

COMMUNAL PROGRAMMING: A CONSTRUCTIVE RESPONSE TO INTERMARRIAGE

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Because all outreach programming is still innovative and experimental, it is crucial during the community planning process to be attentive to the boundaries of Jewish life that such efforts challenge, to establish a common language of discourse about intermarriage, to involve a broadly representative planning constituency, and to resolve turf questions. A variety of planning processes and programs in Jewish communities around the country illustrate the guidelines and challenges in planning outreach to the intermarried.

In the last two decades, the American Jewish community has moved from a dawning awareness of the rising incidence of intermarriage to a call to community action. During this time intermarriage and what to do about it moved to the forefront of concern at national conventions, increasing attention was devoted to studying the results of Jewish demography, and one by one, communal agencies grappled with reframing their language of discourse. The traditional response of Tevye in "Fiddler on the Roof" proved unsatisfactory to intermarrying couples who did not view their marital choice as a rejection of Judaism, certainly did not provide comfort to parents who were unprepared to "sit shiva" for their children, and left Jewish institutions feeling impotent and immobilized. Although the Jewish community was not prepared to condone intermarriage, neither was it ready to reject intermarrieds. Out of this crisis, a new direction of outreach emerged. This article examines the process of community planning for outreach to intermarrieds and their families, its guidelines and challenges, and showcases program

models that have been successful in a variety of institutional settings and communities around the country.

Outreach to the intermarried now has behind it a decade of practical hindsight. Although some communities and the Reform movement in particular have gained considerable experience through careful planning and trial-and-error hard work, it is safe to state that any programming for intermarrieds is still innovative and experimental. What we have learned most poignantly of all is that, the more we think we know, the more we are challenged to be cautious in our assumptions and the more we must be attentive to the boundaries of Jewish life that this work confronts.

In planning outreach to intermarrieds, the boundaries of Jewish life present challenges that are far different from what would be confronted in planning services for the aging. These challenges, if not heeded, will undermine the potential for success in these efforts.

COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS: GUIDELINES AND CHALLENGES

Problem Identification Phase

During the problem identification phase, information is gathered and analyzed in order to define the target population and

Based on a workshop presented at the Paul Cowan Memorial Conference on Intermarriage, Conversion, and Outreach at the City University of New York, October 24, 1989

program goals, the planning constituency is assembled, and values related to the program effort are clarified. *Even if the need for outreach is clearly demonstrated by demographic or needs assessment studies, it is crucial to establish a common language of discourse about intermarriage and engage in the irresolvable religious debates.*

The issue of expending resources on those Jews who martyr out of the faith must be discussed openly. Variants of these questions will likely be expressed and deserve intellectually honest replies: Does reaching out to intermarrieds imply condoning intermarriage? Why waste community dollars on "bad" Jews or non-Jews when there are so many "good" Jews whose needs are not being adequately met? Can we be responsible and maintain the integrity of Judaism's boundaries without discussing or planning for prevention or conversion?

Although discussing these questions will most likely be very time consuming, they must be addressed seriously. The answers will determine who participates in the planning process, whether the plan will be supported by the community, the goals of the outreach effort, and whom the programs will target. Through such discussion, the community can move beyond the "outreach implies condoning" debate to develop an action-oriented alternative to hand-wringing. A common language of discourse can be based on such responses as "While we don't condone intermarriage, we do not reject Jews who intermarry. We are not telling Jews, 'Go out and martyr whomever you wish, then come back to the program we have for you,'" and "We are dealing with after the fact, not the beginning."

To some extent the segment of the community that initiates the planning process determines its planning constituency. However, the broader the community that is sponsoring the outreach effort, the more representative of different populations and religious perspectives the constituency will need to be. For example, the planning constituency for a Reconstructionist synagogue developing a program for its own

members will probably include synagogue staff and board members and individuals who reflect the needs of the program's intended target population. In contrast, a Jewish family service or a federation intending to create a long-range plan for the entire Jewish community will wisely build support among those who could misunderstand or potentially sabotage the planning process. Such a broader group should discuss with and consider the possibility of including the Orthodox community, rabbis, Jewish partners in marriages in which there has been no conversion, and non-Jewish partners. The sensitivity achieved in the clarification of language and values will determine whom the community will include and who will feel comfortable remaining a part of this planning constituency.

Implementation Phase

During the implementation phase of planning, the program proposal is developed, funding is secured, and the program is offered and marketed to its target group. In any successful planning process, the support of important leadership is maintained throughout the implementation phase.

One of the most challenging issues that must be resolved during this phase is the turf question—which community agency or institution should assume responsibility for outreach programs. The answers to the following questions will determine which community institutions assert leadership (assuming there is more than one option), where the program will be offered, who will conduct it, how its leaders will be trained, how it will be structured, and what will be its content.

- What resources are available and most capable of asserting leadership?
- Is intermarriage a family problem, a reflection of ineffective Jewish education, a result of inadequate access to community resources, the impact of religious values and lifestyle, or merely serendipity?

- Will Centers host the program out of concern that intermarrieds will be too threatened to enter a synagogue? Will synagogues take the lead in order to dispel this anxiety?
- Will social workers or rabbis present the face of the Jewish community?
- What will be the criteria for hiring staff? Can a social worker on the program staff be intermarried?
- Should information about Christianity be presented? If so, should a Christian psychologist or a minister participate?
- Will the program make value judgments about choosing Judaism or remain neutral when discussing religious child rearing?
- Who will design the program and determine its goals—the Jewish institution or intermarried couples, who might have different goals?

Experience with outreach programs during the past decade has yielded valuable insights into marketing these programs. Announcements and advertising in synagogue bulletins and the Jewish press will not reach interfaith families who, by and large, are unaffiliated and do not subscribe to Jewish newspapers. Creativity, market research, and money are needed to reach the intermarried population. Understanding the target population's attitudes about paying for service from the Jewish community may determine a program's fiscal survival. Some programs initially do not charge realistic fees-for-service out of concern that doing so will alienate the already tentatively connected or marginally committed.

Evaluation Phase

In this phase of planning, the program planners, constituency, and participants (1) define what constitutes success and whether this success matches the program's original goals, (2) fine tune the program, and (3) assess its continuity. However, it is vitally important to consider the goals of the program throughout every phase of planning and to structure the program accordingly.

Success can be defined along many dimensions, both qualitative and quantitative:

- numbers of participants
- prevention of intermarriages
- number of participants who decided to convert to Judaism
- number of participants who decided to raise their children as Jews
- number of Jewish parents who can keep the family doors open
- better informed and more sensitive Jewish community

PROGRAM AND PLANNING MODELS

In this section are described a variety of planning processes and programs in Jewish communities around the country. Although this is not an exhaustive survey, it does include models that demonstrate how the above guidelines and challenges are handled in diverse settings. To some extent (and with apologies to other fine programs not included), I selected programs with which I was most familiar.

Role of Federation

In many communities the federation has been instrumental in initiating a comprehensive plan for outreach. Among the earliest examples are the *Commission on Outreach to Intermarrieds* and the *Commission on Outreach to Converts of the Council on Jewish Life, Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles*. The creation of two commissions deliberately kept separate the planning strategies for Jews-by-Choice and interfaith couples. Both established a climate of support for outreach by involving all relevant elements of the organized Jewish community: lay and rabbinic leadership from the range of synagogue movements, judges who perform interfaith civil marriages, federation leadership, individuals concerned with or personally affected by intermarriage, and representatives of service agencies and membership organizations.

The goals of the Commission on Outreach to Converts were to promote the integration and acceptance of converts into the Jewish mainstream by enhancing the quality of courses of instruction, sensitizing congregational rabbis and the Jewish community in general to the needs of converts, and enabling converts to address their own needs and develop resources. This commission sponsored a major conference, created and operated a speaker's bureau, produced and distributed Welcome Baskets to the 300 new converts to Judaism who annually entered the Los Angeles Jewish community through the "Intro" programs, and provided a locus of leadership development among converts, who, as a result of their activities in the commission, assumed positions of leadership throughout the community.

The goals of the Commission on Outreach to Intermarrieds are to increase the content of Jewish life among intermarried families and to develop community resources for them. The commission created a policy of outreach adopted by the federation, conducted focus groups among intermarrieds to learn about their issues of concern and what forms of support they would find useful, and began to build the climate for achieving these structures. To stimulate program development among service delivery affiliates, commission members have served in an active speakers bureau and worked with agencies, synagogues, and organizations to create and fund new programs. The commission involved intermarrieds in the design and marketing of two brochures describing programs available in the local area and mounted a campaign of advertising and "information evenings" for couples and parents of intermarrieds to promote their enrollment. The staff director has served as a consultant locally and nationally to agencies and other communities undergoing similar planning processes and maintains an active clearinghouse of information about local programs for families who are seeking help.

One of the most interesting dilemmas for the commission was determining whether intermarrieds could serve as commission members or on the speakers bureau. After an intense series of discussions that teased out the boundary lines of community acceptance while still maintaining a broad coalition of support, the commission developed a membership policy that Jewish partners in intermarriages are welcome to serve since Jews may participate in setting policy for the Jewish community. Regarding the speakers bureau, the policy permits only intermarried couples whose personal resolution includes conversion, for the following reasons. Such couples understand and can sensitively present the dilemmas of making choices, serve as effective role models, and present a strong image of internal emotional resolution to a Jewish audience that may be ambivalent or even hostile.

The commission is continually examining new issues that affect intermarrieds, such as the recent plethora of television programming calling attention to intermarrieds, and is beginning to examine the perceived successes of outreach activities. The commission has been successful in stimulating the creation of several programs and assisting some to receive seed grants through the Council on Jewish Life's Synagogue Funding Program and other sources.

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The most recent example of a federation-driven community plan is *The Task Force on Jewish Continuity of the United Jewish Federation of MetroWest (New Jersey)*. It was established in 1989 in response to the growing awareness that existing outreach efforts in the community were inadequate

to address the reality identified in a local 1986 demographic study—that one out of every two marriages were intermarriages. In a 6-month planning phase, lay leaders representing the spectrum of religious and secular movements gathered information on the emotional and pragmatic issues related to intermarriage, studied local programs and others from around the country, and produced a report including these recommendations, which will now be presented for approval to the federation board:

1. Create a standing committee on Outreach to Intermarrieds to initiate programs, sensitize the community, and serve as a clearinghouse for information and referral
2. Create a "Stepping Stones" type of program (see Case Study: "Stepping Stones" . . . to a Jewish ME" in this issue)
3. Support and extend current programs offered by Jewish Family Service, synagogues, and other agencies
4. Explore the feasibility of missions to Eastern Europe and Israel for intermarried couples
5. Encourage the Jewish Unity Committee to give higher priority to supporting a dialogue among rabbinic representatives for the purposes of creating a central community conversion council and expanding or combining existing Introduction to Judaism classes throughout the MetroWest area

This planning process illustrates a number of guidelines and challenges discussed earlier. First, the committee drew heavily on the experience of other communities, Los Angeles in particular. The Council of Jewish Federations and the network of experienced professionals referred the planning staff to other federation and agency staff who were able to provide information quickly. Second, the task force allocated time to explore the overarching and emotionally laden issues and, as a result of this exploration, determined that

it would limit its purview to couples already intermarried. (In a preamble to the recommendations, the task force encouraged the creation of a special committee on prevention of intermarriage.) Discussion continually returned to the "fact of existence" of intermarriage and the recognition that closing community eyes would not eliminate the numbers of intermarried couples. This discussion preserved the integrity of the more traditional, enabling them to reframe their position (that giving special attention to this population is condoning intermarriage) to an agreement that such action is necessary for survival. Third, the task force wrote the report by committee, which entailed much compromise and careful wording. Fourth, the recommendation to give priority to rabbinic discussion of central conversion allowed the task force to side-step the question of whose conversions are acceptable and to place the issue of conversion on a broader and long-term agenda. As the task force presents its report for approval, its leaders anticipate further discussion on thorny questions and a confrontation with the fiscal reality of competition for dollars needed to settle newly arrived Soviet Jews.

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Role of the Jewish Community Center

The Interfaith Connection of the San Francisco Jewish Community Center (JCC) is an example of Center-directed outreach (see articles by Mogulof and Crohn in this issue). Funded initially by the local Jewish Community Endowment Fund with continued funding provided by the Koret Foundation, this program was developed jointly by the San Francisco JCC and Jewish Family and Children's Service. The climate of support for this community effort was

created by a Task Force on Jewish Identity of the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, The Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties that pinpointed intermarrieds and the unaffiliated as populations at risk.

The Interfaith Connection operates three tracks: one-day workshops on such topics as how to celebrate Jewish holidays; evening programs on "how to" topics, religious differences between Gentiles and Jews, and raising children in intermarriage; and Groups for Interfaith Couples and Groups for Couples Who are Parents of Small Children. The goals of all three tracks are to (1) present to interfaith families a welcoming attitude for participation in the Jewish community at their own comfort level, (2) provide an opportunity to discuss the above issues in a manner that will bring meaning to them, and (3) assist couples to make informed choices without any pressure for conversion. In the group track in the 4 years since the project began, about 22 groups of six couples each have participated in discussions on holidays, extended family relationships, and raising children—the issues of interest to couples in all of the programs described.

The project is coordinated by one part-time professional who hires licensed social workers to facilitate the groups. Although there is no formal training for facilitators, careful screening of potential facilitators and individual guidance to assist in their preparation are provided. In a follow-up study of the group track conducted last year with a 30% rate of response, couples reported some conversions and a higher rate of affiliation to 25%, which approximates the affiliation rate of Jewish-Jewish couples. As a result of their participation Gentile partners were slightly more open to Jewish involvement and Jewish partners became more aware of their Jewish needs (see article by Crohn in this issue).

Key to the success of this project is the recognition that this is a long-term investment. Significant dollars are spent on advertising in the alternative press and in

maintaining personal contact with potential participants by telephone, even long before they are ready to join a group. Flyers about workshops are sent frequently to the mailing list of 700 couples. Locating the project in Centers is another feature associated with its success because of the perception of the JCC as a less threatening environment—one that does not require as much Jewish commitment as a synagogue and does not imply a "family problem" label as does a family service agency. Despite the high level of support currently enjoyed by this project, initially the developers found it crucial to deal with turf issues and accusations that they were condoning intermarriage.

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Role of the Synagogue

Synagogues and synagogue movements have taken a leadership role in promoting outreach to intermarrieds. This article does not deal with the major role played throughout the country by the Reform movement, which has piloted such programs as "The Times and the Seasons" and "Stepping Stones" (see articles by Kukoff and Heller in this issue). The role of synagogues in creating outreach programs in consonance with their religious boundaries is explored in the following three programs.

Project Joseph, a cooperative venture of the United Synagogue of America and the Rabbinical Assembly, New Jersey Region, is a comprehensive three-pronged outreach effort of the Conservative movement, which was created as a national model to be implemented on a regional basis. According to Rabbi Alan Silverstein, co-chair of Project Joseph, this project is intended to be consistent with the ideology of Conservative Judaism, which retains a strong sense of the

perils of intermarriage and a commitment to "prevention" while extolling publicly the virtue of conversion. The Conservative *keruv* responsa support outreach to interfaith couples after the fact, with the goal of bringing the Jewish spouse closer to Judaism to enhance the possibility of the children being raised as Jews and of the Gentile spouse making a pious conversion.

First, with the goal of helping Jews meet Jews (prevention), a consortium among several dozen synagogues offers special event programs for singles, such as rotating Friday night services, Sunday brunches, special interest programs, and holiday celebrations. Regional advertising and personal recruitment by rabbis, both Conservative and Reform, have sustained these activities for 6 years. Second, the regional conversion school, which predates Project Joseph, became a part of this comprehensive plan. A centrally coordinated, 25-week educational program to study Judaism, the conversion school serves individuals who are sent by a sponsoring rabbi with the intention of preparing for conversion. Both partners in an interfaith relationship are expected to attend together. The sponsoring rabbi is responsible for the conversion rituals and integrating these new Jews into the congregation.

Project Link is a 12- to 15-week educational series on basic Judaism that is offered to those intermarried couples who, during a screening interview, are determined to be clear about their intention to raise children as Jews. In groups of eight to nine couples, life cycle, holidays, and theology are presented with an opportunity to discuss how this material relates to the condition of intermarriage. The project is tied to a course for rabbinical students at the Jewish Theological Seminary who have served as teachers in the 4 years of the program, creating the potential of replicability. Among the 75 couples who have participated, slightly more than 10% of the Gentile partners have converted. Careful attention

was paid to link participants to Conservative synagogues in the area.

Since the completion of the pilot project in New Jersey, it is not clear how much of Project Link will continue or be replicated elsewhere. There is also some sentiment that the program should have been piloted in areas of the country where more intermarrieds are affiliated with Conservative congregations. Although Project Link may be in jeopardy, Project Joseph, in all its components, illustrates how the design and goals of an outreach program reflect the underlying values of the sponsors. The standards of the Conservative movement, as noted earlier, cannot accept full participation of intermarried couples without conversion. The movement continues to grapple with these dilemmas and how firm should be its commitment to funding outreach activities as the numbers of intermarrieds increase.

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Congregation Ner Tamid of South Bay in Rancho Palos Verdes, California is a Conservative congregation in a suburban area of Los Angeles isolated from the areas of greater Jewish concentration. Over the past 3 years, this congregation has developed a comprehensive approach to parents, interfaith couples, and high school students that has not only served its own members but also linked with local agencies to reach a broader audience. It is a good model of a Conservative Jewish approach to outreach.

The parents program, "For Parents and Others Concerned about Intermarriage," consists of four weekly sessions. It began 3 years ago as a parallel effort with the local

satellite office of Jewish Family Service. The agency created a program at the urging of the Women's Division, and the synagogue program grew out of response to the rabbi's sermon on the importance of outreach. Each started separately and then merged for the final session. The Jewish Family Service was concerned that couples whose children were intermarrying would not come forward in their synagogue to reveal their concerns to people they knew or to their own rabbi. By contrast, the rabbi felt that this program provided exactly the type of support that synagogues and rabbis need to offer if congregants are to turn to their synagogues at times of crises. Interestingly, the synagogue program has continued, whereas the agency program has not sustained new groups.

The goal of the parents' program is to help reinforce the parents' Jewishness and enable them to keep the emotional doors open to their children. The group, led by the rabbi, achieves this goal through discussion to help parents focus their emotional reactions; text study to enable the participants to build a vocabulary of Jewish values; presentation of the dynamics and demographics of intermarriage; and an opportunity for parents to talk to an interfaith couple (not their own children) to practice their understanding in a safe environment.

The interfaith couples group meets for seven weekly sessions and is conducted by a congregant who is a social worker. The rabbi joins two of the sessions to provide Jewish content and to help rework some of the couples' negative experiences with the Jewish community. A Friday night Shabbat meal in the facilitator's home completes the program. In its 4 years, many of the couples have joined the synagogue after participating in the group.

The teenagers' program addresses questions of interfaith dating as part of a prevention effort. Although not preachy, the discussion emphasizes that marriage choices are based on personal, cultural, and value-

based criteria and argues that Jewishness should be one of those criteria.

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Creating Jewish Memories is a ten-session program for Jews-by-Choice and interfaith couples that is offered in a small Reform congregation in the southeast section of Los Angeles County, an area of low Jewish density and high intermarriage. It is included in this survey because of its successful application of the lessons of marketing for unaffiliated, interfaith families and because it is an example of the work of the Council on Jewish Life's Commission on Outreach to Intermarrieds.

Based on the concept that what Jews-by-Choice and interfaith couples share is the lack of Jewish memories, this synagogue developed a program that initially de-emphasized the "support" element and emphasized the building of behaviors linked to rituals, folk customs, food, music, and games. Through a grant from the Council on Jewish Life's Synagogue Funding Program, Temple Ner Tamid was able to spend significant dollars to advertise in the general press, subvent participants generously, and hire a coordinator. The success of the advertising produced a crisis for the programmers, who found themselves in the enviable position of having double the number of anticipated participants. It is interesting to note that although the program designers deliberately chose to focus on ritual behaviors in an informal, educational atmosphere, the participants were more interested in sharing their personal concerns in discussion than in preparing Jewish food associated with Shabbat and holidays. The program was then changed to reflect this interest. Another interesting

aspect of this program is the serendipitous gain from the coordinator's enrollment in a graduate school of social work. The coordinator conducted a study of the impact of this program on the ethnic and religious identity of those participating families. This information can be obtained in a Master's thesis by Judy Green, "Jewish Affiliation and Ritual: the Impact of an Experiential Course on Interfaith and Conversionary Couples", submitted to California State University of Long Beach, December 1988.

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Role of the Family Service Agency

In many communities, family service agencies take the lead role in outreach through their family life education programs and in partnership with educational classes for conversion. One of the earliest comprehensive approaches to community planning led by a social service agency was *The Project on Inter marriage/Jews-by-Choice of the Louisville, Kentucky Jewish Family and Vocational Services (JFVS)*. Operating from September 1982 to September 1984 as a one-year demonstration project subsequently extended for a second year, the project had as its goal the development of a community-wide integrated approach to intermarriage. Funded by the Endowment Fund of the Jewish Community Federation of Louisville, its intention was to develop services and programs, increase community awareness, create aggressive outreach attempts, and provide support and guidance for all individuals, agencies, and organizations to develop their own particular appropriate services. The need for this project emerged from the increasing number of clients at JFVS who sought counseling

around issues related to intermarriage. As the primary family service agency in this community of then 2,500 families, JFVS took the lead to develop and implement the proposal.

The task force, composed of 28 members representing each synagogue in the area, the Jewish Community Center, the Jewish Education Agency, Hillel, and fraternal organizations, met monthly the first year and quarterly during the second. A half-time project coordinator was responsible for direct services, including one-time and multisession discussion groups in which 150 individuals participated, and educationally oriented programs, such as lectures, workshops, and panel discussions, which were presented to a range of 10 to 300 people. An average of 1.5 programs per month were presented.

Additional components of the program were sensitivity training for agency clinical staff, the establishment of a noncongregational support group for interfaith couples, outreach to unaffiliated interfaith couples and new Jews-by-Choice through inclusion on the community mailing list and free subscriptions to the local Jewish press, sensitization of the Jewish community through a series of cartoons in the Jewish paper, and the development of an annotated bibliography on intermarriage, which was widely promoted as a resource. Since the project's conclusion, many of these outreach activities have continued. The "Shalom Louisville" booklet is given to new converts and interfaith couples, organizations have adopted the recommendation that converts and interfaith couples be appointed to boards, the bibliography has been updated, articles are periodically placed in the Jewish press, the JFVS has continued its support group, and a joint Reform-Conservative-JFVS Introduction to Judaism program is held at various local synagogues under the sponsorship of the Jewish Education Agency.

This project has been perceived as successful in placing the issue of intermarriage

before the community, building a consensus for action, and creating structures for ongoing service. It is noteworthy that the ongoing noncongregational support group has raised some interesting dilemmas that challenge the agency's role as a conveyer of Jewish programming and values. Some feel that a group that, in effect, has become a havurah and provides religious celebratory experiences should be under the sponsorship of a synagogue and not a social service agency. Additionally, participants have invited Christian clergy to serve as resources for clarifying information about Christianity. This request and requests for "equal time" for celebration of Christian holidays have raised questions that test the boundaries in which the agency feels it is mandated to operate.

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Another example of the role of the family service agency is *The Project on Inter-marriage, co-sponsored by the Baltimore Board of Rabbis and Jewish Family Services in Baltimore*. Currently in its third year, this project was designed to address Baltimore's 39% intermarriage rate among Jews aged 18-29 years old, the declining rate of conversion, and the lack of religious identification among interfaith families. Under the direction of a part-time coordinator and the guidance of a representative task force, the project initially focused on parents, Jews-by-Choice, and interfaith couples. A series of single-session workshops for Jewish teens and college students on interfaith dating was then added. At the end of the first year, the project was evaluated and restructured to move away from support groups for Jews-by-Choice and parents of intermarrieds, since these services were

in less demand than anticipated, and to devote more attention to interfaith couples' groups and educational activities for youth.

This project has had impressive results. In the latter half of 1988, 606 people were served in all phases of the program. There has been a flow of program participants to and from the "Introduction to Judaism" class, which JFS co-conducts with the Board of Rabbis. This flow has increased the "Intro" class size by about 20%, which is one of the goals of the project. Additionally, project task force members are available for speaking engagements to sensitize the community, and the project has published and distributed widely a *Directory of Jewish Resources for Intermarried Families*. Plans for 1990 include both single and multisession discussion and support groups held in synagogues for intermarried couples, three holiday-focused workshops for young children and their intermarried parents, a single-session discussion for parents of interfaith couples, and single-session groups on interdating and intermarriage for Jewish youth. For Jews-by-Choice, a matchmaker program will offer peer support to newly converted individuals through one-to-one matching with a Jew-by-Choice from the speakers bureau. The speakers bureau will also seek to publish articles about the emotional, social, and religious aspects of conversion to sensitize born Jews to these issues. Additional counseling is available through JFS to families requesting assistance beyond the above services.

A major factor in the success of the project has been the collaboration of Jewish Family Service and the Board of Rabbis, a relationship that ensured that socioemotional and religious issues are addressed in a balanced, integrated manner. A further source of strength has been the task force, which unifies the support of the different disciplines and branches of Judaism represented on it and serves to stimulate the involvement of other service agencies, such as the Jewish Community Center, the local

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CONCLUSION

Developing a Jewish community response to intermarriage challenges the demographic odds of nonintervention. Although the Jewish community has learned a great deal

about how to talk about irreconcilable questions, what intermarrieds are concerned about, and how the Jewish community can address these concerns through its programs, what we need to learn most of all is patience. Intermarriage is not the result of simple factors that can be removed by the wave of a magical wand. It is not a new problem at which we can throw money and solve, and doing so will not be a cost-effective process. A constructive response to intermarriage is, rather, a commitment to recognize reality. To engage in outreach is to prepare for the long haul, both for those who would respond to an extended hand of welcome and for those who are on the inside committed to enhancing the quality of Jewish life.