

## What works?

The impact of Jewish programmes and experiences on Jewish identity outcomes in the UK

Dr David Graham, Dr Adina Bankier-Karp and Dr Jonathan Boyd

September 2025



# What works?

## The impact of Jewish programmes and experiences on Jewish identity outcomes in the UK

Dr David Graham, Dr Adina Bankier-Karp and Dr Jonathan Boyd

September 2025

JPR regularly undertakes commissioned studies for clients, using the data we hold or are able to access to explore the questions and issues they wish to understand. Our clients range from individual synagogues and schools, to major international bodies such as the European Commission and European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, and they include both Jewish and general organisations based in the UK, across Europe and the wider world. Our goal at all times is to provide empirical insights that support the planning and policy work of organisations seeking to support Jewish life.

This study and report were funded and specifically prepared for the Jewish Leadership Council (JLC) as part of its 'Forge the Future' programme. Forge the Future is a community plan developed by the JLC following wide community consultation post October 7, 2023, one of whose core strategic objectives is empowering and supporting next generations. This includes a detailed exploration into what the community leadership might do to strengthen young people's Jewish identity. This study was commissioned as part of the JLC's research for this project.

## **/ Table of contents**

<b>/ Executive summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>/ Introduction</b>	<b>6</b>
Measuring impact	6
Measuring Jewish identity	8
Selecting programmes and Jewish experiences	10
<b>/ Setting up the test</b>	<b>12</b>
Testing upbringing	12
Historical timeline	15
Understanding variance	17
<b>/ Results</b>	<b>18</b>
Regression 1: Jewish upbringing type (full sample)	19
▪ Variance explained	19
▪ Regression 1 results	20
▪ Key insights from Regression 1	23
Regression 2: Jewish upbringing practices (full sample)	24
▪ Variance explained	24
▪ Regression 2 results	25
▪ Key insights from Regression 2	27
Regression 3: Jewish upbringing type (generational comparison)	28
▪ Variance explained	28
▪ Regression 3 results	29
▪ Key insights from Regression 3	31
Regression 4: Jewish upbringing practices (generational comparison)	32
▪ Variance explained	32
▪ Regression 4 results	34
▪ Key insights from Regression 4	35
The impact of short- and long-term Israel programmes	37
<b>/ Summary of key findings</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>/ Reflections on the findings</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>/ Acknowledgements</b>	<b>46</b>



## / Executive summary

This study involves advanced statistical analysis of data from the [JPR National Jewish Identity Survey](#) to assess the impact of different Jewish educational and family experiences on the Jewish identities of British Jews. It does so from an objective and independent standpoint, following carefully what the data tell us about the central question underpinning our enquiry, namely 'what works?'.

Jewish identity formation is inherently complex. Even siblings raised in the same Jewish home, exposed to identical experiences, often exhibit very different identities in adulthood. Therefore, there is much about how a persons' Jewish identity is shaped that remains elusive. **In many respects, we find that influencing Jewish identity outcomes is beyond the community's control.** However, it is possible to measure the impact of different types of educational interventions. Given the complexity of Jewish identity, the fact that we are able to do so at all is notable and beneficial for community planning and understanding.

In most cases, of the eight Jewish identity outcomes tested in this study – including one's level of religiosity, the degree to which they are communally engaged and how emotionally attached they feel to Israel – the amount of 'variance explained' was low. This means that **much of what explains the outcomes we observed is a result of untested and untestable miscellaneous variables.**

**However, of the things we can measure, the type of Jewish upbringing people have is the most important predictor of their Jewish identity outcomes,** with 'Orthodox' or 'Traditional' upbringings strongly influencing all eight outcomes.

A separate analysis undertaken as part of this study testing three Jewish practices experienced at home showed that **lighting Friday night candles every week while growing up impacted seven of the eight outcomes.**

Given the relative importance of Jewish upbringing, supporting and **empowering parents** to create a strong Jewish home environment should be given serious consideration.

The impact of nine key Jewish experiences – including Jewish schooling, Jewish youth movement engagement and Israel programme participation – was examined after controlling for demographic and upbringing variables. **This revealed that membership of a university JSoc had the greatest additional impact or 'value add' impact on seven out of the eight identity outcomes tested.** What explains this? It is likely that those who choose to join a JSoc were *already* set on a particular engaged Jewish trajectory, choosing what we might term as 'in-gagement' as opposed to 'out-gagement.' In simple terms, the dye may well already be cast by this stage.

The type of Jewish upbringing people had was much more impactful on those aged 40 to 59 than those aged 16 to 39. On the other hand, the key Jewish interventions people had

experienced were slightly more impactful on the younger age group than the older one. This suggests that the impact of the type of Jewish upbringing people have is partly overshadowed earlier in life when the key Jewish experiences they have had are still relatively 'fresh.' But as time passes, their impact diminishes and the impact of their upbringing comes to the fore. **In the long run, and to the extent it can be measured at all, the data show that the type of Jewish upbringing people have endures more readily than the key Jewish educational experiences they had, leaving a deeper, more lasting imprint.**

Noting that younger adults have grown up in a very different political, technological and educational environment than their parents, we show that in six out of the eight Jewish identity outcomes measured, identity traits tend to be stronger the older people are, begging the question: **Will younger people eventually resemble the older, more engaged ones, or will they plough their own furrow influenced by their unique generational experiences?** In sociological terms, this is known as the "*generation versus life stage*" conundrum. In reality, both the external environment *and* the change in priorities that come with ageing, likely underlie these identity outcomes.

A separate assessment in this study showed that after accounting for people's Jewish upbringing and the other key Jewish experiences they have had, **Israel programmes** have a limited impact on Jewish identity outcomes. However, participating in a yeshiva programme is more impactful than participating in a gap year programme which, in turn, is more impactful than participating in one short-term Israel programme.

The data show that the expansion of Jewish schooling in the UK has taken place alongside a decline in youth movement engagement. Noting that the long-term impact of both is ultimately limited, **youth movement involvement is found to be *more* impactful than Jewish schooling.** Given it is also less costly, from a 'value-added' perspective with limited resources, prioritising youth movement investment should be considered.

Ultimately, it is more realistic and helpful to conceptualise Jewish identity development as continually emergent from the cumulative impact of multiple experiences over time. No programme or experience takes place in a vacuum. Like a car, each part, on its own is necessary, but not sufficient, to make it work. Similarly, each key experience is necessary, but by itself is insufficient to develop Jewish identity. When considering how best to bolster Jewish identity, **we would encourage a conceptual shift away from 'silver bullet' thinking – i.e. that Jewish identity is the outcome of any single particular experience – and towards understanding these different components as fitting together into a broader Jewish ecosystem.** Programmes and experiences still matter, even if they may not have as much measurable long-term impact as assumed.

## / Introduction

'What works?' is a question that lies at the heart of Jewish community life. It seeks to uncover which Jewish experiences leave a lasting imprint on people, shaping their Jewish identity later in life. More specifically, are the programmes that have been provided for decades by the UK Jewish community achieving their intended impact? Are they strengthening Jewish identity as many hope—or believe—they do? Which programmes have the greatest impact, and which aspects of Jewish identity do they influence? Identifying the pivotal experiences that mould Jewish outcomes is essential for anyone dedicated to building the Jewish future: funders, programme coordinators, parents, and community leaders alike. This report tackles these questions head-on by employing advanced statistical analyses to provide a sound empirical basis for understanding impact.

## / Measuring impact

The question of 'what works?' seems straightforward—one can often 'sense' whether a particular programme is having a positive impact on participants—but genuinely measuring it is anything but simple. One common approach to assessing programme impact involves 'before and after' surveys or interviews to track changes in participants' knowledge, behaviours or feelings after experiencing a programme. However, such a method has significant limitations. What if the programme spans many years, such as Jewish schooling? How do we ensure that any observed changes are permanent rather than fleeting? How can we be certain that any detected change was due to the programme itself and not to other concurrent factors? What if participation wasn't random and attracted individuals already interested or particularly motivated? And what about measuring the impact of less tangible, non-programmatic, influences on Jewish identity, such as growing up in a kosher home?

To address these complexities, we need to employ a scientifically sophisticated and statistically rigorous approach. A key component of such analysis requires a *control group*—non-participants who can be assessed alongside programme participants, allowing for comparison between the two groups to be made. (In a medical context, the equivalent would be those who received the treatment and those who received a placebo.) However, in the context of Jewish community life, logistical, financial, political and even ethical constraints make this kind of research approach very difficult, if not impossible. Furthermore, it is also essential to measure an array of experiences in parallel to mitigate such obstacles.

The ideal solution requires a dataset that includes *both participants and non-participants*, captures a broad range of experiences and programmes, and reflects long-term outcomes. That dataset also has to include people who experienced (or did not experience) these programmes sufficiently long ago, to ascertain whether the intended effects are, indeed, long

term. Only survey data,<sup>1</sup> using consistent questions across a wide spectrum of people, can achieve this.

This study leverages data from JPR's 2022 *National Jewish Identity Survey* (NJIS),<sup>2</sup> which was fundamentally designed to explore Jewish identity in the UK, but also deliberately contains within it the capacity to address the 'what works?' question. JPR surveys are typically constructed in this way – with a clear eye not only on generating data in the short-term to understand the obvious issues they address, but also on creating datasets that can be used strategically in multiple ways over many years to support community development work and planning. Conducted between 16 November and 23 December 2022, NJIS sampled 4,891 self-identifying Jewish individuals aged 16 and older across the UK. It included extensive questions on Jewish identity, upbringing and life experiences, providing a robust foundation for examining impact.

The analysis contained within this report would not be possible without the existence of that data, so it is appropriate that we acknowledge the donors who supported that project—most notably Pears Foundation, Rothschild Foundation Hanadiv Europe and the Wohl Legacy among several others. Together, they invested close to £200,000 in NJIS, thereby creating a data resource for the British Jewish community that has been used, and will continue to be used, in multiple ways to help support Jewish community planning for years to come. However, this specific analysis of those data was supported by the Jewish Leadership Council as part of its 'Forging the Future' programme, and we are indebted to them for providing the funding to enable this study to be undertaken.

---

<sup>1</sup> Technically, a longitudinal study tracking the same individuals at multiple points over time could also deliver an answer to the impact question. However, longitudinal studies are notoriously difficult and expensive to conduct and are not necessarily able to deliver better results in this context.

<sup>2</sup> Graham D and Boyd J (2024). [\*Jews in the UK today: Key findings from the JPR National Jewish Identity Survey\*](#). London: Institute for Jewish Policy Research.

## / Measuring Jewish identity

Jewish identity is multi-faceted and complex, encompassing religious, cultural, national, ethnic, linguistic, peoplehood and communal dimensions. Capturing this diversity is challenging, as no single question in a survey can possibly encompass its full scope. To address this, NJIS included over 100 questions covering major and minor aspects of Jewish identity in the UK today. For this analysis, these were distilled into two types of measures: three composite scales and five single-question indicators.

Using a statistical technique called Principal Component Analysis (PCA)<sup>3</sup> we identified three core aspects of Jewish identity. We labelled these: Religiosity, Jewish peoplehood, and Jewish values. Each one reflects particular aspects of Jewishness (see Table 1). For example, the analysis demonstrated that variables such as *Believing in God*,

*Keeping kosher*, *Prayer*, *Studying Jewish religious texts*, and *Observing aspects of Shabbat* tend to statistically group together, so from this we created a dimension which we labelled 'Religiosity,' and using each individual component, we developed a scale to measure it.

However, these three aspects of Jewish identity did not encompass all dimensions of Jewish identity. To supplement the analysis, we included five additional single-question measures from NJIS (Table 2): the proportion of Jewish friends a person has; their level of community attachment; their level of community engagement; whether or not they self-identify as a Zionist; and their level of emotional attachment to Israel. Together these eight measures, which can also be thought of as Jewish 'outcomes,' form the basis for assessing the impact of Jewish experiences on identity (see panel above summarising these different aspects of Jewish identity). Separating these out is important, as different Jewish educational programmes and initiatives may affect some dimensions of Jewish identity (e.g. someone's Jewish social connections), but not others (e.g. their religiosity).

### Different aspects of Jewish identity

When people talk about the strength or weakness of someone's *Jewish identity*, they are referring, intentionally or otherwise, to specific aspects of that identity. For example, someone may feel very strongly attached to Israel but very weakly engaged in Jewish religious life. In this report we are looking at the impact of different educational programmes and interventions on eight different 'dimensions' of Jewish identity:

1. Religiosity
2. Jewish peoplehood
3. Jewish values
4. Jewish social connections (Friends)
5. Jewish community attachment
6. Jewish communal engagement
7. Zionism
8. Israel attachment

<sup>3</sup> Principal Component Analysis (PCA) is a statistical technique used to simplify complex data by transforming them into a set of new, uncorrelated variables called principal components. It helps to 'declutter' a large dataset and highlight important patterns within it.



Table 1. Three composite measures of Jewish identity (outcome or 'dependent variables')\*

	Variable label*	Components**
How important or unimportant are each of the following to how you see yourself as a Jewish person?	Religiosity scale	Believing in God Keeping kosher Prayer Studying Jewish religious texts Observing at least some aspects of Shabbat
	Jewish peoplehood scale	Sharing Jewish festivals with my family Socialising in predominantly Jewish circles Supporting Israel Marrying another Jew Feeling part of the Jewish People
	Jewish values scale	Strong moral and ethical behaviour Supporting social justice causes (helping the poor or homeless, aid to the developing world) Volunteering to support charity Donating funds to charity

\* Composite variables were developed using Principal Component Analysis. Each scale was then created manually based on factor analysis results, with labels applied to best describe each set of components. Scale reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha, and all scales were statistically robust (i.e., with alphas exceeding the threshold of 0.7).

\*\* Answer options for each component: 1. Very unimportant; 2. Fairly unimportant; 3. Fairly important; 4. Very important. 'Don't know' responses were coded as missing.

Table 2. Five individual measures of Jewish identity (outcome or 'dependent variables')

Variable label	Variable survey question	Scale/measurement parameters
Jewish friends	Thinking of your closest friends, what proportion would you say are Jewish, if any?^	1 All or nearly all 2 More than half 3 About half 4 Less than half 5 None or very few
Jewish community attachment	How attached (or otherwise) do you currently feel to your local Jewish community?*	1 Strongly attached 2 Moderately attached 3 Weakly attached 4 Not at all attached
Jewish communal engagement	How engaged were you with Jewish community life in the period before the pandemic, where 0 is 'Not at all engaged' to 10 is 'Highly engaged'?	0 Not at all engaged to 10 Highly engaged
Zionism	Although there are different opinions about what the term Zionism means, in general, do you consider yourself to be a Zionist?^	1 Yes 2 No
Israel attachment	How emotionally attached are you to Israel?	1 Very attached 2 Somewhat attached 3 Not too attached 4 Not at all attached

^ Don't know responses were coded as missing for this analysis.

\* Responses indicating that "There is no local Jewish community where I live" were coded as missing.

## / Selecting programmes and Jewish experiences

Having established what outcomes we are interested in measuring, we also have to choose what the 'input variables' will be. What are we measuring the impact of? In this study, we are able to include several common Jewish experiences: attending a cheder (part-time Jewish classes, typically within a synagogue framework); being involved in a Jewish youth movement; participating in a Jewish youth camp; going to a Jewish school; and participating in a short-term youth programme in Israel (e.g. an Israel summer 'tour') (Table 3). In addition, we investigate other 'key experiences' alongside these: having a Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony; having private Jewish lessons from a parent or relative; gaining a formal school-level qualification in Jewish Studies and/or Hebrew; belonging to a university Jewish Society (JSoc).

However, as previously noted, when assessing the impact of any of these, it is very important to consider whether other factors may be involved in influencing Jewish identity that are *unrelated to the specific programmes or experiences*. Therefore, we controlled for demographic variables (age and sex) and the type of Jewish home environment in which people grew up, including whether it was Orthodox, Traditional, Reform/Progressive or 'Just Jewish.' These factors are important to bear in mind when assessing the effectiveness of any particular programme or intervention, as their impact on different people may well differ substantially depending on those people's Jewish upbringing or age profiles.

In total, 18 input (or 'predictor') variables were included in the analysis to comprehensively assess their impact on Jewish identity outcomes.

**Table 3. 18 predictors of Jewish identity outcomes (independent/predictor variables)**

Order predictor entered into regression model	Type of predictor	Broad label	Narrow label with survey question (predictor)	Scale/measurement parameters
Step 1	Demographic background		Age	16-19, 20-29 ... 90+
			Sex	Male vs Female^
Step 2	Jewish background/upbringing	<i>Either</i> Group A: Upbringing type	Orthodox upbringing**	1 Orthodox 0 Non-practicing; mixed Jewish and non-Jewish; non-Jewish; none, other; missing
			Traditional upbringing	1 Traditional 0 Non-practicing; mixed Jewish and non-Jewish; non-Jewish; none, other; missing
			Reform/Progressive upbringing	1 Reform/Progressive 0 Non-practicing; mixed Jewish and non-Jewish; non-Jewish; none, other; missing

			<b>Just Jewish upbringing</b>	1 Just Jewish 0 Non-practicing; mixed Jewish and non-Jewish; non-Jewish; none, other; missing
		<i>Or</i> Group B: Upbringing practices	<b>Friday night</b> (During your childhood) Are candles lit in your home on Friday night?	1 Every Friday night 0 Not every Friday night
			<b>Kosher</b> (Observed during your childhood) What kind of meat, if any, is bought for your home and which was bought during your childhood?*	1 Kosher meat 0 Not kosher meat
			<b>Shomer Shabbat</b> (Observed during your childhood) Which of the following Shabbat practices do you currently observe and which did you observe during your childhood? Not switch on lights on Shabbat	1 Yes 0 No
Step 3	Key Jewish experiences during upbringing	Please tell us what type of school(s) you attended.^	<b>Jewish school attendance</b>	1 None 2 Primary or secondary 3 Primary and secondary
		Which, if any, of the following did you experience growing up?	<b>Part-time classes in a synagogue, religion school or cheder</b>	1 Yes 0 No
			<b>Jewish lessons from a parent, relative or tutor (in a private capacity)</b>	1 Yes 0 No
			<b>Regular involvement in a Jewish youth club or youth movement</b>	1 Yes 0 No
			<b>GCSE/A Level (or equivalent) in Jewish Studies, and/or Hebrew</b>	1 Yes 0 No
			<b>A Jewish youth summer camp in the UK (or equivalent)</b>	1 Yes 0 No
			<b>Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony</b>	1 Yes 0 No
			<b>Membership of a university Jewish society (JSoc) (or equivalent)</b>	1 Yes 0 No
		And which, if any, of the following did you experience growing up?	<b>Israel programme</b>	1 One short-term Israel programme only 0 No Israel programme

^ Other gender was coded as missing in this analysis, due to lower numbers.

\* Vegetarians were coded as missing in this analysis, as their responses could not determine kosher observance.

\*\* Including a small number (n=237) who had a Strictly Orthodox upbringing.

^^ Answer options: A Jewish state school; A Jewish private school; A non-Jewish state school; A non-Jewish private school; Other.

## / Setting up the test

To help understand our research approach, imagine a scenario where a statistical relationship is found between wearing sunglasses and eating ice cream. The existence of that relationship might prompt one to ask: does wearing sunglasses cause people to eat ice cream, or vice versa? However, upon closer inspection, a third factor—hot sunny days—explains the connection much better and more logically. This highlights a key principle: correlation does not always imply causation.

To move beyond simple correlations between Jewish experiences (e.g. attending a Jewish school) and outcomes (e.g. being Orthodox in adulthood), we use regression analysis. This statistical method allows us to evaluate multiple predictors simultaneously, isolating each variable's unique contribution while controlling for others. For example, a statistical relationship may exist between attending a Jewish school and becoming Orthodox, but further analysis might reveal that Orthodox families are more likely to send their children to Jewish schools in the first place, making family background the main driver. Regression analysis helps to disentangle these effects by examining various scenarios, such as comparing Orthodox families who did and did not send their children to Jewish schools, or Orthodox adults who grew up in non-Orthodox families. This method ensures a more nuanced understanding of the factors influencing Jewish outcomes.

## / Testing upbringing

Our analysis uses two regression models. The first incorporates variables alongside **upbringing type** (Group A in Table 3)—a typology of Jewish identity (e.g., Orthodox, Traditional, Reform/Progressive, etc.) that has been used to categorise the UK Jewish population for decades. But while this approach can predict Jewish behaviour, it has limited utility for policy development. To address this, the second model includes **upbringing practices** (Group B in Table 3), such as maintaining a kosher home, which offer more actionable insights.

### The test

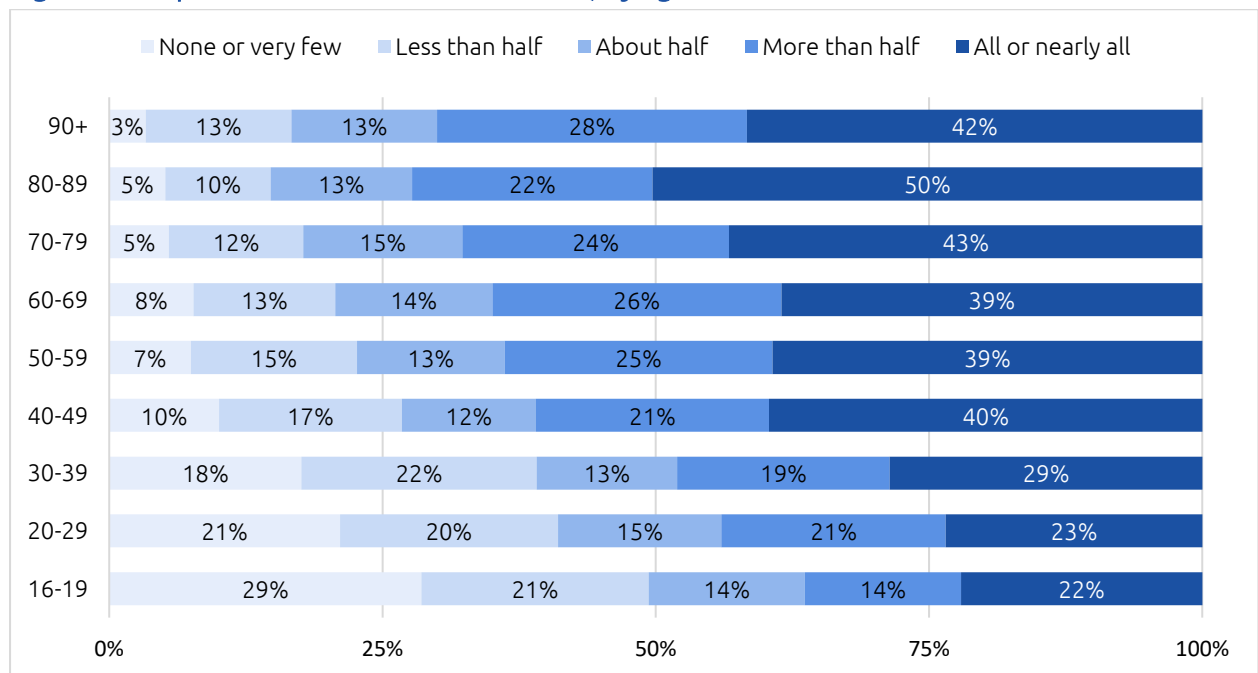
Having identified the eight different dimensions of Jewish identity, the test is designed to explore whether, and to what extent, different 'key experiences' (i.e. Jewish educational programmes and initiatives) have a long-term impact on each of these dimensions, after accounting for people's demographic background and Jewish life during their upbringing. Specifically, we consider:

1. Attending a Jewish school
2. Attending a synagogue 'cheder'
3. Private Jewish lessons
4. Regular involvement in a Jewish youth movement
5. Participation on a Jewish youth summer camp
6. Studying for a GCSE or A-Level in Jewish Studies and/or Hebrew
7. Having a bar or bat mitzvah
8. Belonging to a university JSoc
9. Participating in an Israel programme

To help isolate the long-term effects of each of these, we 'control'—or account—for background factors, such as the kinds of Jewish homes people were brought up in, how old they are, and whether they are male or female.

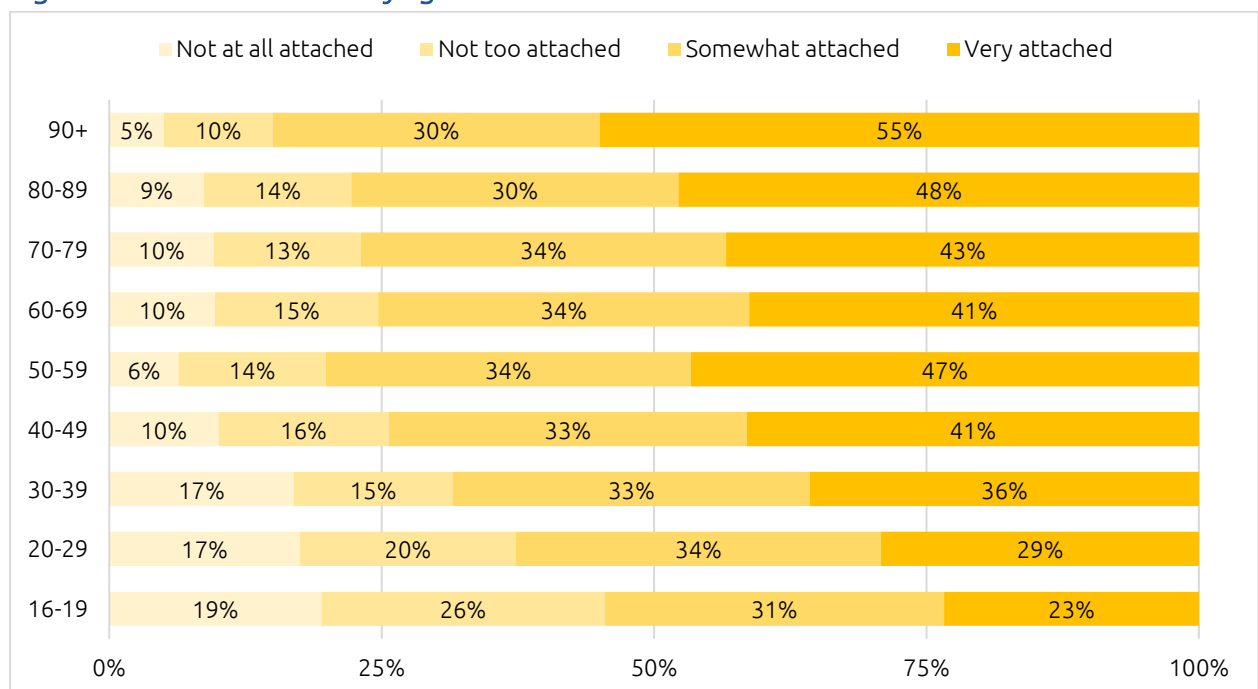
Age emerges as a significant correlate and potential predictor of Jewish outcomes. For example, simple cross-tabulations show that older individuals are more likely to report that most or all of their friends are Jewish, with a marked shift between the 16–39 and 40–59 age groups (Figure 1). Similarly, Figure 2 illustrates that older individuals exhibit stronger emotional attachment to Israel. These findings underscore the influence of age on key aspects of Jewish identity.

**Figure 1. Proportion of friends that is Jewish, by age band**



Question: Thinking of your closest friends, what proportion would you say are Jewish, if any?

**Figure 2. Israel attachment by age band**

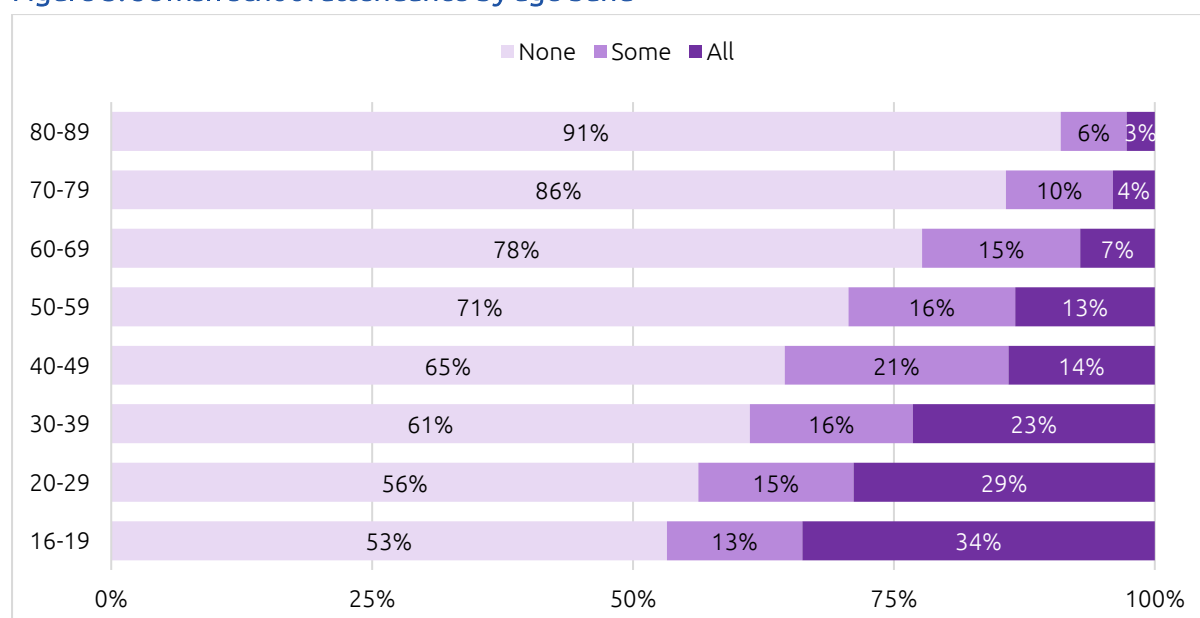


Question: How emotionally attached are you to Israel?



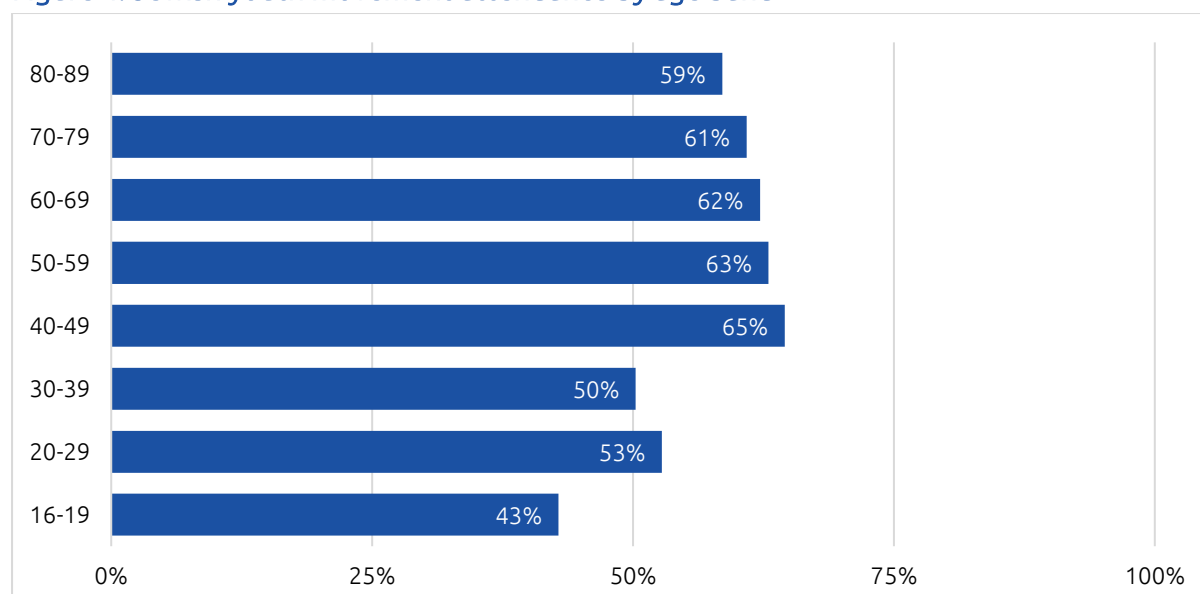
Figure 3 highlights the increasing prevalence of Jewish schooling in the UK over time, with younger people significantly more likely to have attended a Jewish school compared to their parents. In contrast, Figure 4 reveals a decline in youth movement attendance, with younger cohorts notably less likely to have participated compared to older groups. A marked shift is evident between those in their 30s and 40s (i.e. those born before and after 1982).

**Figure 3. Jewish school attendance by age band**



Question: Please tell us what type of school(s) you attended. Answer options: A Jewish state school; A Jewish private school; A non-Jewish state school; A non-Jewish private school; Other.

**Figure 4. Jewish youth movement attendance by age band**



Question: Which, if any, of the following did you experience growing up? Answer option: Regular involvement in a Jewish youth club or youth movement. Yes/No.

The 1990s saw rapid expansion of Jewish schooling in the UK, with younger cohorts exposed more systematically to this educational experience than older groups. This deliberate focus aimed to produce distinct Jewish identity outcomes. To explore these differences, the analysis divides the sample into two age groups: 16–39 and 40–59 (as of 2022). This segmentation highlights potential generational shifts in Jewish identity formation. The broader dataset also includes ten-year cohorts extending to those aged 60 and above.

## [/ Historical timeline](#)

In addition, it is important to bear in mind that the younger group grew up in a vastly different geopolitical and technological landscape compared with the older group. Most people under age 40 in 2022 will not recall a world before the Oslo Accords, Benjamin Netanyahu's premiership, or a Gaza Strip prior to Hamas's rule (Table 4). Likewise, their lives have been shaped by the advent of Google, Amazon, social media, and touchscreen technology; the older group remembers a world before the Internet. These contextual differences raise a critical question: to what extent does the period in which one comes of age influence Jewish identity? On the other hand, and irrespective of the background environment, to what extent does identity evolve with life stages, as priorities shift with age, such as family formation and increasing financial responsibilities?

This 'generation versus life stage' conundrum underscores a key tension. Will the younger cohort develop identities similar to the older group as they age (the life stage hypothesis), or will they forge a distinct path influenced by their unique generational experiences (the generation hypothesis)? A second generational question is also relevant. Will the impact of Jewish programmes, if any, diminish over time? By assessing whether programme effects persist or 'wear off' as life progresses, the study provides insight into the long-term influence of these interventions.

Table 4. Timeline with respect to key background events and developments (up to 2022, when the NJIS data were collected)

Year	Age if 39 in 2022	Age if 29 in 2022	Israel/Middle East	Israel politics	UK politics	Tech-nology
1983	0	-		Shamir	Thatcher	
1984	1	-		Peres		
1985	2	-				
1986	3	-		Shamir		
1987	4	-	First intifada starts			
1988	5	-	Formation of Hamas			
1989	6	-				
1990	7	-	First Gulf War		Major	
1991	8	-				
1992	9	-		Rabin		
1993	10	0	Oslo Accords			
1994	11	1	Israel-Jordan peace treaty			Amazon
1995	12	2	Assassination of Rabin	Peres		
1996	13	3		Netanyahu		
1997	14	4			Blair	
1998	15	5				Google
1999	16	6		Barak		
2000	17	7	Second intifada starts			
2001	18	8	9/11	Sharon		
2002	19	9				
2003	20	10	Second Gulf War			
2004	21	11				
2005	22	12	Gaza Disengagement			Facebook YouTube
2006	23	13	Second Lebanon War	Olmert		Twitter
2007	24	14	Hamas takes control of Gaza		Brown	
2008	25	15				iPhone
2009	26	16	Gaza War (Cast Lead)	Netanyahu		
2010	27	17	Arab Spring		Cameron	Instagram
2011	28	18				
2012	29	19	Gaza war (Pillar of Defence)			
2013	30	20				
2014	31	21	Gaza war (Protective Edge)			
2015	32	22	Iran Nuclear Deal (JCPOA)			
2016	33	23			'Brexit' May	TikTok
2017	34	24	US recognises Jerusalem as Israel's capital			
2018	35	25				
2019	36	26			Johnson	
2020	37	27	Abraham Accords			
2021	38	28	Gaza war (Guardian of the Walls)	Bennett		
2022	39	29		Lapid Netanyahu	Truss Sunak	

## / Understanding variance

Before presenting the results, it is important to explain two key statistics produced by regression analysis, which we show below: *variance explained* and *standardised beta coefficients*.

### Variance explained

Variance explained indicates the proportion of variability in the outcome variable (e.g. a dimension of Jewish identity) that is accounted for by the predictor variables (e.g. upbringing and key Jewish experiences). For example, consider a classroom of children. We can measure each child's height and calculate the average. Some children will be taller than average, while others will be shorter—this is the observed variation. To understand this variation, we could hypothesise about the potential factors that might cause it: gender (e.g. girls might grow faster than boys); genetics (e.g. taller parents tend to have taller children); and diet. If we collect data on these factors, variance explained tells us how much each of these contributes to the overall variation, or how well they predict height.

A variance explained score of 0.20, for example, indicates that 20% of the variability in the outcome is explained by the predictors, but it also means that *80% remains unexplained*. Nevertheless, in social science, this can be considered a strong result, as many unmeasured factors or 'random noise' typically contribute to the remaining variation. The complexity of social phenomena, such as identity formation, often leads to a high degree of unexplained variance. For example, even siblings growing up in the same environment can develop vastly different Jewish identities. Given this complexity, being able to measure any predictive impact at all should be seen as a notable achievement.

### Standardised beta coefficients

The second statistic, standardised beta coefficients, measures the *relative importance* of each predictor variable. These coefficients allow for a direct comparison of the predictors' influence on the outcome, creating a hierarchy of importance. For example, in predicting height, beta coefficients might reveal that gender is the most significant factor, followed by genetics and then diet. While beta coefficients have no intrinsic meaning, they are invaluable for understanding the relative contributions of different variables.

## / Results

The results of our analysis are outlined below. In presenting them, we share the details of four separate analyses (or ‘models’), each one based on various sub-samples and using different assessments of people’s Jewish upbringing. Specifically:

**Regression 1** examines the **full sample** (i.e. everyone who participated in the survey, irrespective of their age) in terms of upbringing type (see Table 5), and considers their Jewish upbringing type by the denominational label they chose to assign to it (e.g. Orthodox, Traditional, Reform/Progressive, etc.).

**Regression 2** examines the **full sample** in terms of upbringing practices (see Table 6). It considers Jewish upbringing by some of the practices that happened in the home in which they grew up (lighting Shabbat candles, observing kashrut at home, living in a ‘shomer Shabbat’ household).

**Regression 3** examines **two sub-samples based on age**—those aged under 40 (Table 7), and those aged 40-59 (Table 8)—to assess whether results differ by generation, when considering their Jewish upbringing type.

**Regression 4** examines the same **two sub-samples by age** (18-39 years: Table 9, and 40-59 years: Table 10) but considers their upbringing by the Jewish practices they grew up with.



## / Regression 1: Jewish upbringing type (full sample)

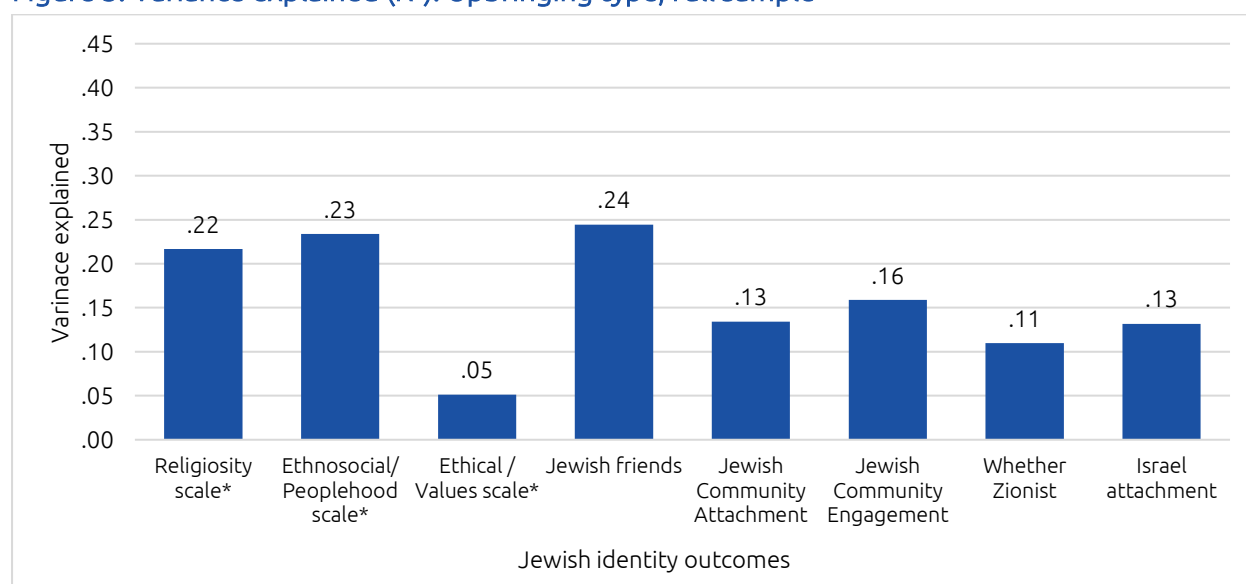
### / Variance explained

The first model we used in this study tested the full sample—i.e. all Jews who participated in NJIS, irrespective of their age or upbringing—using the following **fifteen predictors**: two demographic variables (age and sex), four upbringing type variables (Group A in Table 3) and the nine key experiences (Step 3 in Table 3). These predictors were applied to each of the **eight Jewish outcomes** (Table 1 and Table 2). Figure 5 illustrates the total variance explained for each outcome.<sup>4</sup>

The model explains a substantial proportion of variance for three of the eight Jewish identity outcomes: **Religiosity (24%)**, **Peoplehood (23%)**, and **Jewish Friends (22%)**, indicating that there is a statistically meaningful predictive relationship between the input variables and these outcomes. For the four Jewish community and Israel outcomes, the variance explained is more modest. For example, 16% of variance in **Jewish Community Engagement** is explained by the inputs, and 11% is explained for whether or not one identifies as a **Zionist** (Figure 5).

However, only 5% of the variance is explained for **Jewish Values**, suggesting that this outcome is largely influenced by factors outside the model. The remaining 95% of unexplained variance for Jewish values points to the presence of other variables not included in the analysis and a significant amount of random ‘noise.’ This underscores the complexity and difficulty of predicting certain aspects of Jewish identity and highlights a need for further investigation into unmeasured factors.

**Figure 5. Variance explained ( $R^2$ ): Upbringing type, full sample**



\* Composite scale.

<sup>4</sup> Variance statistics are called adjusted  $R^2$  (pronounced R-squared) values. They are a measure of how well the data fit the regression model, or ‘goodness of fit.’

## / Regression 1 results

This analysis identifies the most impactful predictors among the fifteen variables, including upbringing type, using a three-step regression for each outcome. The results, detailed in Table 5 below, include adjusted R-squared values (variance explained) and standardised beta coefficients (significant at the 99% level).<sup>5</sup> These are directly comparable *down the columns* (but not across the rows). In seeking to understand these results, it is important to bear in mind the following key interpretation notes:

- **Empty cells** in Table 5 indicate predictors that did not achieve statistical significance ( $p > 0.05$ ).
- **Asterisks** denote coefficients with weaker significance ( $> 95\%$  confidence – all others being  $> 99\%$ ).
- **Negative values** indicate an *inverse relationship* between predictor and outcome (e.g. higher predictor values lead to lower outcomes). This means that some key experiences are found to have a *negative* association with certain Jewish identity outcomes. Two exceptions are for *Sex*, where negative values indicate a stronger association for females, and for *Age*, where negative values mean the effect weakens with age (i.e. it is lower among older compared to younger people) and vice versa.

### Religiosity Scale (Table 5, Column 1: 22% Variance Explained)

- **Upbringing:** Having an Orthodox (.52) and Traditional (.48) upbringing are the strongest predictors of religiosity, outperforming Reform (.26) and 'Just Jewish' (.08).
- **Key experiences:** Having private Jewish lessons (.06) and having been a member of a JSoc (.05) are significant, but their influence is minor compared to upbringing type. Having had a Bar/Bat Mitzvah and participating in a single short-term Israel programme *negatively* predict religiosity, although these results are statistically weaker.

### Peoplehood Scale (Column 2: 23% Variance Explained)

- **Age:** Age is predictive of feelings of Jewish peoplehood in that feelings are stronger among older people compared with younger people (.13).
- **Upbringing:** Having had a Traditional upbringing (.55) is the strongest predictor, followed by an Orthodox upbringing (.43).
- **Key experiences:** Regular involvement in a Jewish youth club or youth movement (.09) has the greatest impact of the key experience effects, followed by membership in a JSoc (.06) and having attended a Jewish school, although the latter is statistically weaker.

---

<sup>5</sup> In simple terms a  $p$  value of 99% means that a result is very unlikely to be due to chance alone. A lower level of 95% is also reported here and this indicates slightly less statistical confidence in a result but is nonetheless considered to be statistically significant.

### Jewish Values Scale (Column 3: 5% Variance Explained)

- The predictors do not explain much variance, indicating that unmeasured factors dominate this outcome.
- **Predictors:** Being female is more predictive than being male. Age is also predictive in that strength of Jewish values is stronger among older compared with younger respondents.
- **Upbringing:** Orthodox, Traditional and Reform upbringing are all significant predictors.
- **Key experiences:** Of all experiences measured, only private Jewish lessons are significant, although weakly so.

### Jewish Friends (Column 4: 24% Variance Explained)

- **Age:** Older, compared with younger, respondents are more likely to have a higher proportion of Jewish friends in their friendship groups (.25).
- **Upbringing:** Having had a Traditional (.33) or Orthodox upbringing (.28) are significant predictors.
- **Key experiences:** Regular involvement in a Jewish youth movement (.14) has the strongest impact, followed by having attended a Jewish school (.09), Israel programme (.08), and having been a member of a JSoc (.04). Two other predictors are weaker or negative.

### Jewish Community Attachment (Column 5: 16% Variance Explained)

- **Age:** Older compared with younger respondents feel more attached to their communities (.13).
- **Upbringing:** Having had a Traditional upbringing (.43) is the strongest Jewish community attachment predictor, followed by having had an Orthodox (.35) and Reform (.33) upbringing.
- **Key experiences:** JSoc membership (.06) is the only significant programmatic predictor, although private Jewish lessons are weakly predictive.

### Jewish Community Engagement (Column 6: 16% Variance Explained)

- **Age:** Older, compared with younger, respondents report higher engagement (.06).
- **Upbringing:** Having had a Traditional upbringing (.42) is the strongest Jewish community engagement predictor, followed by having had an Orthodox (.38) and Reform (.33) upbringing.
- **Key experiences:** Having been a JSoc member (.08) is the most significant predictor, followed by regular involvement in a youth movement/club and having had private Jewish lessons, although the latter two are weaker.

### Zionism (Column 7: 11% Variance Explained)

- **Upbringing:** Having had a Traditional (.28) or Orthodox (.20) upbringing are the strongest predictors.

- **Key experiences:** JSoc membership (.11), one short-term Israel programme (.06), and Jewish youth movement/group involvement (.05) are significant. Jewish school attendance is weaker but still predictive.

#### Israel Attachment (Column 8: 13% Variance Explained)

- **Age:** Older respondents have stronger Israel attachment than younger respondents (.16).
- **Upbringing:** Having had a Traditional (.30) or Orthodox (.25) upbringing are key predictors.
- **Key experiences:** Regular involvement in a youth movement/group (.07), participating in one short-term Israel programme (.07), and having been a member of a JSoc (.06) are significant. Having attended a Jewish school or having had private Jewish lessons have weaker impacts.

Table 5. Regression analysis using upbringing type, full sample

Adjusted R Square	.22	.23	.05	.24	.13	.16	.11	.13
	Religiosity scale	Ethno-social/ Peoplehood scale	Ethical/ Values scale	Jewish friends	Jewish community attachment	Jewish community engagement	Whether Zionist	Israel attachment
Sex			-.12					.05*
Age		.13	.09	.25	.13	.06		.16
Orthodox upbringing^	.52	.43	.15	.28	.35	.38	.20	.25
Traditional upbringing^	.48	.55	.14	.33	.43	.42	.28	.30
Reform/Progressive upbringing^	.26	.27	.13	.07	.33	.33	.10	.11
Just Jewish upbringing^	.08	.17		.07	.12	.08	.06	.08
Jewish school attendance		.04*		.09			.05*	.05*
Part-time classes in a synagogue, religion school or cheder								
Jewish lessons from a parent, relative or tutor (in a private capacity)	.06		.04*	-.05	.04*	.04*		.04*
Regular involvement in a Jewish youth club or youth movement		.09		.14			.05	.07
GCSE/A Level (or equivalent) in Jewish Studies, and/or Hebrew								
A Jewish youth summer camp in the UK (or equivalent)				.04*		.04*		
Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony	-.05*							
Membership of a university Jewish society (JSoc) (or equivalent)	.05	.06		.04	.06	.08	.11	.06
One short-term Israel programme only	-.05*			.08			.06	.07

\* Significant at 95% only, not 99%.

^ Compared with those whose upbringing was Non-practising or None or Not Jewish or Other.

## / Key insights from Regression 1

What can we say about these results overall? The type of Jewish upbringing one had emerges as the most significant predictor across all outcomes, with **Traditional** and **Orthodox upbringing** having the strongest influence. **Age** also plays a notable role in six outcomes, indicating that older respondents have stronger Jewish identities than younger ones, particularly when measured in terms of the proportions of Jewish friends in their close social circle, and levels of both community and Israel attachment. After controlling for age and upbringing, the importance of key experiences is less consequential, but they remain meaningful contributors nonetheless.

Among the nine key experiences:

- Having been a member of a **JSoc** has the broadest impact, significantly influencing seven out of the eight factors.
- Having had regular involvement in a **Jewish youth group or movement** positively impacts four outcomes.
- Having attended a **Jewish school** is significant for four outcomes, but only achieves the highest level of significance (99%) with respect to the proportion of Jewish friends in one's close social circle.
- Having attended a cheder and having studied for a **GCSE/A-Level in Jewish Studies/Hebrew** show no significant impact on any outcome.
- Having had a **Bar/Bat Mitzvah** has a weak negative impact on one outcome.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> We would caution overinterpreting this result since there is considerable variation, not least in terms of sex, in the type of experience this involves.



## / Regression 2: Jewish upbringing practices (full sample)

### / Variance explained

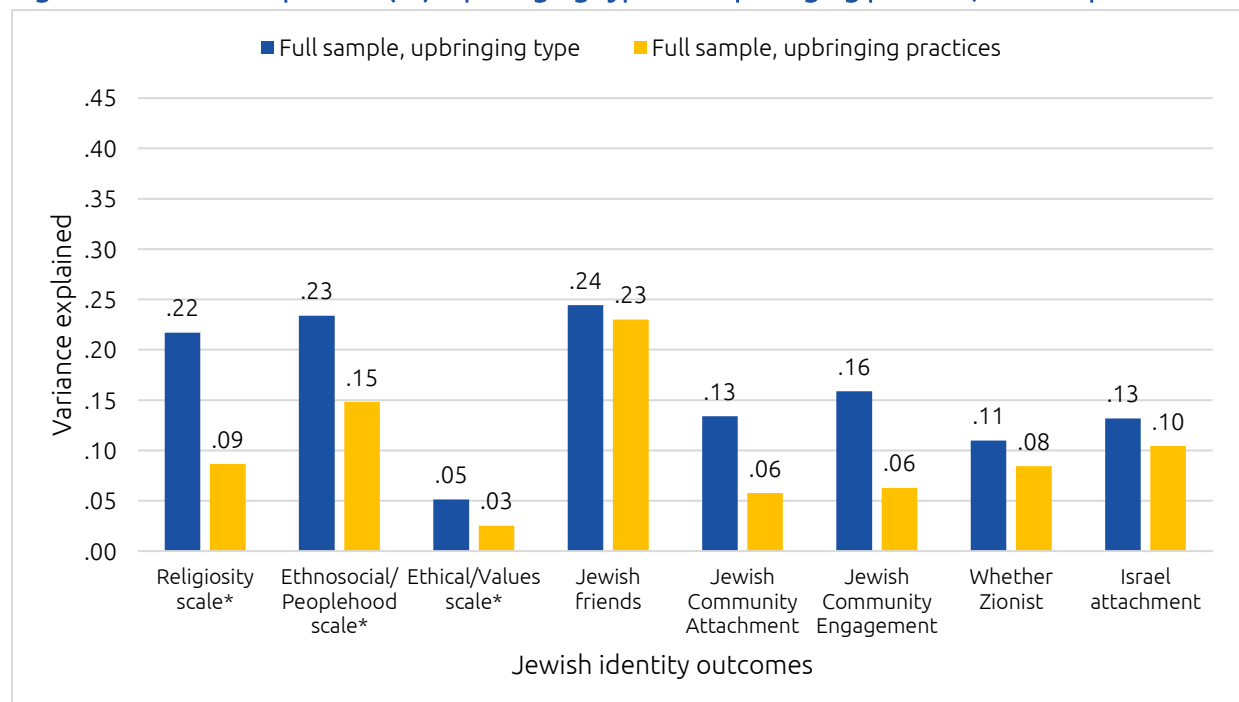
This analysis replaces the four upbringing type predictors with **three specific upbringing practices**: lighting Friday night candles every week, eating kosher meat at home, and refraining from using light switches on Shabbat. Figure 6 compares the variance explained using upbringing practices (orange columns) to that of upbringing type (blue columns).

Overall, the variance explained is lower for all eight outcomes when examining upbringing practices compared to upbringing type, which is to be expected given their narrower scope. Key results include:

- **Jewish Friends**: 23% of variance explained, the highest among all outcomes.
- **Peoplehood**: 15% of variance explained.
- **Israel Attachment**: 10% of variance explained.
- **Religiosity**: 9% of variance explained.
- **Jewish Values**: Only 3% of variance explained, indicating a minimal predictive relationship with these practices.

These findings reflect the more focused influence of specific practices compared to the broader upbringing types.

**Figure 6. Variance explained ( $R^2$ ): upbringing type and upbringing practice, full sample**



\* Composite scale.

## / Regression 2 results

Building on the findings from upbringing type (Table 5), the same analysis was conducted using the three upbringing practices as predictors (Table 6). Key results include:

### Religiosity (Table 6, Column 1: 9% variance explained)

- **Upbringing practices:** Kosher meat at home (.13) and being Shomer Shabbat (.13) are the most predictive for religiosity, followed by Friday night candles (.08).
- **Key experiences:** JSoc membership (.08) and having had private Jewish lessons (.07) are also significant predictors, although less impactful than growing up in a home with all three Jewish practices.

### Peoplehood (Column 2: 15% variance explained)

- **Upbringing practices:** After controlling for Age and Sex, Kosher meat (.12) and Friday night candles (.11) are strong predictors for Jewish peoplehood.
- **Key experiences:** Regular youth movement involvement (.10), JSoc membership (.09), and attending a Jewish school (.07) have notable impacts. Participating in a short-term Israel programme is weakly significant.

### Jewish Values (Column 3: 3% variance explained)

- **Low variance explained:** Only 3%, with demographic background (i.e. age and sex) as the primary predictor. Private Jewish lessons (.05) are weakly significant.

### Jewish Friends (Column 4: 23% variance explained)

- **Upbringing practices:** After controlling for Age (.27), Friday night candles (.12), and kosher meat (.12) are predictive.
- **Key experiences:** Youth movement involvement (.14) has the strongest impact on Jewish social circle, followed by Jewish school attendance (.11), one short-term Israel programme (.08), and JSoc membership (.06).

### Community Attachment and Engagement (Columns 5 and 6: 6% variance explained each)

- **Community attachment:** With the exception of Age (.14), Friday night candles (.10) and JSoc membership (.08) are the strongest predictors. Regular youth movement involvement and having had private Jewish lessons are weakly significant.
- **Community engagement:** After controlling for Age, JSoc (.11) is the most significant predictor, followed by having grown up in a home where Friday night candles were always lit (.08) and/or in one that was Shomer Shabbat (.06). Having attended private Jewish lessons (.05) and going to a youth summer camp (.05) are also significant predictors, although weaker.

### Zionism (Column 7: 8% variance explained)

- **Strongest predictor:** JSoc membership (.13), followed by growing up in a home with kosher meat (.09), regular involvement in a youth movement (.06), participating in a short-term Israel programme (.06), and attending a Jewish school (.05).

### Israel Attachment (Column 8: 10% variance explained)

- **Predictors:** All three upbringing practices contribute, with regular involvement in a youth movement (.08) and JSoc membership (.08) having the greatest predictive strength. Having grown up in a home where Friday night candles were always lit (.07), participating in one short-term Israel programme (.07), growing up in a kosher home (.06), and having attended a Jewish school (.06) also play roles.

**Table 6. Regression analysis using upbringing practices, full sample**

Adjusted R Square	.09	.15	.03	.23	.06	.06	.08	.10
	Religiosity scale	Ethno-social/ Peoplehood scale	Ethical/Values scale	Jewish friends	Jewish Community Attachment	Jewish Community Engagement	Whether Zionist	Israel attachment
Sex			-.12					.05*
Age		.16	.09	.27	.14	.09	.04*	.17
Candles lit at home on Friday night (upbringing)	.08	.11		.12	.10	.08	.05*	.07
Kosher meat bought for home (upbringing)	.13	.12		.12			.09	.06
Refrain from using electric light switches on Shabbat (upbringing)	.13					.06		.04*
Jewish school attendance		.07		.11			.05	.06
Part-time classes in a synagogue, religion school or cheder								
Jewish lessons from a parent, relative or tutor (in a private capacity)	.07		.05*	-.04	.04*	.05		.04*
Regular involvement in a Jewish youth club or youth movement		.10		.14	.05*	.04*	.06	.08
GCSE/A Level (or equivalent) in Jewish Studies, and/or Hebrew				.04*		.04*		
A Jewish youth summer camp in the UK (or equivalent)				.04*		.05		
Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony	-.06*							
Membership of a university Jewish society (JSoc) (or equivalent)	.08	.09		.06	.08	.11	.13	.08
One short-term Israel programme only	-.05*	.04*		.08			.06	.07

\* Significant at 95% only, not 99%.

## / Key insights from Regression 2

Switching our analysis from upbringing type to upbringing practices reduces the overall variance explained for each factor. However, this approach provides the advantage of identifying specific aspects of upbringing that influence identity outcomes. It also increases the number of significant predictor-outcome relationships and yields higher coefficient values compared to upbringing type.

Among the nine key experiences, only cheder fails to predict any outcomes and, as with upbringing type, Bar/Bat Mitzvah remains insignificant (see footnote 6):

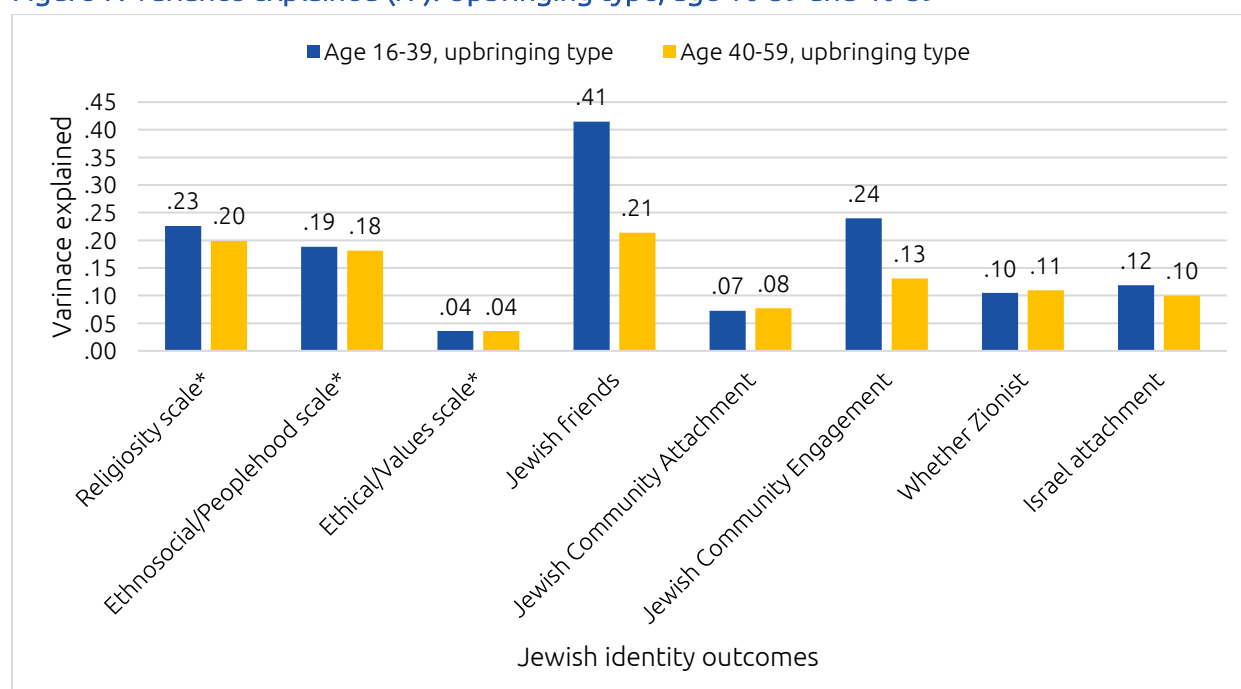
- Growing up in a home in which **Friday night candles were lit weekly** (upbringing) has the broadest impact, significantly influencing seven out of eight factors.
- Growing up in a **kosher home** (upbringing) positively impacts five outcomes.
- Having been a member of a **JSoc** significantly influences seven out of eight outcomes.
- Having been involved in a **Jewish youth group or movement** positively impacts six outcomes, but only achieves the strongest result on four outcomes.
- Having attended a **Jewish school** is significant for four outcomes.

## / Regression 3: Jewish upbringing type (generational comparison)

### / Variance explained

Compared with the original analysis using upbringing type (Regression 1), we now examine the sample by looking at two age groups: those aged 16 to 39 and those aged 40 to 59. As noted (Table 4), these two groups experienced very different geopolitical and technological environments in their formative years (see Table 4). The variance explained for each group is shown in Figure 7. It shows there is little difference between the identity outcomes for each cohort, with the exception of two outcomes: Jewish friends and Community engagement.

Figure 7. Variance explained ( $R^2$ ): Upbringing type, age 16-39 and 40-59



\* Composite scale.

### Jewish friends

For the Jewish friends outcome (i.e. having a higher proportion of Jews in one's close social circle), the model explains a substantial 41% of the variance in the younger cohort, compared to 21% in the older cohort. This suggests the predictors are more effective at explaining friendship patterns among younger respondents than older ones. 21% remains the highest amount of variance explained for any outcome in the older cohort. However, despite the much lower variance explained, as noted previously (Figure 1), older respondents, compared with younger ones, are still *more likely* to have more Jewish friends in their close social circle.

### Community engagement

A similar pattern emerges for Community engagement, where 24% of variance is explained in the younger cohort, compared with 13% among the older cohort (Figure 7). This indicates that the input variables—background, upbringing type, and key experiences—are more effective at explaining community engagement in the younger generation.



## Other outcomes

For the other outcomes—Religiosity, Peoplehood, Community attachment, Zionism and Israel attachment—the variance explained is similar across both age groups. This suggests that these outcomes are equally predictable in the older and younger groups when controlling for upbringing type. The results indicate that the impact of upbringing type on these outcomes does not diminish significantly with age.

## / Regression 3 results

### Jewish friends

The predictors for the Jewish friends outcome differ significantly between the two age cohorts Table 7: aged under 40, Table 8: aged 40 to 59):

- **Upbringing:** For the older cohort, having had an Orthodox (.24) or a Traditional (.24) upbringing are significant predictors, but in the younger group, only an Orthodox upbringing is significant (.18).
- **Key experiences:**
  - Having attended a Jewish school is a strong predictor for the younger cohort (.26) but is not significant for the older group.
  - Conversely, participation in a single Israel programme is significant for the older (.12) but not for the younger cohort.
  - Regular involvement in a Jewish youth club/movement is a key factor for both cohorts, with a slightly stronger effect in the younger group (.18) compared with the older group (.14).
  - Participation in a Jewish youth summer camp weakly predicts Jewish friends in the younger cohort but has no significance in the older group.

This analysis does not show that younger respondents have more Jewish friends (in fact the opposite is the case); rather that the predictors more effectively account for variance in this outcome for the younger cohort.

### Jewish Community Engagement

- **Upbringing:** Upbringing type plays a greater role in predicting community engagement for the older cohort, where having had either an Orthodox or a Traditional upbringing is significant. In the younger group, only an Orthodox upbringing (.21) is significant.
- **Key experiences:** Key experiences are more impactful for the younger cohort than the older one:
  - For the younger group, having participated in a Jewish youth summer camp (.17), having been a member of a JSoc (.15), and having had a Bar/Bat Mitzvah (.16, weakly) are significant predictors, whereas only JSoc is significant (.08, weakly) and Jewish school (.10, weakly and negatively) for the older group.

- Notably, participating in one short-term Israel programme is negatively associated with community engagement in the younger group, although weakly.
- For the older cohort, only having been a member of a JSoc is weakly significant. Having attended a Jewish school shows a weak negative association.

**Table 7. Regression analysis using upbringing type, age 16-39**

Adjusted R Square	.23	.19	.04	.41	.07	.24	.10	.12
	Religiosity scale	Ethno-social/ Peoplehood scale	Ethical/ Values scale	Jewish friends	Jewish Community Attachment	Jewish Community Engagement	Whether Zionist	Israel attachment
Sex			-.18					
Age				.12			.13	
Orthodox upbringing^	.50	.29		.18	.21*	.21		
Traditional upbringing^	.30	.27						
Reform/Progressive upbringing^	.19							
Just Jewish upbringing^								
Jewish school attendance				.26				
Part-time classes in a synagogue, religion school or cheder								
Jewish lessons from a parent, relative or tutor (in a private capacity)	.13							
Regular involvement in a Jewish youth club or youth movement				.18			.13*	.17
GCSE/A Level (or equivalent) in Jewish Studies, and/or Hebrew			.14*					
A Jewish youth summer camp in the UK (or equivalent)			.15*	.11*		.17		
Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony	-.17*					.16*		
Membership of a university Jewish society (JSoc) (or equivalent)	.12*					.15		
One short-term Israel programme only						-.14*		

\* Significant at 95% only, not 99%.

^ Compared with those whose upbringing was 'Non-practising' or 'None' or 'Not Jewish' or 'Other'.

Table 8. Regression analysis using upbringing type, age 40-59

Adjusted R Square	.20	.18	.04	.21	.08	.13	.11	.10
	Religiosity scale	Ethno-social/ Peoplehood scale	Ethical/ Values scale	Jewish friends	Jewish Community Attachment	Jewish Community Engagement	Whether Zionist	Israel attachment
Sex			-.08*		.08*			
Age				.07*	.09*		.13	.08*
Orthodox upbringing^	.50	.41	.13*	.25	.28	.39	.14	.22
Traditional upbringing^	.38	.45		.24	.27	.35	.16*	.19
Reform/Progressive upbringing^		.18			.25	.27		
Just Jewish upbringing^			-.14					
Jewish school attendance						-.10*		
Part-time classes in a synagogue, religion school or cheder								
Jewish lessons from a parent, relative or tutor (in a private capacity)				-.08*				.08*
Regular involvement in a Jewish youth club or youth movement				.14				
GCSE/A Level (or equivalent) in Jewish Studies, and/or Hebrew								
A Jewish youth summer camp in the UK (or equivalent)								
Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony								
Membership of a university Jewish society (JSoc) (or equivalent)		.10			.09*	.08*	.13	
One short-term Israel programme only				.12			.08*	.11

\* Significant at 95% only, not 99%.

^ Compared with those whose upbringing was 'Non-practising' or 'None' or 'Not Jewish' or 'Other'.

## / Key insights from Regression 3

The differences between the two age groups in terms of the impact of Jewish upbringing type, shows that overall, upbringing type has a much greater impact on Jewish identity outcomes in the older age group than the younger one. But after controlling for demographic background and upbringing type, the impact of key experiences is weaker than upbringing for both groups although it is marginally more impactful for the younger than the older group. Additionally, different experiences are more impactful depending on the group, so for the young group youth movement, Jewish school, summer camp and JSoc are impactful. For the older group it is JSoc, Israel programme and youth movement.

## / Regression 4: Jewish upbringing practices (generational comparison)

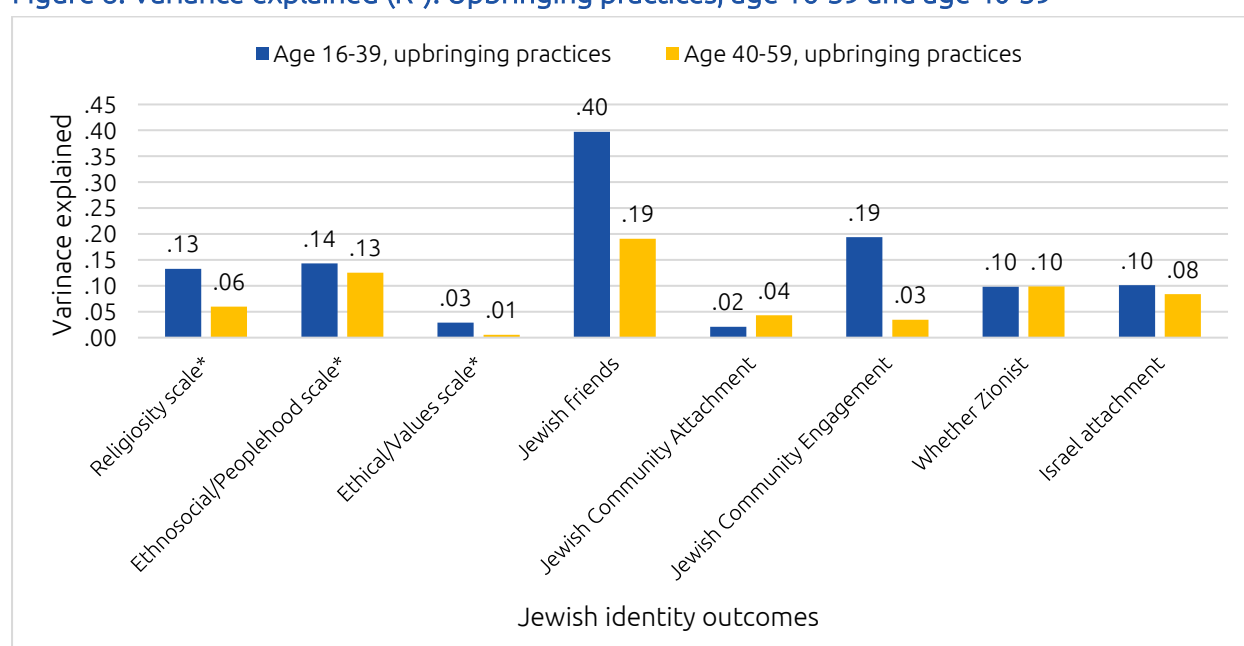
### / Variance explained

Using upbringing practices instead of upbringing type, this regression again focuses on the two age groups. Figure 8 compares the variance explained by each cohort and, for most outcomes, shows results similar to those based on upbringing type (Figure 7).

#### Key differences by age group

- For **Religiosity** (.13 vs. .06), **Jewish Friends** (.40 vs. .19), and **Community Engagement** (.19 vs. .03), variance explained is much larger for the younger cohort than the older one, indicating that the input variables (i.e. growing up in a home with those practices) are more predictive for younger respondents.
- For **Jewish Values** and **Community Attachment**, variance explained remains very small in both age groups. The predictors struggle to explain these outcomes.
- For **Peoplehood**, **Zionism**, and **Israel Attachment**, results are comparable across the two generations.

Figure 8. Variance explained ( $R^2$ ): Upbringing practices, age 16-39 and age 40-59



\* Composite scale.

#### Variance explained results by generation: Upbringing type (Figure 7) vs. upbringing practice (Figure 8)

- The most notable difference is for **Religiosity**. When upbringing practices are used, variance explained for the younger cohort is more than double that of the older group (.13 vs. .06). However, with upbringing type, the gap is much smaller (.23 vs. .20).
- The other main difference relates to **Jewish Community Engagement**. While more variance is explained in the younger group than the older group regardless of

upbringing variables examined, considerably more variance is explained in the younger group than the older group when the analysis is based on upbringing practices (.19 vs. .03). By contrast, the difference is still large but proportionally far less (.24 vs. .13).

- These differences highlight the nuanced effects of specific upbringing practices versus broader upbringing types, which are further explored in the regression results.

## / Regression 4 results

The regression results for upbringing practice by generation are shown in Table 9 (under 40s) and Table 10 (40 to 59-year-olds).

### Religiosity

- For the **younger group, (Table 9, Column 1, 13% variance explained)** both upbringing practices and key experiences are predictive of Religiosity:
  - Key predictors: having grown up in a shomer Shabbat household (.23) and having had private Jewish lessons (.14).
  - Having attended a cheder and having been a member of a JSoc are significant but weaker predictors.
  - Negative predictor: Bar/Bat Mitzvah (-.27).
- For the **older group, (Table 10, Column 1, 6% variance explained)** by contrast, only upbringing practices contribute to Religiosity, with no significant role for key experiences.

### Peoplehood (Column 2)

- **Younger group (14% variance explained):** Upbringing practices are insignificant. Aside from Age, the sole key predictor is having attended a Jewish school (.19).
- **Older group (13% variance explained):** Upbringing practices are significant, including having grown up in a kosher home (.15) and one that always lights Friday night candles (.12). Having been a member of a JSoc (.11) and having participated in a Jewish youth summer camp (weakly) contribute.

### Jewish Friends (Column 4)

- **Younger group (40% variance explained):** The primary predictor is having attended a Jewish school (.30), with regular involvement in a Jewish youth movement/club also significant (.19).
- **Older group (19% variance explained):** Predictors are distributed across having grown up in a home where Friday night candles were always lit (.15), having been regularly involved in a Jewish youth movement/club (.14), and having attended one short-term Israel programme (.13).

### Jewish Community Engagement (Column 6)

- **Younger group (19% variance explained):** Upbringing practices have minimal impact. The strongest predictor is having been a member of a JSoc (.18).
- **Older group (3% variance explained):** Community engagement appears driven by unmeasured variables, with no significant contributions from upbringing practices or key experiences.

## / Key insights from Regression 4

Overall, upbringing practices are stronger predictors of identity outcomes for the older group compared with the younger group, particularly for Religiosity, Peoplehood and Jewish friends. But after controlling for demographic background and upbringing practices, we see that the overall impact of key experiences is actually quite similar for both groups. However, the key difference is which experiences are most impactful. For the younger group, Jewish schooling is the most impactful variable followed by youth group and private Jewish lessons. But for the older group, both JSoc and short-term Israel programme are the most impactful, also followed by youth group and private Jewish lessons.

**Table 9. Regression analysis using upbringing practices, age 16-39**

Adjusted R Square	.13	.14	.03	.40	.02	.19	.10	.10
	Religiosity scale	Ethno-social/ Peoplehood scale	Ethical/ Values scale	Jewish friends	Jewish Community Attachment	Jewish Community Engagement	Whether Zionist	Israel attachment
Sex			-.15					
Age		.12		.13			.16	
Candles lit at home on Friday night (upbringing)				.13*				
Kosher meat bought for home (upbringing)	.14*						.16*	
Refrain from using electric light switches on Shabbat (upbringing)	.23					.12*		
Jewish school attendance		.19		.30				
Part-time classes in a synagogue, religion school or cheder	.14*							
Jewish lessons from a parent, relative or tutor (in a private capacity)	.14					.10*	-.11*	
Regular involvement in a Jewish youth club or youth movement				.19				.14*
GCSE/A Level (or equivalent) in Jewish Studies, and/or Hebrew								
A Jewish youth summer camp in the UK (or equivalent)			.15*					
Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony	-.27							
Membership of a university Jewish society (JSoc) (or equivalent)	.13*			.10*		.18		
One short-term Israel programme only								

\* Significant at 95% only, not 99%.



Table 10. Regression analysis using upbringing practices, age 40-59

Adjusted R Square	.06	.13	.01	.19	.04	.03	.10	.08
	Religiosity scale	Ethno-social/ Peoplehood scale	Ethical/ Values scale	Jewish friends	Jewish Community Attachment	Jewish Community Engagement	Whether Zionist	Israel attachment
Sex					.10*			
Age				.08	.07*		.14	.10
Candles lit at home on Friday night (upbringing)		.12		.15	.13			
Kosher meat bought for home (upbringing)	.18	.15		.10*				
Refrain from using electric light switches on Shabbat (upbringing)	.10							
Jewish school attendance						-.08*		
Part-time classes in a synagogue, religion school or cheder								
Jewish lessons from a parent, relative or tutor (in a private capacity)				-.10				.09*
Regular involvement in a Jewish youth club or youth movement				.14				
GCSE/A Level (or equivalent) in Jewish Studies, and/or Hebrew								
A Jewish youth summer camp in the UK (or equivalent)		.10*		.09*		.08*		
Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony								
Membership of a university Jewish society (JSoc) (or equivalent)		.11			.10	.09*	.14	
One short-term Israel programme only				.13			.09*	.12

\* Significant at 95% only, not 99%.

## / The impact of short- and long-term Israel programmes

In the preceding analysis only a short-term Israel programme was examined, but NJIS contains data on other kinds of Israel programmes. However, assessing their impact involves separate analyses and to avoid additional complication we limited the scope. Here we briefly explore the impact of other types of Israel programme compared with one short-term Israel programme.

The survey contained data on three types of Israel programme: short-term, gap year<sup>7</sup> and yeshiva/ seminary.<sup>8</sup> We have already seen the results for 'a single short-term Israel programme only' (see Figure 5 and Table 5). We call this Scenario 1, and the data are reproduced below (Table 11, row 1 and row 4). Scenario 2 runs the Scenario 1 analysis (i.e. including short-term Israel programme) but adds in gap year programme. Scenario 3 runs the Scenario 2 analysis adding in yeshiva, i.e. entering all three Israel programmes. The comparison for each case is those who never went on any Israel programme.

In Scenario 2 when gap year is included in addition to one short-term Israel programme, the short-term variable was excluded from the analysis due to a lack of statistical significance, as participation in a gap year programme statistically 'overshadows' it. Similarly, in Scenario 3 when all three Israel programmes are included, both short-term *and* gap year variables were excluded by the analysis as yeshiva/seminary participation proved the strongest predictor. (It can be assumed that most people participating in a gap year or yeshiva programme will have previously participated in at least one short-term Israel programme, and that in some instances, yeshiva and gap year programmes may refer to the same experience.)

As can be seen in Table 11, in terms of **variance explained** (top three rows), despite the three different scenarios, when all other variables are taken into account (i.e. type of Jewish upbringing and other key experiences), the overall variance explained for each of the eight outcomes is quite similar, indicating that the Israel programmes do not make a substantial contribution to the overall level of variance explained in any of the identity outcomes. That said, there is slightly more variance explained across the outcomes in Scenario 2 (gap year) compared with Scenario 1 (short term), and in Scenario 3 (yeshiva) slightly more is explained overall than in Scenario 2.

Regarding the **regression findings** (bottom three rows of Table 11), Scenario 1 (one short term Israel programme) impacts four outcomes (but one is negative and statistically weaker), Scenario 2 (gap year) also positively impacts three outcomes although with a stronger (i.e. more impactful) score than in Scenario 1, and Scenario 3 (yeshiva) impacts five outcomes, two of which are at a statistically weaker level. In none of the scenarios is there a measurable

---

<sup>7</sup> Question: And which, if any, of the following did you experience growing up? Answer option: A gap year programme in Israel with a youth movement.

<sup>8</sup> Question: And which, if any, of the following did you experience growing up? Answer option: Study at a yeshivah/seminary in Israel.

impact on Jewish peoplehood or Jewish values. All three scenarios have a significant impact on Jewish friends and Israel attachment. Scenario 3 is impactful on community engagement and at a weaker level, religiosity and community attachment. Scenario 1 is impactful on whether one self-identifies as a Zionist or not.

The bottom line is that none of these Israel programmes has a sizable impact on Jewish identity outcomes once upbringing and other key experiences have been taken into account. At the same time, a gap year programme is more impactful than one short-term Israel programme, and yeshiva is more impactful still.

Table 11. Testing different Israel programmes (based on a model using upbringing type)

			Religiosity scale	Ethno-social/ Peoplehood scale	Ethical/Values scale	Jewish friends	Jewish Community Attachment	Jewish Community Engagement	Whether Zionist	Israel attachment
Variance explained (R2)	Scenario 1	One short Israel prog only v No Israel programme	.22	.23	.05	.24	.13	.16	.11	.13
	Scenario 2	Gap year Israel prog v No Israel programme	.21	.25	.05	.26	.14	.16	.11	.15
	Scenario 3	Yeshiva/Sem v No Israel programme	.22	.25	.05	.26	.15	.17	.10	.15
Regression results (Beta coefficients)	Scenario 1	One short Israel prog only v No Israel programme	-.05*			.08			.06	.07
	Scenario 2	Gap year Israel prog v No Israel programme				.09			.07	.11
	Scenario 3	Yeshiva/Sem v No Israel programme	.05*			.08	.05*	.07		.07

\* Significant at 95% only, not 99%.

## / Summary of key findings

This analysis has aimed to identify and quantify key formative experiences that impact Jewish identity later in life. Using multiple regression analyses on data from JPR's 2022 National Jewish Identity Survey, we assessed the influence of nine key Jewish experiences—ranging from Jewish schooling to Jewish youth movement participation—on eight Jewish identity outcomes, such as religiosity, Jewish community engagement and attachment to Israel. Crucially, we have done this after controlling for background variables, across multiple age groups, and comparing those who participated with those who did not.

Two experiments were carried out. The first explored the impact of upbringing type (i.e. the type of Jewish home one grew up in) versus upbringing practice (i.e. whether certain religious practices were part of one's upbringing), and the second repeated this comparison but this time splitting the sample by age, comparing younger respondents (aged under 40) with older respondents (aged 40-59). This resulted in four further regression analyses, each testing the impact of key experiences on the eight Jewish identity outcomes.

Table 12. Summary of analyses

		Upbringing Type	Upbringing Practice
Full sample		<i>Regression 1</i>	<i>Regression 2</i>
		Table 5	Table 6
Age analysis		<i>Regression 3</i>	<i>Regression 4</i>
	a) 18-39 years	Table 7	Table 9
	b) 40-59 years	Table 8	Table 10

- **Variance explained:**

- For most outcomes, the amount of 'variance' explained was low, meaning that the predictors (i.e. the Jewish educational experiences investigated) did not 'explain' the outcomes very well—much of what explains these outcomes is a result of other miscellaneous variables. This is a common result in this type of analytical work, and it reflects the difficulty of identifying drivers of Jewish identity due to the inherent complexity of identity development. The highest amount of variance explained for any outcome was 41% (Figure 7), indicating that while the model identifies significant predictors, a substantial percentage of variability (59%) remains unexplained.
- However, the fact that it is possible to measure any impact at all is notable and beneficial given this complexity and the multifaceted nature of Jewish identity.

While most **variance** remains unexplained, the fact it is possible to measure any impact at all is notable.

**Orthodox and Traditional** upbringings are the most important predictors of Jewish identity outcomes.

Growing up in a home where **Friday night candles** were always lit, that was **kosher** and **shomer Shabbat**, was also impactful.

After accounting for upbringing, *JSoc* is the most important predictor followed by *private Jewish lessons*.

- **Importance of Upbringing Type (Regression 1) (Table 5):**
  - Of all the inputs and experiences tested, and after taking age and sex into account, the type of Jewish upbringing received emerges as the most important predictor of Jewish identity outcomes, with Orthodox or Traditional upbringings strongly influencing all eight identity outcomes.
  - By contrast, no single key Jewish educational experience impacted all eight Jewish identity outcomes.
- **The role of key Jewish educational experiences (Table 5):**
  - After taking upbringing and demographic background into account, the most impactful experience was having been a member of a **university JSoc**. In other words, JSoc had the greatest additional impact or 'value add,' significantly impacting seven out of eight Jewish identity outcomes. (We discuss how this should be interpreted in the reflections section below.)
  - Having had **private Jewish lessons** impacted six outcomes, although one negatively and four with weaker significance.
  - Having been regularly involved in a Jewish **youth movement/club** impacted upon four outcomes, followed by having attended a **Jewish school** (also four outcomes, but only one of which was strongly significant (Jewish friends)) and having participated in a **short Israel programme** (three positive, one negative outcome).
  - **Cheder, GCSE/A-Level in Jewish Studies/Hebrew, and Bar/Bat Mitzvah** showed no positive and statistically significant impact.
- **Testing Jewish Practices in upbringing as opposed to Upbringing Type (Regression 2) (Table 6):**
  - A separate set of variables about specific Jewish practices experienced at home while growing up were tested next (instead of the 'upbringing type' variables), to potentially provide more actionable insights for policy. These were: Friday night candles, kosher home, and Shomer Shabbat. This reduced the overall amount of variance explained. In other words, a larger proportion of what drives Jewish identity outcomes remains unknown, compared with the model using broader upbringing type variables.
  - Having grown up in a home in which **Friday night candles** were always lit impacted seven of the eight outcomes (one weakly). Having grown up in a **kosher home** impacted five, and in a **shomer Shabbat** home impacted three (one weakly). Only Jewish values was not impacted by any of these three practices.
  - After controlling for these Upbringing Practices, having been a member of a **university JSoc** had the greatest additional impact or 'value add,' significantly influencing seven out of eight outcomes. Indeed, this was found to be as impactful as having grown up in a home in which Friday night candles were always lit.
  - Again, after controlling for the three upbringing practices, other key impactors were: having attended a **Jewish school**, which impacted four outcomes; having been regularly involved in a **Jewish youth movement/club** (six outcomes, two weakly); having had **private Jewish lessons** (six outcomes, three weakly, one negatively); and

having participated in a **short-term Israel programme** (and no other), which impacted five outcomes (one weakly and one negatively).

- **Generational analysis**

- The analysis was repeated comparing the outcomes for two age groups: a younger group aged 16 to 39 with more recent memory of their upbringing and key educational experiences, and an older group aged 40 to 59 with more distant memory of these experiences.
- Comparing the two age groups - variance explained:
  - Including the **type of Jewish upbringing** people experienced (Figure 7), the amount of variance explained is similar for the younger and older groups with the exception of two out of the eight outcomes: Jewish friends and Jewish community engagement. In both cases, less variance is explained for the older group, i.e. other factors, not measured here, are driving these two outcomes in the older group compared with the younger group.
  - Including the **upbringing practice variables**, less variance was explained compared with upbringing type (Figure 8). And again, the generational differences are similar, with the exception of two out of the eight outcomes: Religiosity, where less variance is explained for the older age group, and Jewish community engagement where almost no variance is explained in the older age group.
- Comparing the two age groups - regression results:
  - The type of Jewish upbringing people had (Regression 3) was much more impactful on the older compared with the younger group. In the younger group, Orthodox upbringing was key (five outcomes, one weakly). In the older group both Orthodox (eight outcomes, one weakly) and Traditional (seven outcomes, one weakly) upbringings were most impactful.
  - Upbringing practices (Regression 4) were also more impactful on the older compared with the younger group but, in both cases, less impactful than upbringing type. For the older group, Friday night candles were impactful on three outcomes. Kosher home was also impactful on three outcomes (one weakly).
- After controlling for demographics and the **type of upbringing** people had (Regression 3), key experiences were slightly more impactful overall on the younger compared with the older age group. The most notable **key experiences** differed for each age group:
  - For the younger group (Table 7): regular involvement in a Jewish youth movement/club (impacting three outcomes, one weakly), participation in a Jewish youth summer camp (three outcomes, two weakly), and having been a member of JSoc (two outcomes, one weakly).
  - For the older group (Table 8): having been a member of a JSoc impacted four outcomes (two weakly), and having participated in a short-term Israel programme (only) impacted three outcomes (one weakly).

- Finally, after controlling for **upbringing practices** (Regression 4), the most notable **key experiences** were:
  - For the younger group (Table 9), having been a member of a JSoc (impacting three outcomes, two weakly), having had private Jewish lessons (three outcomes, two weakly, one negative), and having attended a Jewish school (two outcomes).
  - For the older group (Table 10): having been a member of a JSoc (impacting four outcomes, one weakly), having participated in a short-term Israel programme (only) (three outcomes, one weakly), and having participated in a Jewish youth summer camp (three outcomes, three weakly).

### Will the younger generation ultimately resemble their parents?

- In both analyses of the full sample the age variable was a positive predictor of six out of eight Jewish identity outcomes. This means that these identity traits tended to be stronger in older people than younger people. This begs the question: will the younger people eventually resemble their parents' generation in terms of Jewish identity, or will they forge their own path? This is the classic 'generation versus life stage' conundrum.
- As we noted (Table 4), the younger people experienced a very different political and technological environment to older people. They also experienced a different Jewish educational environment, in particular greater access to Jewish schools.
- This age analysis shows that upbringing is more impactful on the older compared with the younger age group. Conversely, key Jewish experiences are slightly more impactful on the younger group compared with the older group. Moreover, the key experiences that do resonate between the two groups differ. The best interpretation of these results is that the impact of upbringing is somewhat overshadowed early in life when the Jewish educational experiences one has had are still relatively 'fresh,' but that as time passes, the impact of the key experiences diminishes and the impact of upbringing comes to the fore. In other words, what endures over time is the impact of one's upbringing, while the impact of key experiences erodes; after all, the younger group experienced these key programmes far more recently than the older group. This may be telling us that the impact of these key programmes weakens as time passes, and that it is one's upbringing that endures, leaving a deeper, more lasting imprint.
- Nevertheless, we should be careful not to overstate this impact as we have shown that the measurable impact of any historical experience is rather limited.



## / Reflections on the findings

These findings offer valuable insights into the intricate ways in which Jewish identity emerges and evolves from childhood into adulthood. Importantly, they show that in many respects, influencing Jewish identity outcomes is complicated, and to a considerable extent, beyond the community's control. In this sense, the results are humbling, highlighting the limits of what can be achieved through targeted interventions. A key lesson is that whilst community ambitions should remain high, expectations should be realistic about what programmes can and cannot achieve in the process of identity formation. Unrealistic expectations risk setting up the programmes, community, and funders for perceived failure.

Indeed, the very notion of 'impact' assumes a direct cause-and-effect relationship between programmatic inputs and identity outcomes. Yet identity formation is inherently complex. Even siblings raised in the same Jewish home, exposed to identical environments and programmes, often exhibit very different identities in adulthood. This reflects the individuality of the human experience. Jewish identity outcomes emerge over time from a mosaic of influences across multiple settings and occasions rather than a single defining experience. Many of these factors are unmeasurable and random, limiting what can be assessed or deliberately influenced by programmes.

That said, the data consistently identify what can be assessed. Of the things with the greatest measurable impact, upbringing matters most. This is not a novel insight, but it remains critical. While it presents challenges for programme designers, it underscores the importance of supporting and empowering parents to create a strong Jewish home environment. This study shows how the specific home practices we measured impact different identity outcomes. Much could potentially be gained if new parents are made more keenly aware of the importance of the Jewish home environment in shaping the outcome of their children's identities later in life. This points to the importance of investing in the agency of young Jewish families. Building parental agency means making parents aware of the crucial role they play and equipping them with the educational resources and support they need to feel confident and capable as the primary Jewish educators of their children.

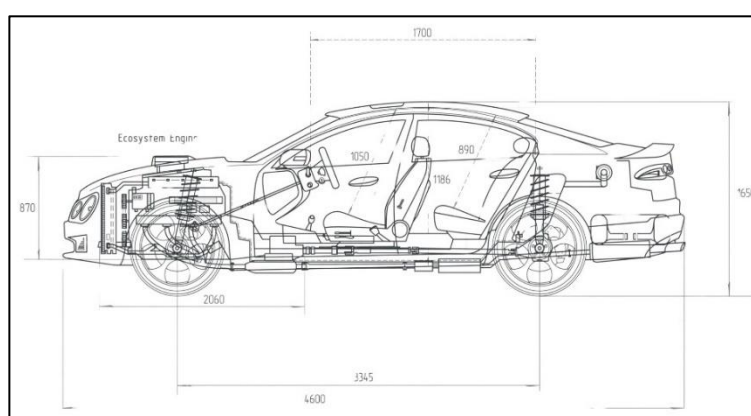
Yet programmes and experiences still matter, even if they may not have as much long-term influence as is often assumed. With this in mind, we should consider the decline of Jewish youth movement engagement shown in Figure 4. We see in this analysis how younger people are far less likely to have participated in Jewish youth movements than older people, and conversely, how they are far more likely to have attended a Jewish school. It is tempting to link these two trends: the expansion of Jewish schooling has taken place alongside the decline of youth movement engagement. If they are linked, what might be the underlying cause of this association? Is it the case that Jewish school pupils and their parents have concluded that Jewish schooling provides a sufficient Jewish social and educational experience and it is therefore unnecessary to participate in a Jewish youth movement? If so, consciously or otherwise, a call is being made that the benefits of a youth movement experience are subsumed by the benefits of Jewish schooling. But is that true? Our analysis suggests that

while the long-term impact of both programmes is ultimately somewhat limited, youth movement involvement is *more* impactful than Jewish schooling. Moreover, we show that the two experiences influence different Jewish identity outcomes. Since the cost of running peer-led youth movements is a fraction of the cost of running a Jewish school, in a world of limited resources, is there a case for greater emphasis on informal educational frameworks and systems?

This analysis also indicates that belonging to a university Jewish Society (JSoc) seems to have a much greater impact than other programmes and experiences. Are we to understand from this that there is something intrinsic to the JSoc experience that has a particularly impactful and long-lasting effect on Jewish identity? Or rather, is the apparent 'effect' more a result of circumstance? For most Jews, JSoc is a version of Jewish community life that takes place on campus, and while Jewish students are free to sign up or not, it tends not to be seen as simply another society of the Student Union, such as Chess Soc or Labour Soc. Knowingly or not, for many young Jewish people, JSoc constitutes an important 'transition' Jewish community. For the first time, young Jewish adults are free to choose for themselves whether they want to be part of a Jewish community or not, having moved out of the family home for the first time. Perhaps the result is telling us that those who choose to join a JSoc are the same Jewish adults who choose Jewish community life further down the line, which in turn suggests that the result was somewhat predetermined. JSoc members were *already* set on a particular engaged Jewish trajectory, a particular path to 'in-gagement' as opposed to 'out-gagement.'

By the same token, those who chose not to sign up indicated they were already on a path that had limited or no interest in Jewish community life. So perhaps the JSoc result is more circumstantial than intrinsic, telling us that even by this early stage in life, the crucial formative period of Jewish identity development has essentially passed. By the time someone reaches university and finds themselves in a position where they are free to choose, the decision they make will be based on what came before. If those experiences growing up were meaningful and positively impactful, then joining a JSoc may be less a choice than a necessity—or at least a very strong preference—for them.

However, whether considering JSoc membership, Jewish school attendance or any other Jewish framework or intervention, no programme or experience operates in a vacuum. To explain the complicated interrelationships between the different inputs of Jewish identity, consider the following analogy. Cars are complex machines consisting of thousands of separate parts that must all work together to produce a viable working vehicle. Yet not all parts are equal. Some are more expensive and complicated than others, some are more important (impactful) than



the following analogy. Cars are complex machines consisting of thousands of separate parts that must all work together to produce a viable working vehicle. Yet not all parts are equal. Some are more expensive and complicated than others, some are more important (impactful) than

others. Some have to be continually replenished; others last a lifetime. And each part on its own is necessary, but not sufficient, to make the car work. Each needs to be connected to other parts and in specific ways for peak performance. In this sense the car is greater than the sum of its parts, and the parts don't function in isolation; they act together, in concert. In other words, they operate within an *ecosystem*. The analogy is not hard to make: the car parts are the inputs—the key Jewish experiences and programmes—and the car, or rather the experience of the car, is the output, Jewish identity.

Each key Jewish experience is necessary but, on its own, insufficient. Some experiences, as we have shown, are more important (impactful) than others. The Jewish identity outcomes they impact differ. Some cost more, some have a longer lasting impact.

This leads us to a broader and more conceptually powerful point. It is more realistic to conceptualise Jewish identity development as continually emergent from the cumulative impact of multiple experiences over time, rather than as the outcome of any particular experience – any particular 'silver bullet.'

The complexity is mindboggling. No programme or experience occurs in isolation—they all occur in varied contexts, in parallel or in series, and are frequently interconnected or mutually reinforcing. Rather than viewing programmes and experiences as silver bullets, it is more important to see them as components of a broader Jewish ecosystem, where their collective and interrelated impact exceeds the sum of their individual parts.<sup>9</sup>

If the past decades have taught us anything, it is that there are no quick fixes, no silver bullets when it comes to developing strong Jewish identity. Jewish experiences, like Jewish identity, are works in progress that take place in a *Jewish ecosystem*. A programme's weak or unmeasurable impact does not necessarily mean failure. Failure occurs when evidence is ignored or when expectations are unrealistic. Failure is not trying at all. As Rabbi Tarfon, the first century-Talmudic sage, states in *Pirkei Avot* (2:16):

לא עליך המלאכה לגמר, ולא אתה בן חורין לבטל ממנה.

*It is not your duty to finish the work, but neither are you at liberty to neglect it.*

---

<sup>9</sup> For a more in-depth discussion and analysis see: Bankier-Karp, A. and Graham, D. (2025, forthcoming). 'Silver bullet versus ecosystem: unravelling the impact of Jewish educational interventions on Jewish identity', *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*.

## Acknowledgements

This study was funded by the Jewish Leadership Council as part of its 'Forge the Future' programme. More generally, JPR's work is supported mainly by charitable donations, and we are particularly indebted to the following foundations and individuals, without whom the data that underpins this study would not exist:

- The Rothschild Foundation Hanadiv Europe
- Pears Foundation
- The Wohl Legacy
- The David and Ruth Lewis Charitable Trust
- The Bloom Foundation
- The Charles Wolfson Charitable Trust
- The Haskel Foundation
- The Kirsh Foundation
- The Davis Foundation
- The Morris Leigh Foundation
- The Maurice Hatter Foundation
- The Exilarch's Foundation
- The Humanitarian Trust
- The Sobell Foundation
- The Klein Family Foundation
- The Mitchell Charitable Trust

The authors wish to thank the team at the Jewish Leadership Council who funded this study and ensured its results were understood and shared across the UK Jewish educational sector, particularly Bill Benjamin, Carolyn Bogush and Claire Mandel. In addition, our thanks go to the team at JPR that ran the 2022 National Jewish Identity Survey and ensured that those data were available for analysis, notably Dr Carli Lessof, Omri Gal and Richard Goldstein. Most importantly, we wish to thank the many people across the UK who give up their time to complete our surveys and to support our research. We know their time is precious, so we are always grateful to them for sharing their thoughts and experiences.

## / About the Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR)

The Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR) is a London-based research organisation, consultancy and think-tank. It aims to advance the prospects of Jewish communities in the United Kingdom and across Europe by conducting research and informing policy development in dialogue with those best placed to influence Jewish life positively. Web: [www.jpr.org.uk](http://www.jpr.org.uk).

## / Authors

**Dr David Graham** is a Senior Research Fellow at JPR, an Honorary Associate at the Department of Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies at the University of Sydney, and an Honorary Research Associate at the University of Cape Town. He holds a DPhil from the University of Oxford and has published widely for academic and general interest audiences. A geographer by training and expert in the sociodemographic study of Jews in the UK, Australia and South Africa, his skills encompass statistical analysis, survey and questionnaire design, census data analysis and geographic information system mapping. He has been involved in numerous studies of Jewish life and has undertaken work for several organisations, including the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Kaplan Centre at the University of Cape Town, Jewish Care, the Jewish Chronicle, UJIA, Pears Foundation, the Union of Jewish Students and JCA Australia.

**Dr. Adina Bankier-Karp** is a research affiliate at the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation, Monash University, and associate editor of the journal *Contemporary Jewry*. She has written for academic and general audiences on topics including Jewish identity formation, Australian Jewry, Jewish education and the intersection of religion and wellbeing. Her most recent publications have examined Jewish identity resilience and the relevance of Jewish denominations to understanding Jewish values and engagement. Adina holds a PhD in Education from Monash University.

**Dr Jonathan Boyd** is the Executive Director of the Institute for Jewish Policy Research, Honorary Research Fellow at University College London, and a former Jerusalem Fellow at the Mandel Institute in Israel. A specialist in contemporary Jewry and antisemitism with expertise in the study of Jews in the UK and across Europe, he is a Board member of the Association for the Social Scientific Study of Jewry, and a regular columnist in the Jewish press. He was the academic director for the 2012 and 2018 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) studies of Jewish perceptions and experiences of antisemitism, and is currently Project Director for the first ever European Commission survey of antisemitic attitudes across the EU. He holds a doctorate in education from the University of Nottingham, and an MA and BA in Jewish history from University College London.

© Institute for Jewish Policy Research 2025 (Registered Charity No. 252626)

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reprinted or reproduced, or utilised in any form or by any means, now known or hereinafter invented, including photocopying and recording or in any information storage or retrieval system, without the permission in writing of the publisher.

Published by Institute for Jewish Policy Research

6 Greenland Place, London NW1 0AP, UK

+44 (0)20 7424 9265

[jpr@jpr.org.uk](mailto:jpr@jpr.org.uk)

[www.jpr.org.uk](http://www.jpr.org.uk)