassau Total	221,500	203,000	9%	75,100	87,800	58,000	46,400

Regional Considerations

Suffolk

- Western Suffolk reflects a slight decrease in Jewish population with Central Suffolk's drop more significant.

Neighborhood	All Jews			Conservative Jews			
	Jewish Persons 2002	Jewish Persons 1991	Change 2002-1991	Nominal 2002	Nominal 1991	Affiliated 2002	Affiliated 1991
Western Suffolk	34,100	36,300	-6%	10,500	11,600	7,200	9,200
Central Suffolk	32,800	43,000	-24%	11,300	17,300	6,500	10,000
Suffolk Total	90,200	98,000	-8%	25,900	41,700	15,300	22,800

Regional Considerations

Westchester

- Westchester shows the greatest gains in Jewish population of any county in the metropolitan area.

Neighborhood	All Jews			Conservative Jews			
	Jewish Persons 2002	Jewish Persons 1991	Change 2002-1991	Nominal 2002	Nominal 1991	Affiliated 2002	Affiliated 1991
Southwest	20,700	21,000	-1%	7,730	5,900	2,600	5,500
Central/Southeast	54,800	39,900	37%	15,700	11,000	12,500	7,400
Northern	43,000	24,300	77%	12,550	4,200	11,600	3,400
Westchester Total	129,100	92,000	40%	37,700	29,900	28,300	18,100



Steps for building

1. Make synagogues user and *edud* friendly.
2. Make synagogues competitive offering a broad range of services.
3. Transform nominal Conservative Jews into affiliated ones.
4. Explore alternative service delivery models for transition neighborhoods and opportunities for regionwide programming.
5. Identify additional resources for areas of population growth.
6. Provide for intensive Conservative Jewish experiences.

