



PHASE II FINAL REPORT
OF THE
EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVE
of the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle

Co-Chaired by David Ellenhorn and Darci Lewis

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Jewish Federation
OF GREATER SEATTLE
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With this report, we continue the progress of the Federation's Early Childhood Initiative. We want to thank the volunteers from many of our community agencies [their names are listed in Appendix I of this report] who have assisted in the development of the overarching goals and programmatic initiatives. A special thank you goes to Bob Center for chairing the subcommittee looking at Access and Outreach initiatives. Many people provided good thoughts and feedback as we quickly completed Phase II of the Initiative, and we are truly impressed by the passion and dedication shown by the committee.

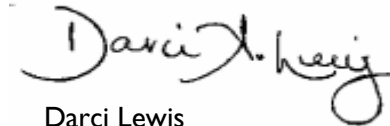
A special thank you also goes to Amy Wasser-Simpson for the continued guidance she has given to this process. Without Amy this would not have moved forward.

The next challenge that awaits us is fundraising and implementation of these programs, and the reward of better educated and more engaged young Jewish families and early childhood educators in our community. We look forward to a bright future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Ellenhorn', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Ellenhorn
Co-Chair, Early Childhood Initiative

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Darci Lewis', with a stylized, looped end.

Darci Lewis
Co-Chair, Early Childhood Initiative

Background

In December 2006, the first phase of the Early Childhood Initiative began which culminated in a final report being published and approved by the Federation Board of Directors in December 2007 which contained the following mission and outcomes vision statements:

Mission Statement for Early Childhood Initiative

The Mission of the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle's Early Childhood Initiative is to develop recommendations and strategies to significantly increase and have a positive impact on Jewish engagement of families with children ages birth to five, in the Greater Seattle Jewish Community.

In order to accomplish this we will:

- ✧ Review current local programs in the areas of early childhood and parent education
- ✧ Assess the community's needs regarding early childhood education and parent education programs
- ✧ Investigate national programs and best practices in the areas of early childhood and parent education
- ✧ Develop recommendations and strategies in consultation and collaboration with community partners to strengthen Jewish programming in the areas of early childhood and parent education
- ✧ Explore and identify financial resources necessary and potentially available for implementation of recommendations and strategies, and secure funding for implementation.

The work of the Task Force shall serve as a catalyst for ongoing dialogue, collaboration, and program development leading to excellence in the areas of early childhood and parent education.

In addition, the following Outcomes Vision Statement was developed prior to any research being conducted. This was done in order for the Task Force members to have a better understanding of what the ultimate positive outcomes might be for Seattle in taking the community from "good to great" in the area of early childhood and family life programming. Success can be measured if Seattle becomes a community of excellence in engaging families with children from birth to 5 and increasing their participation in Jewish communal life.

Outcomes Vision Statement for Early Childhood Initiative

Five years from now, if we are successful with the Early Childhood Initiative, the following will have taken place:

- ✧ There will be an increase in the number of families in the greater Seattle Jewish community who are engaged with Jewish early childhood programs and parent education programs
- ✧ There will be a better mechanism for both the identification and cultivation of young families
- ✧ There will be an increase in the number of "entry points" for families with children aged birth to 5 to engage in Jewish programming

- ✧ There will be ongoing teacher training increasing the number of stellar Jewish early childhood educators teaching in Seattle
- ✧ There will be both increased and improved Judaic programming for families with children aged birth to 5

Key findings from Phase I of the Early Childhood Initiative appear in Appendix II.

Tasks Beyond Phase I

Subsequent to the approval of the Phase I Report, a community Early Childhood Initiative Summit was held on January 13, 2008 with over 75 participants, including early childhood directors, teachers, parents with small children as well as other community agency directors and interested leadership. The materials and the results from the Summit appear in Appendix III. Following the Summit, Phase II of the Early Childhood Initiative began in earnest. As part of the Phase I Final Report the following was recommended for Phase II.

- ✧ Creation of a new task force with key stakeholders from the early childhood community as well as interested community members
- ✧ Review materials generated during Phase I of the Initiative and by the Summit
- ✧ Review gaps or shortcomings in service noted in prior research
- ✧ Develop community-wide action plan to take Seattle from “good to great” in the area of early childhood and parent education programming, increasing and enhancing engagement of families with children from birth to age 5
- ✧ Develop a budget associated with implementing the action plan
- ✧ Work with the Center for Jewish Philanthropy at the Jewish Federation to develop a fundraising plan in order to raise sufficient funds to implement the action plan
- ✧ Work with the Planning and Allocations Committee of the Federation to create a process for collaboration with local agencies to access funds raised in order for program plan to be properly implemented
- ✧ Work with the Planning & Allocations Committee of the Federation to develop a mechanism for program review and evaluation

Phase II Process and Recommendations

The first 5 bullet points above were accomplished by the Phase II Early Childhood Initiative Task Force. The Phase II Task Force divided itself into two sub-committees: Quality Jewish Education and Access and Outreach. Both sub-committees overlaid the notion of increasing Jewish identity in all of their discussions and ultimate goal development.

The following represents the goals, programmatic initiatives and evaluation benchmarks developed by the Phase II Task Force for moving the Early Childhood Initiative forward in order to accomplish the ultimate goal of increasing and enhancing Jewish engagement of families with children from 0 – 5 in the greater Seattle Jewish community.

Goals for Increasing and Enhancing Jewish Engagement of Families with Young Children

- I. Increase and enhance welcoming Jewish entry points/opportunities for families with children pre-birth to age 5.

2. Provide in-depth and sustained parental support for families with children pre-birth to age 5.
3. Increase the number of families with children pre-birth to age 5 participating/engaging in Jewish programming.
4. Enhance and support the profession of early childhood educators in Jewish settings.
5. Increase Judaic competencies in our early childhood educators and families.
6. Facilitate the development of content rich Judaics in early childhood settings leading to increased engagement by families.

Programmatic Initiatives Recommendations

The following list of programmatic initiatives has been developed in order to achieve these six overarching goals.

A. Community Early Childhood Program Manager [Applies to goals 1, 2 and 3]

The person hired for this position will help change the face of early childhood engagement with families of young children due to their ongoing interaction with those families. They will assist parents in accessing resources and bring appropriate programming to them, encouraging families with children from pre-birth to age five to avail themselves of the abundant opportunities to enhance their connections to the Jewish community through early childhood activities.

B. Pre- and Post-Birth Outreach Programming [Applies to goals 1,2, and 3]

First-time parents and even those having a second or third child are sometimes overwhelmed by the impending birth and right afterwards with caring for a newborn. Ensuring that these parents are connected to the Jewish community through pre- and post-birth programming which provides a forum for them to connect with other parents in a Jewish environment is critical during this time period.

C. Neighborhood/Community Outreach Programming [Applies to goals 1 and 3]

Young families like to stick close to their neighborhood [either the one in which they live or work] in order to forge close ties with those in similar family situations. Their friendships are formed through their associations and the more we can provide them with opportunities to interact with other Jewish young parents, the stronger their connections will become to the Jewish community. Therefore, in order to engage more families in participating in Jewish communal programming we need to bring the programming to them.

D. Parent/Family Resources [Applies to goals 1, 2 and 3]

Parents of young children do not always know where to go or how to access information about “doing Jewish” when they are ready to engage with Jewish ritual or culture. Providing them the tools through the creation of their own Jewish library of children’s books or via a traveling resource library where they can interact with knowledgeable Jewish educators and feel more confident in their ability to teach Jewish values to their children is significant and will make a difference in the way these parents engage in the future with the organized Jewish community.

E. Infrastructure Entry Points [Applies to goals 1 and 2]

These may be ways of enticing families with young children to engage earlier with the organized Jewish community.

F. Jewish Early Childhood Fellowship Program [Applies to goals 4 and 6]

Providing excellent Jewish early childhood education is contingent upon the recruitment and retention of first-rate educators. Through the creation and implementation of the Jewish Early Childhood Fellowship Program, the quality of educators and education in our community will be dramatically elevated. Through financial investment, recruitment at academic institutions of

individuals who are obtaining Jewish education graduate degrees, and the development of Hevrutot and mentoring opportunities, a group of educators committed to early childhood education will be cultivated in our community. A Fellowship Program such as this one is nationally unprecedented and will enable Seattle to be viewed as *THE* place for professionally driven, early childhood educators to develop their career.

G. Parent Education [Applies to goals 5 and 6 and aligns with programmatic initiatives B and D]

Parents of young children are always seeking new information on how to be a better parent, want to learn from others in similar situations and are looking for as many opportunities to interact with their peers as possible. By developing a cadre of trained parent educators who can go out to neighborhoods where young families live and host parent education programming within a Jewish context we will increase our chances of engaging these parents in Jewish communal activities due to the positive experiences they will have with programming they desire.

H. Judaic Content Initiative [Applies to goals 4 and 5]

With close to 50% of our early childhood teachers not having had any formal Jewish education, it is critical for us to provide an avenue for these educators to feel more comfortable and confident in their ability to teach Jewish values, ethics and culture to the young children in their classrooms. By creating a physical space where early childhood educators can come together to learn, share ideas and resources and enhance the materials being taught in the classroom, we will build a stronger cohort of early childhood educators for our children.

I. Shabbat/Holiday Outreach [Applies to goals 5 and 6]

Bringing programming to families with young children that occurs “outside of the four walls” of our educational institutions is a way to engage those not currently connected to the Jewish community. Creating meaningful ways of interacting with these families will increase the likelihood that they will wish to connect with the Jewish community since we are providing them with programs they want, where they can have fun with their young children sharing Jewish practices.

J. Salary Enhancement Initiative [Applies to goal 4]

Early childhood educators have been traditionally underpaid. Those who enter the field right after college have a tendency to leave the field after a fairly short period of time when they realize they can not financially make ends meet. This initiative attempts to bridge the salary gap between elementary school teachers and early childhood educators.

Programmatic Initiatives Intended to Advance Goals, Benchmarks and Projected Costs:

A. Community Early Childhood Program Manager [Applies to goals 1, 2 and 3]

The Community Early Childhood Program Manager will be the conduit for parents of children birth to age 5 to connect to program opportunities for their families, assisting them in increasing their engagement with the Jewish community.

1. Program manager to assist parents with program opportunities and selection, market programs, provide neutral guidance
2. Development of comprehensive early childhood family database in order to keep families abreast of ongoing activities
3. Comprehensive database of scheduled activities for children 0-5 and their families
4. Partner with OB/GYNs, hospitals, realtors and other service providers to market programming available for families with children pre-birth to age 5
5. Development of social networking solutions using technology
6. Create networking opportunities for early childhood programming professionals to learn together as well as collaborate on programming

Benchmarks

1. By the end of year 1, Program Manager hired and has begun working.
2. By the end of year 1, technology infrastructure developed.
3. By the end of year 3, an early childhood family database has been developed with no less than 750 families and their children.
4. By the end of year 3, a continuously updated list of programming taking place, around Seattle, for families is available online and, through monthly communication with the families in the database they are informed of upcoming events for their families.
5. By the end of year 3, relationships with no less than 30 ob/gyn and pediatrician offices, realtors, hospitals, mohels and other community service providers exist and early childhood marketing materials can be found in their offices, being given to perspective clients and funneled to the early childhood program manager for personal connection.
6. By the end of year 3, an interactive web-based program has been created which allows for social networking of families with young children to take place.
7. By the end of year 3, the website will have no less than 100 hits a month.
8. By the end of year 3, early childhood program professionals are meeting on a monthly basis, learning together and will have collaborated on no less than 6 programs for families with young children.

Projected Costs - \$250,000 over three years – presumes a .75 FTE, plus marketing, programming & web development

B. Pre- and Post-Birth Outreach Programming [Applies to goals 1,2, and 3]

Develop ongoing pre-and post-birth programming that reaches a wide audience of families to increase and enhance their engagement with the Jewish community

1. Enhanced Shalom Baby program designed to reach larger numbers of community members through paid coordinators and volunteer outreach
2. Coordination of Jewish Lamaze or other pre-birth contact with parents
3. Organization of Jewish PEPS groups to create communities of new mothers raising Jewish children

Benchmarks

1. By the end of year 1, at least 150 families have been given a Shalom Baby basket.
2. By the end of year 1, 30 volunteers have been trained for the Shalom Baby program.
3. By the end of year 3, at least 500 families have been given a Shalom Baby basket and have had at least 3 contacts from volunteers from the Shalom Baby program.
4. By the end of year 3, 60 Shalom Baby volunteers have been trained.
5. By the end of year 3, an expectant parent program, with Jewish content, serving one group of 12 – 15 participants, with two cycles annually is in place [serving 24 – 30 participants annually] [This benchmark is also part of the Parent Education program initiative benchmarks – see G. below.]
6. By the end of year 3, at least 6 Jewish PEPS programs are in existence throughout the community.
7. During year 3, consider establishment of a larger 1 on 1 mentoring program [Mom2Mom].

Projected Costs: \$210,000 over three years – presumes .25 FTE, plus programming and marketing

C. Neighborhood/Community Outreach Programming [Applies to goals 1 and 3]

Develop strong and consistent neighborhood programming for affiliated and unaffiliated families, in order to enhance their connections with other Jewish families and the Jewish community.

1. Increased programs aimed at families by neighborhood [e.g., Tot Shabbat, havdalah, holidays, rosh hodesh]
2. Community-wide events for children aged 0 – 5 and their families, concentrating on Jewish Holidays and life cycle events
3. Parent education programming with both Jewish and general parenting education, using secular marketing to reach out beyond the “connected” Jewish community members [This should be in coordination with many Jewish and non-Jewish agencies in order to reach the widest audiences possible.]
4. Coordination of neighborhood havurot of families with children 0-5 based on outreach efforts
5. “J-Date” for pre-school families
6. Community-wide family mentoring program for families with children birth to 5 [This is not a priority for years 1 and 2 but should be considered in year 3]

Benchmarks

1. By end of year 3, 30 neighborhood Jewish programs annually, aimed at families with children birth to age 5, are taking place, serving no less than 500 families.
2. By the end of year 3, 5 community events focusing on Jewish holidays and life cycle events are taking place annually.
3. By the end of year 3, monthly Jewish parent education programs are taking place, reaching no less than 300 participants, with one larger parent education program annually.
4. By the end of year 3, at least 10 neighborhood havurot have been formed and meet regularly. [This benchmark is also part of the Parent Education program initiative benchmarks - see G. below.]

Projected Costs: \$210,000 over three years – includes programming and marketing

D. Parent/Family Resources [Applies to goals 1, 2 and 3]

To engage families with children birth to age 5 in Jewish education and Jewish practice outside of the four walls of early childhood institutions.

1. PJ Library – providing age-appropriate Jewish books on a monthly basis to families with children between 6 months and 5 ½ years in order to help them create their own Jewish library [to be funded in part through a Grinspoon Foundation grant that has been applied for]
2. Traveling/multi-location parent resource library
3. On-line list-serve / managed blogging
4. Social networking using technology to provide ongoing parent education and support

Benchmarks

1. By the end of year 1, 450 children enrolled in the PJ library.
2. By the end of year 2, 600 children enrolled in the PJ Library.
3. By the end of year 3, 750 children enrolled in the PJ Library.
4. By end of year 3, resource library is fully stocked with materials for parents and their children to assist them in bringing Judaism into their homes and will visit 30 locations/events annually to engage families in the resource center.
5. By the end of year 3, an interactive web-based program has been created which allows for social networking of families with young children to take place. [This benchmark appears in A above as well.]
6. By the end of year 3, the website will have no less than 100 hits a month. [This benchmark appears in A above as well.]

Projected Costs: \$205,000 over three years – include .5 FTE, plus resource materials and marketing [PJ Library is also funded, in part, by a grant from the Grinspoon Foundation.]

E. Infrastructure Entry Points [Applies to goals 1 and 2]

[These are not a priority for years 1 and 2, but should be revisited 18 months into the implementation of the ECI programming in order to assess whether or not they should be considered in year 3.]

1. Communal tuition subsidy pool
2. Funding to encourage additional infant care facilities around the community
3. Encourage satellite facilities/new facilities in under-served areas

F. Jewish Early Childhood Fellowship Program [Applies to goals 4 and 6]

To create a professional path that facilitates retention of “new” Jewish early childhood education professionals.

1. Financial Incentives – these would be provided for those teachers furthering their education through participation in the Fellowship Program, as a means of keeping them in the field and teaching in our schools [Acceptance in Fellowship Program will be through application and interview process.]
2. Establishing ongoing Judaic education for Jewish early childhood educators, with emphasis on those who are new to the field [Hevruta Program]
3. Development of a peer mentoring program for educators through the establishment of a network of Seattle Jewish early childhood professionals

4. Develop a local and national recruitment program for educators – part of the Fellows program will be to develop relationships with Jewish education programs outside of Seattle and will allow Seattle to attract young Jewish early childhood educators – this kind of a program will necessitate excellent marketing materials

Benchmarks

1. By the end of year 3, 2 classes of Fellows [3 – 5/year] have been studying and learning together and a third class is in formation.
2. By the end of year 3, Fellows are working collaboratively with early childhood program directors to develop Judaic rich programming for families and other Fellows.
3. By the end of year 3, each Fellow is either being mentored and/or serving as a mentor to at least one other educator.
4. By the end of year 3, Seattle is known nationally as a preferred destination for new Jewish early childhood educators.

Projected Costs: \$625,000 over 3 years – presumes 15 fellows with annual stipend for 5 years, .5 FTE, programming and marketing

G. Parent Education [Applies to goals 5 and 6 and aligns with programmatic initiatives B & D]

To provide parents with the resources to become more comfortable with Jewish education in order to increase and enhance what is happening Judaically in their home

1. Localized/neighborhood programming with Jewish educational component that leads to the creation of Havurot
2. Providing lectures and seminars with Judaic content and ability to transfer learning to the home
3. Creating a Jewish education program for those expecting a child during the pregnancy phase, which focuses on issues surrounding the birth of a child
4. Develop a cadre of parent educators to serve the needs of the entire Seattle Jewish community

Benchmarks

1. By the end of year 3, at least 10 neighborhood havurot have been formed and meet regularly.
2. By the end of year 3, 30 neighborhood programs/lectures/seminars with Judaic content are being provided. [This benchmark is also part of the Neighborhood/Community Outreach Programming Initiative in the Access and Outreach area.]
3. By the end of year 3, an expectant parent program, with Jewish content, serving one group of 12 – 15 participants, with two cycles annually is in place [serving 24 – 30 participants annually]. [This benchmark is also part of the Pre and Post Birth Outreach Programming initiative in the Access and Outreach area.]
4. By the end of year 3, 6 parent educators have been trained and are working throughout the community.

Projected Costs: \$210,000 over 3 years – presumes .25 FTE, programming, marketing and parent educator training

H. Judaic Content Initiative [Applies to goals 4 and 5]

To create an infusion of Judaic content for teachers and school administrators to enhance their own level of comfort and knowledge Judaically

1. Resource/Research Center – this could include purchasing or development of program modules for use by teachers that include Israel education as well as basic Hebrew instruction and other Judaic content that can be further adapted in Seattle
2. Build a physical resource center to be located at the Stroum Jewish Community Center on Mercer Island
3. Development of facilitated Jewish education learning opportunities for teachers, directors and administrative staff of early childhood programs which encourage them to increase and enhance their own Judaic knowledge and assists them in recognizing the value of increased Judaic content in their classrooms
4. Implement best practices regarding Judaic content infusion in early childhood settings
5. Israel/Hebrew Exposure – in year 2 or 3 of initiative – create a Hebrew Ulpan for teachers and parents leading to Hebrew immersion in the classroom

Benchmarks

1. By the end of year 1, the Resource Center has been built and materials purchased.
2. By the end of year 3, the Resource Center is open, fully stocked with resource materials and functioning for the entire community.
3. By the end of year 2, each early childhood educator has spent at least 6 hours in the resource center, working with the materials and bringing them into their classroom.
4. By the end of year 3, each teacher has spent no less than 10 hours/over 3 years, engaging with their colleagues at the resource center, using the resource materials and bringing the teaching modules into their classrooms.
5. By the end of year 3, there is a demonstrated increase in the amount of Judaic content, exploration and engagement by students in the classroom.
6. By the end of year 3, every director, teacher and administrative staff member will have participated in no less than 3 facilitated Jewish educational opportunities which increase their own Judaic knowledge.
7. By the end of year 3, each teaching team or age group from each school will have contributed one new module/program back to the resource center for use by others.
8. By the end of year 3, at least one teacher and one parent, from each early childhood center, has participated in Hebrew Ulpan program.

Projected Costs: \$235,000 over 3 years – presumes a .5 FTE, build-out of physical space, and materials

I. Shabbat/Holiday Outreach [Applies to goals 5 and 6]

To develop ongoing programming that reaches beyond the four walls of our early childhood classrooms in order to engage parents and families who have children in our schools and those who do not yet have children in our schools.

1. Newsletter – e-news with short articles and links to resources where they can delve further into a Jewish topic if they choose but with the ability for them to easily learn something and teach their young children that is associated with Jewish holidays or Shabbat or the torah reading of the week
2. Shabbat/Holidays in a Box – ability for schools to send a “box” home each week for families with hands-on programming inside that relates to either Shabbat or upcoming Jewish holidays
3. Challah in the homes – ability for families with children in our early childhood settings to regularly “pick up a challah” for Shabbat, at little to no cost to them

Benchmarks

1. By the end of year 1, newsletter has been distributed at least 6 times to more than 450 households.
2. By the end of year 3, newsletter has been distributed more than 24 times to at least 550 households.
3. By the end of year 3, every early childhood family enrolled in an early childhood center has had the Shabbat/Holiday in a Box brought home no less than 4 times for their family to explore.
4. By the end of year 3, every early childhood family should have a challah sent home one time/month during the 9 month school year.
5. By the end of year 3, unaffiliated early childhood families who are on the newsletter list and/or receiving the PJ Library should receive a challah quarterly.

Projected Costs - \$125,000 – presumes development of Shabbat/Holidays in a Box and materials required for 2 boxes per class for 3 – 5 year olds, at each early childhood center, marketing, newsletter development and challah purchases

J. Salary Enhancement Initiative [Applies to goal 4]

Early childhood educators have been traditionally underpaid. Those who enter the field right after college have a tendency to leave the field after a fairly short period of time when they realize they can not financially make ends meet. This initiative attempts to bridge the salary gap between elementary school teachers and early childhood educators.

Salary incentives would be provided only when the following criteria are met:

1. A minimum of 5 years in the field as an educator.
2. A designated number of professional development hours, beyond STARS certification hours, per year.
3. A designated number of Judaic learning hours per year.
4. Participation in a mentoring program.

This is not a top priority initiative for years 1 and 2. There was not consensus that this type of salary enhancement furthers the ultimate goals of the Early Childhood Initiative of significantly increasing and having a positive impact on Jewish engagement of families with children ages 0 –

5, in the Greater Seattle Jewish Community. Therefore, this should be revisited in year 2, to assess whether or not it should be implemented in year 3.

Recommendations for Phase III – Fundraising and Implementation

The following is a list of recommendations for Phase III – the Fundraising and Implementation Phase.

1. Federation needs to continue taking the lead in order to ensure full implementation of these recommendations.
2. Systematic outreach to community organizations to raise awareness of the initiative and gain endorsement and participation.
3. Work with Federation marketing team to develop program narratives and fundraising materials.
4. Work with Center for Jewish Philanthropy to develop community-wide fundraising plan to include non-traditional funding sources, out of town foundations and multiple agency participation.
5. Convene work-plan groups for each programmatic initiative in order for an implementation plan to be developed which includes a timeline for initiating programming and annual benchmarks and will act as an ongoing monitor for the program.

Conclusions

This report is being submitted to the Federation Board of Directors for approval of the programmatic initiatives and Phase III – Fundraising and Implementation in order to begin moving our community from “good to great” in the area of increasing and enhancing engagement of families with children from pre-birth to age 5.

Approval of Recommendations

Federation Board of Directors unanimously approved the recommendations, implementation and fundraising goals of the Phase II Early Childhood Initiative on June 18, 2008.

APPENDIX I: COMMITTEE MEMBERS

David Ellenhorn, Co-Chair
Darci Lewis, Co-Chair

Laurel Abrams
Dr. Leah Amyakar
Cindy Benedek
Barbara Binder Kadden
Peter Blair
Robin Boehler
Robert Center
Ellice Ellenhorn
Nancy Etsekson
Tammy Federman
Deb Frockt
Barbara Goldberg
Carrie Hearshen
Margie Holzer
Connie Kanter
Erica Nash
Rabbi Rachel Nussbaum
Kristin Partridge
Moss Patashnik
Marjorie Schnyder
Rabbi Rob Toren
Bayla Treiger
Julie Warwick
Dana Weiner
Beth Weisberg

Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle Staff
Amy Wasser Simpson, Vice President for Planning and Community Services
Barbara Binder Kadden, Director, Jewish Education Council
Richard Fruchter, President and CEO

APPENDIX II: KEY FINDINGS FROM PHASE I RESEARCH

Key Findings from Early Childhood Directors Survey

- ✧ The 2007 – 2008 school year has over 464 children enrolled in 5 schools
- ✧ 75% of the faculty employed are Jewish
- ✧ 23% of the faculty have been at their facility for more than 10 years
- ✧ Funding for teachers salaries and Jewish professional development are two of the resources most needed
- ✧ Recruiting qualified staff, especially those with Judaic/Jewish backgrounds is a major challenge
- ✧ Retaining staff is also difficult – there is a high turnover rate after the third year of employment
- ✧ Providing adequate Jewish curricular materials is a difficult issue

Key Findings from the Early Childhood Teachers Survey

- ✧ 94% of the teachers are female
- ✧ Almost all of the teachers earn under \$40,000
- ✧ 47% are the primary income earner for their household
- ✧ There is a 51/49% split between Jewish and non-Jewish teachers
- ✧ 47.7% have had no formal Jewish educational experience
- ✧ Over 85% indicated that they plan on staying in the field for the next 3 – 5 years
- ✧ 90% are looking for a supportive work environment
- ✧ 85% say working with children is a key reason they are in the field
- ✧ 74% indicated they feel they have an opportunity to make a difference

Key Findings from the Early Childhood Parents Survey

- ✧ Almost 2/3 of the 307 parents who responded are between 31 – 40 years old
- ✧ 70% reported income in excess of \$100,000 and of that, 26% reported income of more than \$200,000
- ✧ 50% had 1 child between birth – 5 and 42% had 2 children in this age range
- ✧ 46% characterized themselves in more traditional religious ways
- ✧ 40% characterized themselves in more liberal ways
- ✧ 19% indicated they were more secular, 13% are in interfaith households and 6% were not Jewish
- ✧ The group was very highly connected to the community with over 70% making contributions to Jewish causes and 62% belonging to a synagogue
- ✧ 84% would be interested in participating in Jewish social activities with their children
- ✧ 65% would be interested in celebrating Jewish holidays with other Jewish families
- ✧ 51% are interested in parent education programming with Jewish content
- ✧ When selecting a school quality is the most important factor
- ✧ 15% of respondents are not sure to what kind of elementary school they will send their child

Key Findings from the Early Childhood Parents Focus Groups

- ✧ Parents have a high desire and need to connect with other Jewish families
- ✧ Geographic considerations play a critical role in choosing an early childhood program
- ✧ Parents are looking for a nurturing environment for their children
- ✧ Quality programming – real or perceived – is a determining factor for choosing a program
- ✧ The high costs associated with sending their children to Jewish early childhood programs was a factor
- ✧ Non-users of Jewish early childhood programs mentioned the challenge of Jewish holiday closures
- ✧ Some suggestions to improve EC environment: a central source of information, sponsor a parent's fair, provide support for early childhood tuition

Key Findings from the Early Childhood National Research

- ✧ Issues surrounding early learning and families with young children are on everyone's agenda
- ✧ Outreach to the unconnected and unaffiliated is important but not happening in a coordinated manner
- ✧ Tracking of participants in early learning programs is not happening in most communities
- ✧ The following are some innovative programs happening around the country:
 - ✧ PJ Library – sponsored and started by the Grinspoon Foundation in Massachusetts
 - ✧ Enhanced Shalom Baby programs
 - ✧ Early childhood concierge
 - ✧ Jewish educator partnerships with Israel
 - ✧ “Intensive Change” Program through JECEI [Jewish Early Childhood Education Institute]

APPENDIX III: SUMMIT MATERIALS AND OUTCOMES

The goals of the Summit were:

- ✧ To further share the findings of Phase I with interested members of the Jewish community, including those currently working in early childhood education
- ✧ Pose questions to Summit participants and seek feedback in three areas:
 - ✧ Identity – outreach issues
 - ✧ Quality – teacher training and curriculum issues
 - ✧ Access – financial, geographic and other barriers to greater engagement by the community with young children and their parents
- ✧ Generate enthusiasm and garner participants for Phase 2 of the Early Childhood Initiative
- ✧ Expose Federation leadership and potential funders to a new collaborative planning model and the community improvement that can be achieved through innovative programming

The Summit participants were able to participate in two different breakout sessions dealing with the three topics mentioned above. Facilitators for each of the breakouts were provided with background and guide questions to assist them with the discussions which appear below.

JEWISH IDENTITY: How do we develop a comprehensive community-wide program to cultivate Jewish identity for families with children 0-5?

Background: Families with children between the ages of birth to 5, who engage in Jewish early childhood education and parent education, are more likely to maintain their connection with the organized Jewish community in the future. This includes more children attending Jewish day and religious schools, participating in Jewish camping and Israel experiences and increased Jewish philanthropy over time.

We feel it is important to engage more families with children between birth and 5 in the Jewish community and Jewish communal life and enhance their lifelong Jewish identity.

1. How do we create welcoming and compelling Jewish programming that will attract young families?
2. How do we ensure Jewish connections with young families are maintained?
3. How do we ensure Jewish identity is promoted and nurtured in Jewish early childhood centers?
Outside of Jewish early childhood centers?
4. What should the components of an engaging Jewish identity programming look like to attract young families?

QUALITY JEWISH EDUCATION: How do we continually improve Jewish early learning, in all settings, for children ages 0-5 and their parents?

Background: Families with children between the ages of birth to 5, who engage in Jewish early childhood education and parent education, are more likely to maintain their connection with the organized Jewish community in the future. This includes more children attending Jewish day and religious schools, participating in Jewish camping and Israel experiences and increased Jewish philanthropy over time.

Our local survey, along with national research indicates that when choosing an early childhood center, parents look for quality first. Teachers and directors shared that additional resources are required in order to provide the stellar quality Jewish early childhood education our community desires.

1. What do we mean by quality Jewish early learning programming? [Make a list with group]
2. How do we continually improve the quality of Jewish early learning, in all settings, for children ages 0-5 and their parents [i.e., teacher education, parent education, and curriculum]?
3. How do we bring quality Jewish early learning into the home for young families?
4. In your role as director/teacher/parent/community leader what do you need to make a successful quality Jewish early childhood program?

ACCESS & OUTREACH: How do we ensure multiple outreach/access/entry points into Jewish early learning of families with children ages 0-5?

Background: Families with children between the ages of birth to 5, who engage in Jewish early childhood education and parent education, are more likely to maintain their connection with the organized Jewish community in the future. This includes more children attending Jewish day and religious schools, participating in Jewish camping and Israel experiences and increased Jewish philanthropy over time.

We feel it is important to engage more families with children between birth and 5 in the Jewish community and Jewish communal life.

1. Who are the people we want to reach? What is their make-up? What are their interests? How do they want to connect? How do we best reach them?
2. [Facilitators should make sure that most of these groups are mentioned during discussion.]
 - ✧ Unaffiliated
 - ✧ Interfaith
 - ✧ Those already connected
 - ✧ LGTBQ
 - ✧ Single parents
 - ✧ Special needs
 - ✧ Grandparent/foster parents rising children
 - ✧ Financially indigent
3. How do we make sure that barriers to participation are avoided? This includes: geographic, financial, religious
4. How do we ensure outreach and multiple outreach/ access/entry points into Jewish early learning for families with children ages 0-5?
5. How do we effectively reach out to young Jewish families that are unconnected and unaffiliated and bring them into the Jewish community?

At the conclusion of the Summit, the key points generated during each breakout were shared with the entire group and the following emerged:

Jewish Identity

- ✧ 1st contact critical when families call about connecting Jewishly
- ✧ Community concierge would be way for families to have “one-stop” shopping
- ✧ Costs – need to lower barrier to participation, 1st year subsidy to get them in the door
- ✧ Tracking and following consumers in programs; where do they go afterwards
- ✧ Public space Judaism
- ✧ Welcoming aspect critical, mentoring of people in programs
- ✧ Programs targeted at kids also public space follow up critical
 - ✧ Marketing concierge

Quality Jewish Education

- ✧ Ongoing quality teacher education especially Jewish education
- ✧ Alternative school options for holiday closures
- ✧ Mentorship
- ✧ New member clearinghouse
- ✧ Childcare at every Jewish program
- ✧ Teaching critical thinking skills
- ✧ Qualified Jewish education program
- ✧ Quality Israel programming
- ✧ PJ Library – grandparent adoption
- ✧ Excellent faculty, facilities
- ✧ Well compensated teachers
- ✧ Accessible facilities
- ✧ Establish goals – how to measure and develop accountability and evaluate success
- ✧ Faculty & staff training
- ✧ Resources for faculty to learn best practices
- ✧ Bring home resources for increased home practice
- ✧ Curriculum development
- ✧ What to make happen - space, programs, quality faculty, marketing, multiple entry points, parent involvement, money to fuel desires

Access and Outreach

- ✧ Community concierge
- ✧ Welcoming skills as a community
- ✧ Free programming to bring people in
- ✧ Reduce financial barriers
- ✧ Easy way to learn about available scholarships
- ✧ Community wide partnerships
- ✧ Effective follow thru and follow-up
- ✧ Public space programming
- ✧ Parent focus/partnership with hospitals & OBGYN offices