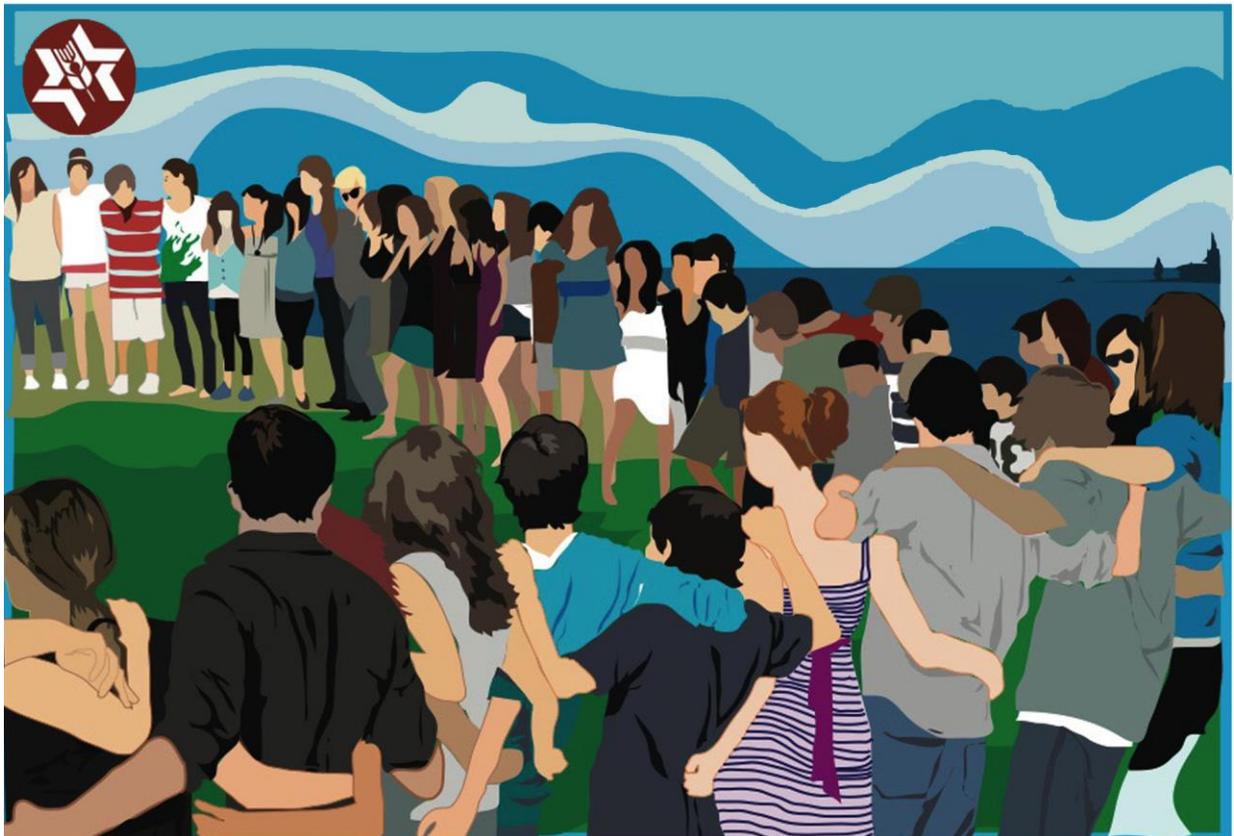


# Building Progressive Zionist Activists:

## Exploring the Impact of Habonim Dror

Steven M. Cohen and Steven Fink  
12/01/2013



Published 2013 by the Habonim Dror Camp Association  
Steven J. Weinberg, Executive Director  
732-390-4745  
[alumnistudy@habonimdror.org](mailto:alumnistudy@habonimdror.org)

Study available online at:  
<http://study.hdcamp.org>

Habonim Dror North America website:  
[www.habonimdror.org](http://www.habonimdror.org)

Authors:  
Prof. Steven M. Cohen, [Steve34NYC@AOL.com](mailto:Steve34NYC@AOL.com), 646-284-1932  
Steven Fink, [Rightresearch@yahoo.com](mailto:Rightresearch@yahoo.com)

Cover graphic printed with the permission of Habonim Dror Camp Miriam

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Habonim Dror – From 1935 to Today .....	2
An Anxious Time for American Jewry .....	2
Can Jewish Value Education Work? .....	3
Habonim Dror: Philosophy and Program .....	4
The Sample and Implications for the Analysis .....	5
The Analytic Strategy.....	6
Demographic Characteristics.....	7
High Levels of Experiencing Habonim Dror, but Varied as Well .....	8
Jewish Background: Many Conservative-Raised & Day School Alumni .....	10
Jewish Engagement Somewhat Higher than Comparable Camp Alumni.....	12
Israel Engagement – Many Current Olim, Former Olim, and Highly Attached ...	16
Politically, Strongly to the Left.....	19
On Israel: Very Dovish, Hardly Hawkish .....	22
Testifying to Impact.....	24
Camps in Particular .....	25
The Habonim Dror Family & Family as Habonim Dror .....	27
Conclusion.....	28
Frequency Distributions .....	A-1

## Habonim Dror – From 1935 to Today

Founded in 1935, Habonim Dror in North America – with its network of summer camps, local programming and Israel-based activities -- has directly touched on the order of 40,000 Jewish young people. Anecdotal evidence points to significant number of “Habos” (the insider term for Habonim Dror alumni) who have made aliyah, assumed lay and professional leadership positions in Jewish life, and become active in socially progressive organizations – all consistent with the articulated educational objectives of this progressive Zionist youth movement, the largest such movement in North America.

While a small literature, almost all by alumni (or “bogram,” the Hebrew term we use below), has provided historic context and impressionistic (and impressive) testimony to the impact of Habonim Dror, to date no social scientific survey has sought to understand the scope, depth and extent of its impact. This study, relying upon the responses of almost 2,000 Habonim Dror alumni, ages 18-83, represents a first attempt to assess the impact, and across a range of parameters. Such an enterprise will be of interest not only to passionate supporters of Habonim Dror, but also to all those with an interest in the impact of youth movements, Israel education and overnight Jewish summer camps. Indeed, this study comes at a moment in American Jewish history when interest in the study of “what works” in terms of Jewish education and commitment-building is especially critical, and when a mounting literature addresses such questions to a particularly attentive audience of policy makers, practitioners, and parents. In fact, the reasons for their attentiveness, and the context that has given rise to it, are important preliminary issues for the study of Habonim Dror, or any such Jewish educational endeavor in early 21<sup>st</sup> century North America.

## An Anxious Time for American Jewry

To look at the broader social and intellectual context ... Inherent to Jews, Judaism, and Jewish culture is an abiding anxiety around Jewish sustainability. For understandable reasons, be they justified or not, identified Jews typically focus on two concerns: either anti-Semites will do Jews harm physically, or assimilation will do Jews in spiritually. Not for nothing did a leading

Jewish thinker (Simon Rawidowicz, 1986) entitle a seminal essay on Jews, “Israel: The Ever-Dying People.”

In the mid and latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Shoah and Israel’s many wars and conflicts have served to reinforce and deepen fears for Jews’ physical survival. In the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, recognition of the advance of intermarriage along with numerous reports of declining Jewish numbers in a variety of institutional contexts, have heightened pre-existing fears that Jews will diminish numerically if not qualitatively as well. Particularly since the early 1990s, Jewish communal leaders have become even more focused upon the instruments of Jewish education and socialization, hoping to “stem the tide of assimilation,” by producing more committed and connected younger Jews who will, in their own way, sustain the Jewish future.

In this context, Jewish communal leaders and observers inevitably wonder whether their hopes for Jewish education will be realized. Will day schools, camps, Hillels, Israel travel and a variety of related activities actually make a difference? Is it even possible for the various instrumentalities of Jewish education and socialization to overcome powerful social and cultural forces and produce Jewish youngsters and adults with a life-long Jewish engagement? More broadly, in an open society – one which is not so favorably disposed either to ethnic identity or religious commitment that is non-fundamentalist – can value education even hope to succeed?

## **Can Jewish Value Education Work?**

Over the last two decades a growing body of literature has documented that certain experiences in adolescence and childhood do, in fact, exert several sorts of long-term impact upon Jewish engagement in adulthood.

While the literature often points to generalized impact, just a few studies have demonstrated more focused impact, in accord with the ideological perspectives of the particular form of education under investigation. In other words, we do know that a variety of educational experiences tend to leave a lasting imprint on their alumni’s Jewish engagement generally conceived; but we have little evidence that the specific educational aims of ideologically driven Jewish education are achieved.

In this context, we turn to the study of Habonim Dror, asking whether the Habonim Dror experience has made any difference in the lives of former “Habos”, and, if so, whether that impact comports with the highly value-driven philosophy that guides the Habonim Dror experience.

We do so here by way of a survey of almost 2,000 Habonim Dror alumni, age 18 to 83, who as long as 60+ years ago participated in some aspect of the Habonim Dror program in North America. Before turning to the survey itself, we provide some background information on Habonim Dror.

## Habonim Dror: Philosophy and Program

Habonim Dror describes itself as a Progressive Zionist Youth Movement.<sup>1</sup>It sees its mission as twofold (from its website <https://www.habonimdror.org/>):

- To build a personal bond and commitment between North American Jewish youth and the State of Israel.
- To create Jewish leaders who will actualize the principles of social justice, equality, peace and coexistence in Israel and North America.

“Habonim Dror runs 7 [Machanot](#) (summer camps) across Canada and the United States, an [Israel summer program](#) (MBI), a [year-long Israel program](#) (Workshop), and year-round activities in many areas of the country (called [Eizorim/Kenim](#))based on the pillars of Progressive Labor Zionism, Judaism, Socialism, Social Justice, and Hagshama (actualization of values).”

Habonim Dror’s educational aspirations may be encompassed in the following domains:

- Jewish engagement
- Israel commitment
- Progressive political identity in the US or Canada
- Dovish policies with respect to Israel

According to the website, Habonim's brand of Labor Zionism continues to be relevant and to resonate with Jewish youth throughout the country.

---

<sup>1</sup>In 1982 Habonim merged with Dror and Habonim Dror North America was created.

To examine these and related issues, Habonim Dror requested this study of its alumni, those who have had any contact with Habonim Dror over the decades.

## The Sample and Implications for the Analysis

The sample frame consisted of all 5,000 Habo alumni whose email addresses could be assembled by the Habonim Dror office. Nearly 2000 (N=1994 to be exact) eligible respondents returned the survey (a few respondents reported they had not participated in Habonim Dror in their youth, and were dropped from the analysis).

Habonim Dror cannot produce an exact estimate of its alumni, but some observers have arrived at a figure of 40,000 alumni since the first Habonim camps opened in 1935. We must exercise some caution when working with a limited sample frame and sample is that roughly 10% of the total eligible population of those involved since 1960. We have some reason to believe that these are the more connected to Habonim Dror (by virtue of being among the 25% or so appearing on the email lists in the first place) and more committed to Habonim Dror (or its people, its values, etc., by virtue of having been among the 40% who responded to the survey).

To conduct a study of the impact of Habonim Dror in the ideal world, the pristine experimental design would randomly assign Jewish youngsters of similar background to Habonim Dror treatment (or experimental) and control groups. On a random basis, some would be assigned to attend Habonim Dror summer camp, and others would not be assigned to attend. Obviously, in the real world, families who were already more committed to Habonim Dror values, as well as comparable peer groups, guided their youngsters to the Habonim Dror orbit, obviating any possibility of pure random assignment.

But, in addition to self-selection, to an unknown extent, this sample is probably biased in the direction that would demonstrate greater influence of Habonim Dror in the selected outcome areas. Thus, if Habonim Dror is designed to promote Israel commitment and aliyah, then, in all likelihood, this sample contains somewhat more people committed to Israel and more olim than the entire universe of Habos.

That said, by the same reasoning, the intra-sample differences between “heavy” and “light” users of Habonim Dror experience may be less susceptible to sample bias. That is, the gaps

in, say, Israel commitment, between those who underwent many Habonim Dror activities over many years as compared with those who undertook just a few activities for a short period may be resilient to the challenges of selective appearance on the email lists or response bias.

## The Analytic Strategy

We assess the impact of Habonim Dror in two ways.

First, where possible, we compare the Habos' responses with those of (moderately) comparable samples of American Jews from other studies. If, for example, the Habonim Dror respondents far more often identify as liberals or Democrats than American Jews generally, we have presumptive (albeit, imperfect) evidence that Habonim Dror served to produce more politically progressive alumni, or more modestly, that it worked to recruit people from politically progressive families, neighborhoods and peer groups.

Second, we compare "light" and "heavy" Habonim users, as noted above. If Habonim Dror exerted a long-lasting impact, then those who received more exposure to Habonim Dror stimuli and socialization should look different from those with very modest engagement with Habonim Dror contexts, activities, and people.

In addition, to provide greater insight and lend greater richness to our quantitative results, we present selections from the respondents' verbatim comments. These serve to underscore and refine our principal findings.

## Findings

### Demographic Characteristics

Among the most notable features of the sample are the following (see Appendix A for a complete frequency distribution).

First, they range in age from 18 to 83, with the oldest respondent having been born in 1930. As Table 1 shows, the ages are widely distributed as follows:

**Table 1. Age Groupings**

Age Groups	Percent
75-83	6
65-74	10
50-64	30
40-49	15
30-39	20
18-29	19
Total	100

SOURCE: Habonim Dror Survey, 2013.

As for gender distribution, over half (57%) are women, consistent with the general finding that girls and women are more active in religious life in general and Jewish life in particular.

These respondents display a distribution of marital status generally compatible with that seen among adult Jews their age in Jewish population studies (see Table 2).

**Table 2. Marital Status**

Marital Status	Percent
Married	59
Living with Partner	8
Single-never married	24
Divorced	6
Separated	1
Widowed	2
Total	100

SOURCE: Habonim Dror Survey, 2013.

Thus, about 59% of the individuals are married (comparable to many Jewish community studies). In part as a result of their youthful character (39% are under 40), the number living with a partner (8%) is somewhat higher than we typically find in general Jewish population studies. And, consistent with the relatively small number age 65 and over (16%) hardly any (2%) are widowed. Just over 3-in-5 (60%) have had children.

While American Jews are highly educated, this sample of Habonim Dror alumni displays a high degree of educational attainment (see Table 3).

**Table 3. Highest Level of Education Achieved**

Education	Percent
High school or less	2
Some college	10
B.A. or B.S. or other undergraduate degree	30
MSW	4
MBA	3
Law degree	6
Other professional post-graduate degree	8
Other M.A. or equivalent	22
Doctor or Doctorate (M.D., Ed.D., Ph.D., etc.)	14
Total	100

SOURCE: Habonim Dror Survey, 2013.

Fully 88% have earned a college degree; most (58%) have earned a post-graduate degree, and as many as 14% are entitled to place the honorific of “doctor” before their names.

## High Levels of Experiencing Habonim Dror, but Varied as Well

Habonim Dror offers its young people several ways to participate in its activities. Undoubtedly reflecting usage patterns generally, nearly everybody who has been involved with Habonim Dror attended or worked in a movement camp (97%) and the vast majority (86%) also participated in Ken (club) activities in their home towns. About two thirds (68%) of this sample participated in local Madatz, MB or KM Bet (summer leadership training programs). And almost

half participated in summer programs in Israel (47%) and Workshop or Machon, the gap year programs in Israel (48%).

The Habos in this sample attended or worked in the summer camps as early as the 1930s and as recently as 2012. A small number (8%) last attended before 1960; about a sixth in the 1960s, a fifth in the 1970s, a sixth in the 1980s, a fifth in the 1990s and, as well, in 2000 or beyond. In other words, they are widely distributed in terms of the recency of their camp experience and, of course, in terms of age, as we have seen.

The respondents range, as well, in terms of the number of years they attended or worked in camp. Of significant note, a slim majority attended five seasons or more of camp. Combined with the rates of participation in the other Habonim Dror activities, the profile of the average Habo (or at least the ones in this survey) points to high levels of engagement in the movement when these alumni were youngsters.

To measure the extent to which respondents had been active in Habonim Dror in their youth, we constructed an index which assigned one point for each for having participated in a Ken, in a summer program in Israel, in Madatz, in Habonim Workshop, and for attending camp for five years or more and for working as a counselor. Table 4 shows the distribution.

**Table 4. Index of Habonim Dror Activity**

Number of Points	Percent
0 (camp only)	7
1	12
2	13
3	16
4	18
5	21
6*	13
Total	100

SOURCE: Habonim Dror Survey, 2013.

\*Camp, Ken, summer programs, Madatz, Workshop, 5- years as a camper, + camp counselor.

The wide variation in the extent to which respondents participated in Habonim Dror in their younger years is methodologically useful, to say the least. It allows us to compare people

with different levels of Habonim Dror activities to ascertain likely impact, or more precisely (and modestly), the extent to which involvement in Habonim Dror is associated with a variety of postulated outcomes.

## Jewish Background: Many Conservative-Raised & Day School Alumni

Habonim Dror alumni report evidence of childhood Jewish socialization somewhat more intense than that reported by American Jews generally, and on par with that reported by those who attended Jewish camps. About a third of them, in fact, attended or worked in a Jewish camp other than their Habonim Dror camp experience. Almost two thirds participated in Hillel or another campus Jewish organization and as many as 20% served as a leader at some point – both numbers that exceed those reported in other studies.

Further evidence can be seen in their denominational background, as almost half were raised in Conservative homes, and another 8% reported Orthodox upbringing (see Table 5).

**Table 5. While growing up, in which Jewish denomination, if any, were you raised? (percent)**

Denomination	Habonim Dror Alumni	NY Comparison Group
Orthodox	8	20
Conservative	49	36
Reform	15	28
Reconstructionist	5	--
Other movement such as Renewal, Secular Humanist, etc.	1	--
Just Jewish	4	--
Not raised Jewish	0	--
Other	4	--
Secular Zionist	6	--
Culturally Jewish	8	--
Other than O, C, R (NY)	(28)	17
Total	100	100

SOURCE: Habonim Dror Survey, 2013

By way of a very approximate comparison, we may examine a segment of respondents drawn from the 2011 Jewish Community Study of New York (Westchester, New York City, and Long Island), constructed to loosely resemble the Habos. The constructed New York sub-sample shares the following characteristics: all are US-born former participants in a Jewish camp, but they contain no current Haredim (ultra-Orthodox Jews) and those who attend religious services more than weekly (almost all of whom are highly committed Modern Orthodox men). In comparison with these former overnight Jewish campers in the eight-county New York area, the Habonim Dror distributions suggest mixed levels of religious traditionalism.

To elaborate ... In the New York sample sub-group, far more ex-campers were raised Orthodox (20% vs. 8%), the most observant denomination, and, at the same time, far more were also raised Reform (28% vs. 15%), the least observant denomination. In contrast, the Habos derived significantly more from Conservative background (49% vs. 36%), as well as from “other” origins, that is, not from one of the three largest movements (although the difference in question wording may have contributed to this seeming variation). In any event, the Habonim Dror sample reports an uncharacteristically high number of Reconstructionist parents (5%), judged high by virtue of their numbers in American Jewry that generally place them at around 1%.

The bottom line: The denominational data suggest that Habonim Dror alumni derive from homes that were not necessarily, as a group, more (or less) “religious” or ritually observant than the non-Haredi New York area Jewish camp alumni; but the Habos’ parents’ homes may well have been characterized by stronger Jewish ethnic connections and commitment, as demonstrated by the seemingly high numbers of Conservative and Reconstructionist parents. (To be sure, the point rests on weak evidence, but is consistent both with the Habonim Dror ethos and with the distinctive denominational patterns above.)

The distribution of Jewish schooling experiences also testifies to a stronger than average Jewish upbringing, as fully a quarter reported having attended Jewish day school, just 9% had no Jewish schooling and half reported Jewish supplementary school that met at least twice a week (as do almost all Conservative Hebrew schools) (see Table 6).

**Table 6. As a child, what was the main type of Jewish schooling that you received, if any?**

Jewish schooling	Habonim Dror Alumni	NY Comparison Group
None	9	25
A part-time school that met once a week	16	29
A part-time school that met 2+times week	50	33
A Jewish day school or yeshiva	25	23
Total	100	100

SOURCE: Habonim Dror Survey, 2013

For this sub-sample, almost a quarter (23%) attended day school, much like the Habonim Dror alumni. However, in all other respects, Habonim Dror alumni appear to have experienced more intensive Jewish education than comparable New Yorkers. Specifically, the former report more frequent attendance at two+ day-a-week Hebrew schools (50% vs. 33%), while far fewer Habos never stepped foot inside a Jewish classroom (9% vs. 25%).

The schooling patterns are critical not so much for what they say about the intensity of Jewish schooling per se. Rather, they suggest that the homes and communities where Habonim Dror alumni grew up were moderately more connected to Jewish life than were comparable alumni of Jewish camps in the New York area. Moreover, the nature of that connection may be loosely termed as highly “ethnic” rather than highly observant in traditional religious terms.

### **Jewish Engagement Somewhat Higher than Comparable Camp Alumni**

The survey of Habonim Dror alumni used a number of questions whose wording exactly replicated that found in the 2011 Jewish Community Study of New York, allowing direct comparisons between results for the alumni (limited to those resident in the US, to maximize comparability) and for the specially drawn segment of New York area Jewish camp alumni (see Table 7).

**Table 7. Jewish Engagement Questions (US and Canadian residents only)**

Jewish Engagement Questions	Habonim Dror Alumni	NY Comparison Group
<b>Habonim Dror alumni scores are higher</b>		
Belong to a Jewish organization (not synagogue or JCC)	51	29
Participate in a Friday night Shabbat meal sometimes or regularly	63	40
Usually Shabbat candles lit in the home (usually + always)	39	24
Being Jewish in your life ... Very important	67	55
Most closest friends are Jewish (all/almost all/most)	62	49
<b>Habonim Dror alumni are slightly higher</b>		
Feel like you are part of a Jewish community ... a lot	46	38
To be part of a Jewish community ... Very important	51	46
Attends religious services (monthly or more)	28	27
<b>Scores are about the same</b>		
Regularly talk about Jewish-related topics w Jewish friends	43	40
Belong to a synagogue	48	50
Inmarried/intermarried	81/19	83/17
<b>Denominational identification</b>		
Orthodox	3	<b>11</b>
Conservative	25	24
Reform	11	<b>32</b>
Reconstructionist	10	2
Other	52	30
Total	100	100

SOURCE: Habonim Dror Survey, 2013

In general, the Habonim Dror alumni outscore the NY comparison group on measures of Jewish engagement. Gaps are especially wide for Shabbat home observance, belonging to Jewish organizations, and having Jewish friends. On the other hand, we find no differences with respect to synagogue-belonging. Of those married, the Habonim Dror alumni are slightly *less* likely to be in-married than the New York comparison group, although that variation may derive in part from the relatively low rates of in-marriage in the New York area as compared with the country as a whole.

With respect to denominational identification, the largest number of denominationally identified are Conservative (25%), hardly any alumni identified themselves as Orthodox (3%), few are Reform (11%), and 10% identify as Reconstructionist. In part, the patterns bear the influence of upbringing, where both Conservative and Reconstructionist identities also figured relatively prominently. Perhaps most interesting is the large number – over half (52%) -- who identify with a variety of “other” denominational identities. By way of comparison, the New York group reports substantially more Orthodox and Reform identifiers, and far fewer Reconstructionist and “other” identifiers.

In short, the comparisons with adults of similar Jewish background who attended Jewish summer camp point in no strong direction. One cannot say that Habonim Dror alumni score unusually high or low on various forms of Jewish engagement, as compared with other Jewish summer camp alumni. In other words, since we know from other research that Jewish summer camp enhances Jewish engagement, all we can infer is that Habonim Dror does not out-perform other Jewish camps with respect to elevating Jewish engagement. Rather, one can conclude, Habonim Dror – like overnight Jewish camp in general – seems to exert a lifelong influence on most indicators of involvement in Jewish life.

At the same time, many credit their Habonim Dror experience with influencing their Jewish identity. To elaborate, this impact was often separate from the impact of attending Jewish Day School or Hebrew school. Several bogrim believe the Habonim experience was more influential than the values instilled by their families. This sense of Jewish identity was often framed in the context of feeling positive with, and sense of connecting to, Judaism. Examples of comments provided by bogrim on this theme include the following:

- Habonim Dror was my Jewish education. It was the place where I learned that being Jewish could be cool and that it was something that I could embrace and make my own.
- Habonim Dror was profoundly influential on my development of a \*positive\* Jewish identity, as well as my world views, social networks, etc. While I attended Hebrew School, I really credit Habonim Dror with connecting me to my Jewishness. In truth, it offset any damage done by Hebrew School.
- In a world where finding a positive Jewish identity was difficult, Habonim provided a home away from home in which to explore my Jewish identity, values, and find strong social connections.

- Coming from a traditionally religious home and being a "non-believer" from my early teens Habonim gave me a way to identify Jewishly. I could rebel and still remain positively identified Jewishly.
- Habonim was the first place I really could identify with other Jews. I had been to a traditional conservative temple my whole life, but Habonim was the first that I felt comfortable my Judaism because I was already leaning towards being left wing but here I was able to model myself after some people who were really cool.... and for the first time I could be cool AND Jewish.

Yet another piece of evidence comes by way of comparing alumni with different levels of experience with Habonim Dror (low, moderate and high). Those with high levels of experience, as noted earlier, were those who went to camp for many years, served as counselors, and partook of several Habonim Dror programs in the US and Israel.

We constructed two measures of Jewish engagement. One drew upon measures of Jewish ethnic and social engagement: Shabbat at home, Jewish friends, and the subjective importance of being Jewish. The other scale measured Jewish religiosity by way of synagogue membership and service attendance, traditional denomination, as well as the stated importance of religion. Both scales were constructed on a 0-100 metric, such that 0 represented the lowest possible score and 100 the highest. For example, a person scoring 0 on religiosity never goes to services, belongs to no synagogue, identifies with no denomination, and thinks that religion is not at all important. Someone with a score of 100 is an Orthodox synagogue member who attends services more than monthly and regards religion as very important.

As Table 8 shows, more extensive Habonim Dror experience bears little relationship to intensifying Jewish ethnic and social engagement; and, perhaps surprisingly, it is associated with diminished religiosity, perhaps in line with a secularizing ethos that emphasizes progressive politics and Israel engagement.

**Table 8. Jewish Engagement & Religiosity Mean Scores by Levels of Habonim Dror Activity**

Habonim Activity Levels	Jewish Engagement: Importance of being Jewish + friends + Shabbat, etc.	Religiosity: Religion important, synagogue belong, service attendance, denomination
Low	62*	54
Moderate	63	50
High	63	46

SOURCE: Habonim Dror Survey, 2013

\*Mean scores on scales ranging from 0 to 100.

In any event, the sum total of evidence strongly suggests that Habonim Dror participation did little to raise overall measures of Jewish engagement, and may have even served to diminish levels of Jewish religious engagement. While Habonim Dror alumni may appear more Jewishly and religiously engaged than average American Jews, these gaps derive primarily from the homes, neighborhoods and Jewish educational experiences they underwent rather than Habonim Dror per se. As we shall see, the effects of Habonim Dror on other dimension are readily apparent and quite powerful.

## **Israel Engagement – Many Current Olim, Former Olim, and Highly Attached**

In numerous ways, these Habonim Dror alumni display unusually high engagement with Israel. Most significant are the number who have made aliyah (a total of 23%, divided almost evenly between those who remain and those who have returned). The direct link between the Habonim Dror experience and aliyah emerges in the comments of those who actually went on aliyah.

When asked to provide their thoughts and reflections about their experience with Habonim Dror, aliyah, a significant, life changing decision, was frequently mentioned. Many bogrim believe that the movement played an important role in their decision, as illustrated by the following comments:

- I currently live in Israel, and I highly doubt that I would have even considered making Aliyah without first taking part in Habonim Dror.
- Habonim was the seminal experience of my high-school and early college years. While I did not attend workshop, it was due to that [program] model that I went with a friend to a kibbutz ulpan program and subsequently made aliyah.
- I went on to make aliyah after college, and my decision to do that was certainly based in my experiences and perception of Israel from Machaneh Galil.
- After 4 years as an active ma'apila who took on many leadership roles at machaneh and in the ken, I made aliyah with several members from my workshop kvutza, and currently live in Haifa, Israel with my kvutza. We're still active members of Habonim Dror (in Israel, not in North America) and play a crucial role in the running of Habonim Dror Israel programs, and work in a few sectors of Israeli society as well.
- I am currently living in Israel with a kvutza of people I met in Habonim, part of a group of kvutzot who have made aliyah largely because of our growing up in the movement.

While close to a quarter made aliyah, almost all the others have not merely traveled to Israel but traveled there numerous times. Table 9 shows the distribution along these lines.

**Table 9. Israel Visits and Aliyah**

Habonim Activity Levels	Percent
Now lives in Israel	12
Former oleh	11
Lived in Israel 5+ months, but not as oleh	44
Visited 2+ times	21
Visited once	9
Never in Israel	3
Total	100

SOURCE: Habonim Dror Survey, 2013

Fully 97% have been to Israel, and 85% have been there two times or more (as almost all the current and former olim have been to Israel twice as have the long-term visitors of five months or more). For the New York camper alumni comparison group, just 48% have ever been to Israel, and 29% have been there twice or more – far lower than among this sample of Habonim Dror alumni.

But more impressively, about two thirds of the Habos have lived in Israel for five months or more (44%) or as an oleh (23%). In contrast, in the New York camper sub-segment, just 8% have ever lived in Israel. Most of the sample has at one point lived on a kibbutz, and, of those who made aliyah or lived in Israel five months or more, about 2 out of 3 (64%) have at one point lived on a kibbutz, consistent with the strong educational messaging Habonim Dror imparts.

Among the 23% who ever made aliyah, just under half have returned and the remainder (12% of the entire sample) continue to live in Israel today.

Of those living in the United States, 56% feel very attached to Israel, slightly more than the 47% who feel likewise among the New York camper comparison group (see Table 10).

**Table 10. Emotional Attachment to Israel By Current Residence**

	Where do you live now?				Total
	United States	Canada	Israel	Other	
Very attached	56	47	88	68	59
Somewhat attached	31	37	10	27	29
Not very attached	10	12	2	2	9
Not at all attached	3	4	0	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

SOURCE: Habonim Dror Survey, 2013

Again, the verbatim comments provide some richness to our findings. About 14 percent of bogrim mentioned the impact of Habonim Dror on learning about Israel and Zionism. Whether these topics were discussed during camp, overnights, or seminars, many bogrim feel a strong attachment to Israel and attribute it to their experience at Habonim Dror. While there is no way to prove this cause-effect relationship, some bogrim believe belonging to Habonim Dror was very influential in learning about Israel and they would not have gained this knowledge anywhere else. Some of this sentiment is presented below.

- Habonim has been a strong influence on my Zionist outlook and relationship to Israel and my lifelong study of Hebrew. I have visited Israel many times, worked for three months in a volunteer program during the summer while I was in college, taken Hebrew in college and continued to study once a week with a private tutor for the past 22 years

- My attachment and commitment to Israel was deeply influenced by the Habonim experience.
- It was my only real exposure to Zionism, both the political and social/societal dimensions. As such, very important, for a city-born and bred youth with only limited religious connection and not much study of Israel and its history at my synagogue.
- It gave me a great social experience and a wonderful grounding in Zionism.
- Greatest influence on formation of my Judaism and Zionism
- Habonim was my entire life as a teenager. I learned about socialism and Zionism and a deep connection to Israel.

## Politically, Strongly to the Left

Habonim Dror characterizes itself as politically progressive, at one point explicitly aligning with the international socialist movement. In terms of political identity and views, its alumni fall disproportionately on the left. A few key questions clearly illustrate this conclusion. Perhaps most tellingly, self-described liberals vastly outnumber self-described conservatives, by a 12-to-1 margin (85% vs. 7%) (see Table 11).

**Table 11. Overall, how would you describe your views on political issues?**

Political Affiliation	Percent
Extremely Liberal	27
Liberal	50
Slightly Liberal	8
Moderate	7
Slightly Conservative	5
Conservative	2
Extremely Conservative	0
Total	100

SOURCE: Habonim Dror Survey, 2013

By contrast, a survey of American Jews in 2012 found that liberals outnumbered conservatives by a more modest margin of 2.5 to 1 (44% vs. 18%). Among those Habos living in the United States, Democrats vastly outnumber Republicans (84% vs. 4%) (see Table 12).

**Table 12. Overall, how would you describe your political partisanship?**

Political Party	Percent
Strong Democrat	42
Democrat	33
Leaning Democrat	9
Pure Independent	6
Leaning Republican	2
Republican	1
Strong Republican	0
Other or not sure	7
Total	100

SOURCE: Habonim Dror Survey, 2013

In contrast, in a recent Workmen’s Circle survey, the Democrats lead was present but far less lopsided (55% vs. 22%).

It follows that the Habonim Dror alumni sample living in the United States went overwhelmingly for Obama over Romney, 94% to 6%, in sharp contrast with estimates for the overall Jewish vote of about 74% to 26%.

Other evidence for the progressive commitments of this sample comes in the large number who contribute to progressive organizations that focus “on issues such as economic justice, social justice, human rights, peace and the environment” (72%), as well the slight majority (51%) who claim to support at least two such organizations.

The liberalizing impact of the Habonim Dror experience is correlated with the level of activity in the youth movement. Among those who were least active, just 24% now describe themselves as extremely liberal, vs. 31% among those who were most active. Similarly the number describing themselves as liberal or extremely liberal rises from 67% to 84%, while the proportion who are self-described conservatives drops from 12% to 5%.

In short, the evidence points to a significant liberalizing effect of Habonim Dror. The alumni are far more liberal than comparable Jews, and those who undertook more Habonim Dror activities are more liberal as well as less conservative.

The volunteered comments often speak of how the Habonim Dror experience shaped a deep and wide commitment to progressive social justice and world views, consistent with the results reported immediately above. Many bogrim comments mentioned the opportunity to learn about and engaging in discussions of the environment, tikkun olam, social justice, and critical thinking. The following quotes illustrate this theme:

- It's hard to describe the influence Tavor had on me. The biggest impact I think is on my concept of social justice and communal living. It greatly contributed to my desire to do my share and help those in need.
- My life is much different than it would have been otherwise without Habonim, and I am better for it. I learned values about the environment, social justice, Zionism, minority rights, and more, and would probably have substantially different viewpoints otherwise. It taught me that you could feel and be Jewish by engaging in the cultural activities of the Jewish people.
- Totally contributed to my natural attraction and need for involvement with social justice and tikkun olam, strong pull toward critical thinking and education, friendships, wonderful memories, positive childhood.
- Habonim provided me with the ability to engage in critical thinking; to question conventional wisdom; and to think logically. Moreover, it provided me a stronger foundation on issues of social justice, civil rights, and civil liberties. Finally, it gave me a lifelong love for Israel and a commitment for social justice there.
- Incredibly open minded place that taught me to always question myself and the world around me. Taught me a lot about leadership, working with people, the political process, community service etc.
- As a camper, Habonim helped frame my values of social justice and peace. As a madrich, I picked and chose which ideological points to emphasize. As an alum, Habonim has left me sympathetic to Jewish causes while still encouraging critical thought.
- Habonim provided me with the ability to engage in critical thinking; to question conventional wisdom; and to think logically. Moreover, it provided me a stronger foundation on issues of social justice, civil rights, and civil liberties. Finally, it gave me a lifelong love for Israel and a commitment for social justice there.
- Habonim also instilled in me strong values of Tikkun Olam and Jewish communal identity, which today I express via active involvement with my shul and Limmud as well as giving money to Jewish charities.

To be sure, not all Habos appreciated the political lessons the movement tried to teach them. But even their statements of disaffection testify to the likely influence of the experience, if not upon them then upon others:

- Given Habonim's political outlook, it made me challenge my personal views and left me with a bad taste about both how Habonim informed its young people regarding its political views and with those involved in the movement.
- I don't regret my time in Habonim, but I completely reject the ideology.

## On Israel: Very Dovish, Hardly Hawkish

On a variety of positions, the Habonim Dror alumni in this sample take positions that place them squarely on the left or dovish side of the Israeli political spectrum. Asked to choose the Israeli party with whom they most closely identify, they provided the following distribution (see Table 13).

**Table 13. In Israeli politics, with which political party do you most closely identify, if any?**

Political Party Affiliation in Israel	Percent
Labor	20
Meretz	17
Yesh Atid (Lapid)	6
Kadima	2
Likud	2
Hadash	2
Bayit Hayehudi	1
HaTenuah (Livni)	1
Yisrael Beiteinu	0
An Arab Party	0
Another party	0
No party	13
Not sure	35
Total	100

SOURCE: Habonim Dror Survey, 2013

While almost half provided no party answer, 3% identified with parties of the right, 9% with centrist parties, and 39% with those on the left (all of whom declined to go into today's ruling coalition) – essentially yielding more than a 3-to-1 split for the current Opposition and against the current Government, among those providing a party answer.

Accordingly, asked about the way Benjamin Netanyahu is handling his job as Prime Minister, only 8% approved and 62% disapproved.

Asked whether the Palestinian Authority and the current Israeli government truly want peace, 43% in both cases said, “somewhat,” and overall, views of the Israeli government were only marginally better than views of the PA.

Similarly, we asked two parallel albeit non-identical questions. One was about whether the Israeli government wants to prevent the emergence of a Palestinian state. The other was about where the Palestinians seek Israel's destruction. Both questions can be seen as expressions of each party working to negate the other's statehood. The survey showed that the respondents saw both Israel and the Palestinians in an equally negative light.

Finally with respect to freezing settlements, focusing on the clearest responses, the sample overwhelming favored a settlement freeze by a 66% to 7% majority, or by a more than 9-to-1 margin.

Not only are the positions of the sample as a whole situated on the dovish side of the spectrum, but so too does Habonim Dror activity seem to exert a strong pull in that political direction. Using a scale combining answers to most of the question reported immediately above, we find that the percent with very dovish views mount considerably with increasing activity in Habonim Dror years ago. Thus, of the least active, just 24% scored very high on the Index of Israel Dovishness; for the moderately active, it grows to 31%, and for the most active the figure reaches 45% -- clearly testifying to the likelihood that Habonim Dror activity exerted a strong impact upon people's views of Israel and its conflict with the Palestinians.

As a final piece of evidence, we asked respondents whether they belong to or support a variety of Israel oriented organizations. Ameinu (10%) registered the highest level of affiliation, followed by J Street (9%), Hadassah and New Israel Fund (each at 6%), AIPAC (4%) and Americans for Peace Now (3%), with all others under 5%. Doves in this survey (and others) are far more likely

to support Ameinu, J Street, NIF, and APN; hawks tend to support AIPAC. The organizational affiliation results also speak to a heavily dovish coloration to these Habonim Dror alumni.

## Testifying to Impact

Subjective claims to having been influenced by an organization or experience can frequently be discounted. However, when they come in conjunction with other powerful evidence, such testimony gains some credibility.

We asked respondents to assess the extent to which their experience with Habonim Dror affected them in a variety of ways ... political views, life-long friends, attachment to Israel, and engagement in Jewish life. In broad terms, solid majorities, ranging from 53% to 68%, provided the most positive response (“to a great extent”). About a quarter or more (25% to 34%) answered, “to some extent.” Only a few (5% to 20%) answered, “a little or not at all.” Indeed, selected comments enrich our understanding of how bogrim believe Habonim Dror made a significant impact of their lives.

- A hugely formative experience. Shaped my political views, my views and skills in education, my choices of work, my choices of lifestyle, my social circles, my core relationships. I can't think of a more foundational childhood/youth influence than Habonim.
- My involvement in Habonim was one of the most profound influences on my life. As a teenager in the late 60s and early 70s, it provided me not only with a social outlet, but also a way so synthesize the traditional Jewish upbringing that I received at home and at an Orthodox day school with the leftist political views that I was forming inspired by family members and friends. Ultimately I made aliyah in my early 20s and lived on kibbutz for 10 years. To this day, my closest friends are former Habonim members.
- In a world where finding a positive Jewish identity was difficult, Habonim provided a home away from home in which to explore my Jewish identity, values, and find strong social connections. It was a life shaping oasis of a society within a larger society which both provided safety and security as well as invited one to expand one's thinking and experience. I would not be the person I am today without having been through Habonim.
- Habonim is largely responsible for making me the person I am today--in terms of my passion for social justice, love of Israel, connection to Judaism, confidence in myself, and leadership abilities. It also helped me get through the social difficulties and awkwardness of adolescence unscathed and sure of whom I was.

Bogrim frequently mentioned the role of Habonim in forming close relationships with friends, a deep sense of community, and the feeling of “family.” Bogrim’s positive sentiment included such phrases as “life-long relationship”, “connectedness,” and “sense of belonging.” Many also wrote that the Habonim Dror experience contributed to their sense of identity and feeling accepted, often in ways different from their non-Habonim Dror friends.

- The idea that we as a community are responsible for each other's well-being. Habonim was my life, and the people I meet from my Habonim experiences have an instant connection.
- Habonim Dror provided me with a community. I find Habonim people everywhere and feel a connection with them.
- It taught me how to function in a community both by making compromises, listening to the people around me and how everyone needs to do their part.
- Mosh was my home away from home, my second family. The friendships I made as a camper at Mosh and on Workshop continue to be the most meaningful and rewarding.
- Growing up, Camp was the one environment that allowed me to connect with others in a substantial way. The friends that I made at camp are a part of my permanent family. No matter how much time passes and how much distance is between us, we always pick up right where we left off because we have such a strong foundation.
- My summers at Miriam are some of the most formative of my life. It's the first place I ever felt like I belonged — I had a really special kvutza that felt like a family, one that I really needed as I was growing up.

## Camps in Particular

Bogrim specifically mentioned the role, impact, and experiences that camp (as opposed to Habonim Dror) provided for them. For many bogrim, camp represented an opportunity to explore and learn about themselves. Specifically, camp was a “coming of age experience,” an opportunity to live Kupa (organized group sharing and decision-making), learning about leadership, and learning how to get along with others. Some representative comments of this theme include the following:

- Camp Miriam was a wonderful experience and a coming of age for me. It broke me out of my shell and allowed me to grow and experience living as a young adolescent outside of my home. It helped me to experience being Jewish and gain an affinity to Israel in a new way and create my own connections to my heritage....It

also helped me learn how to be a good leader as I got older and became a Madatz and then a Madricha. And of course, going to Israel on MBI was unforgettable as well. I believe all kids should have the opportunity to go to sleep away camp, religious or not. Its benefits are countless.

- I really loved Habonim Dror as a camper. It was a welcoming, communal, active environment where enthusiastic self-expression was encouraged and making friends was easy; all of that contrasted with school and was a really positive part of my youth. I would recommend it to anyone looking for a good summer camp for their children.
- The values I learned at camp, including respect for labor and hard work, sensitivity and compassion towards others, and the power of sharing/Kupa, have most definitely influenced the choices I have made over my lifetime. My choice of life partner, the profession I chose, the way I've raised my children, my politics, and my involvement in my Jewish community are all the result of my early Habonim experiences.
- I can't imagine what my life would have been like without Habonim. Going to camp at Mosh gave me a place where I felt like I belonged completely- a place that I loved fiercely. When I felt like I didn't belong in middle school and high school, I always knew that there was this other place where I belonged, where I had friends that loved me. Habonim has also been a huge influence in terms of values and ideology.
- I got more leadership training from working at Galil than I ever got from any "leadership training program". The intensity of the experience as a madrich led to so much learning about politics, pedagogy, leadership, and organizing. HDNA camps are good for the campers but they are transformative for the staff.

## The Habonim Dror Family & Family as Habonim Dror

Other evidence of impact is found in the numerous family ties among Habonim Dror alumni. One third of the alumni reported that a parent was involved with Habonim Dror, and for the older alumni, Habonim Dror was not even in existence when their parents were children and teenagers. A quarter of the married respondents report that their spouses are Habos, with most of these having attended a Habonim Dror camp. Illustrative are the following comments:

- My spouse grew up at a Habonim camp; we have four kids who all go to Habonim camp. We are active in our Jewish community and still very connected to Israel, our Workshop friends, current camp committee. I would not be the person I am today or the leader that I am today if I had not had the movement experiences that I did.
- I met my wife of now 31 years on Workshop. [Workshop] shaped me, and I shaped it back then, and I would not have traded that experience for the world.
- Habonim is in my genes - my parents met in Habonim, I met my spouse in Habonim and now my children go to Camp. Habonim was my primary source of Jewish identity, political consciousness and community. In a lot of ways, it is impossible for me to separate who I am from my experience in Habonim.
- I married someone from Camp Ein Harod, who I met when I was 16. We are very much in touch w/ many ex-campers, both in Israel and the US. They are like family to us. We have had many reunions and have created a FB page and now have over 130 members. Many of us studied or worked on kibbutzim or went on Hachshara programs in Israel. My husband and I gained an appreciation for nature and hiking, which continue to do today. My husband even has an annual hiking trip for the past 20 years w/ the guys from camp. Camp has had a huge impact on our lives.
- I met my husband as a madricha at Moshava and I partially attribute our happy marriage to the shared values that we developed there. We send our children to Mosh and the experience has been great for them too.
- I met my husband through Habonim and we lived in Israel for a number of years. When I joined I was already interested in Zionism, but it gave me a place to explore living in Israel as a real possibility. In many ways it shaped my thinking and my life choices.

## Conclusion

The findings testify clearly to the impact of Habonim Dror upon the movement's alumni, be they in the United States, Israel, or elsewhere. The respondents in this sample of nearly 2,000 "Habos" make very powerful claims to the impact of Habonim Dror upon their lives. With over 40,000 alumni, there is no way to know the extent to which our sample is truly representative, or the extent to which it over-represents the still-connected and therefore the most-influenced.

That said, this sample does contain credible evidence of impact in at least four areas:

- 1) The acquisition of very strong levels of Israel engagement, resulting in aliyah for over one – in-five, albeit with a return of nearly half the olim. Including the olim, 85% of respondents have visited two times or more and 67% have been in Israel for periods of five months or longer, both numbers well above the New York camper sub-segment. In addition, 89% of the survey participants say that they are very or somewhat attached to Israel.
- 2) The formation of very progressive political values in the American context.
- 3) The crystallization of strong dovish views and identities with respect to Israel and its conflict with the Palestinians.
- 4) The formation of strong family ties and traditions centered around Habonim Dror, as well as life-long friendships based upon Habonim Dror experiences.

That we found mixed effects, at best, in the Jewish engagement area testifies to the credibility of the four major findings enumerated above. That is, the high levels of Jewish engagement today are in good measure the result of the types of parents and Jewish education that promoted participation in Habonim Dror, as well as the "standard" impact of attending any Jewish camp.

However, the special contribution of Habonim Dror in the areas of aliyah (particularly to both rural and urban kibbutzim), ties to Israel, progressive politics in the US and Israeli context, and strong Habonim-centered family ties all emerge quite forcefully in these data. These distinctive outcomes are entirely consistent with the decades-long educational philosophy and objectives of this progressive Zionist youth movement. They speak not merely to the effectiveness of Habonim Dror alone, but sometimes in combination with other forms of Jewish values education in the United States, in encouraging current and future generations to continue their Jewish identity through Jewish day schools, Israel engagement, political activism, and/or Jewish organizations/movements.

## The International Study of Habonim Dror Alumni, 2013

### Frequency Distributions

#### 1. Did you ever participate in any activities of Habonim Dror?

Yes	98%
-----	-----

#### 2. Did you participate in

Ken activities in your city	86%
Summer programs in Israel sponsored by Habonim Dror, such as KM Bet in Israel, SHK (Seminar Hadracha B'Kibbutz) or MBI	47%
Madatz, MB or KM Bet	68%
Habonim Workshop or Machon, the gap year program in Israel	48%

#### 3. Did you ever attend or work in a Habonim Dror camp?

Yes	97%
-----	-----

#### 4. For how many years/seasons did you attend a summer camp sponsored by Habonim Dror as a camper (but not as a counselor or staff member)?

None	9%
One	6%
Two	8%
Three-four	26%
Five	52%
Total	100%

**5. [IF ONE OR MORE YEARS] In what year did you last attend a Habonim Dror camp as a camper?**

1950 or earlier	8%
1960-1969	14%
1970-1979	20%
1980-1989	16%
1990-1999	20%
2000-present	22%
Total	100%

**6. For how many years/seasons did you work at a summer camp sponsored by Habonim Dror as a counselor or other staff member?**

None	31%
One	15%
Two	16%
Three-four	24%
Five or more	14%
Total	100%

**7. IF ONE OR MORE YEARS] In what year did you last work at a summer camp sponsored by Habonim Dror as a counselor or other staff member? [Drop down 1939 to 2012]**

1950 or earlier	6%
1960-1969	11%
1970-1979	19%
1980-1989	16%
1990-1999	14%
2000-present	34%
Total	100%

**8. Which of the following Habonim Dror camps did you attend or work in? [If more than one, pick the one you attended or worked in most recently]**

Ein Harod	1%
Galil	17%
Gesher	9%
Gilboa	8%
Kvutza	2%
Miriam	9%
Moshava	19%
Na'aleh	9%
Tavor/Midwest Camp Habonim	19%
Other	7%
Total	100%

**9. To what extent do you stay in touch with former Habonim Dror campers or members?**

To a great extent	38%
To some extent	31%
A little	24%
Not at all	7%
Total	100%

**10. How many of your current friends ever attended a Habonim Dror camp or otherwise participated in Habonim Dror?**

Many	31%
Some	27%
A few	28%
One	5%
None	9%
Total	100%

**11. Have you ever recommended that your friends or family members send their children to a Habonim Dror Camp?**

Yes, many times	43%
Yes, once or a few times	39%
No, never	18%
Total	100%

**12. Looking back upon your experience with Habonim, to what extent would you say that it?**

	To a great extent	To some extent	A little or not at all	Not sure
Influenced your views on society and politics	68%	26%	5%	1%
Provided you with life-long friends	54%	25%	20%	1%
Contributed to your attachment to Israel	63%	26%	10%	1%
Contributed to your engagement in Jewish life	53%	34%	12%	1%

## Israel and You

**13. How many times have you been to Israel, if at all?**

Three or more	71%
Twice	14%
Once	12%
Never	3%
Total	100%

**14. Have you ever lived in Israel 5 months or more?**

Yes	70%
-----	-----

**15. Have you ever made aliyah**

Yes	23%
-----	-----

**16. Have you ever lived on a kibbutz, either urban or rural?**

Yes	64%
-----	-----

**17. Where do you now live?**

United States	73%
Canada	13%
Israel	12%
Other	4%

**If Israel, when did you first move to Israel**

1967 or earlier	19%
1968-1975	35%
1976-1985	21%
1986-1995	10%
1996-present	16%
Total	100%

**18. How emotionally attached are you to Israel?**

Very attached	59%
Somewhat attached	29%
Not very attached	9%
Not at all attached	3%
Total	100%

**19. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements?**

	Agree to a great extent	Agree Somewhat	Not at all	Not sure
The Palestinian Authority truly wants peace.	7%	43%	29%	21%
The current Israeli government truly wants peace.	12%	43%	30%	14%
The Israeli government wants to prevent the emergence of a Palestinian state.	21%	42%	22%	16%
The Palestinians seek Israel's destruction.	21%	42%	22%	16%
Israel should freeze the expansion of settlements on the West Bank.	66%	17%	7%	10%

**20. Who is more to blame for the failure of both sides to reach a peace agreement?**

Palestinians are more to blame	29%
Both equally	45%
Israelis are more to blame	12%
Not sure	14%
Total	100%

**21. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Benjamin Netanyahu is handling his job as Prime Minister?**

Approve	8%
Disapprove	62%
Not sure	30%
Total	100%

**22. In Israeli politics, with which political party do you most closely identify, if any?**

An Arab Party	0%
Hadash	2%
Meretz	17%
Labor	20%
Yesh Atid (Lapid)	6%
HaTenuah (Livni)	1%
Kadima	2%
Likud	2%
Yisrael Beiteinu	0%
Bayit Hayehudi	1%
Shas	0%
United Torah Judaism	0%
Another party	0%
No party	13%
Not sure	35%
Total	100%

## Views on US Issues and Politics

Next we have a few questions on your views of US issues and politics.

**23. When you hear of a strike by a union against a large company, and before you know any of the details, what is your first reaction?**

To side with the union	91%
To side with the company	9%
Total	100%

**24. Thinking about economic concerns for the country, what kind of threat do you feel the power of financial institutions and banks pose on the economic well being of the U.S?**

Major threat	65%
Minor threat	30%
No threat	5%
Total	100%

**25. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?**

Approve	75%
Disapprove	11%
Not sure	14%
Total	100%

**26. In the 2012 election, for whom did you vote for or favor for President?**

Obama	89%
Romney	6%
Other/didn't vote	6%
Total	100%

**27. Do you belong to or contribute to a progressive organization that focuses on issues such as economic justice, social justice, human rights, peace, and the environment?**

Yes, two or more organizations	49%
Yes, one such organization	21%
No	27%
Not sure	4%
Total	100%

**28. Overall, how would you describe your views on political issues?**

Extremely Liberal	27%
Liberal	50%
Slightly liberal	8%
Moderate	7%
Slightly Conservative	0%
Conservative	2%
Extremely Conservative	0%
Other or Not sure	5%
Total	100%

**29. Overall, how would you describe your political partisanship?**

Strong Democrat	43%
Democrat	33%
Leaning Democrat	9%
Pure Independent	6%
Leaning Republican	2%
Republican	1%
Strong Republican	0%
Other or Not sure	7%
Total	100%

## Jewish Life and Engagement

### 30. How important is being Jewish in your life, if at all?

Very important	67%
Somewhat important	26%
Not very important	6%
Not at all important	1%
Not sure	0%
Total	100%

### 31. How important is religion in your life, if at all?

Very important	19%
Somewhat important	38%
Not very important	27%
Not at all important	16%
Not sure	1%
Total	100%

### 32. How important is it to you to be part of a Jewish community, if at all?

Very important	51%
Somewhat important	34%
Not very important	11%
Not at all important	4%
Not sure, or doesn't apply to me	1%
Total	100%

**33. Among your closest friends, about how many are Jewish, if any?**

All or almost all	24%
Most	38%
About half	21%
Some	14%
Few or none	4%
Not sure	0%
Total	100%

**34. About how often do you talk about Jewish-related topics with friends who are Jewish, if at all?**

Regularly	43%
Sometimes	43%
Rarely	13%
Never	1%
Not sure	0%
Total	100%

**35. To what extent do you feel like you are a part of a Jewish community, if at all?**

A lot	46%
Some	31%
Only a little	17%
Not at all	6%
Not sure	1%
Total	100%

**36. About how often do you access Jewish websites or look for Jewish information on the Internet, if at all?**

Regularly	31%
Sometimes	33%
Never	28%
Not sure	8%
Not sure	0%
Total	100%

**37. How often, if at all, do you or someone in your household light Sabbath candles on Friday night?**

Always	21%
Usually	18%
Sometimes	32%
Never	29%
Not sure	0%
Total	100%

**38. About how often do you participate in a Friday night Shabbat meal, if at all?**

Regularly	37%
Sometimes	26%
Rarely	23%
Never	13%
Not sure	0%
Total	100%

**39. Do you belong to a synagogue, temple, shul, minyan or havurah, or not?**

Yes	48%
-----	-----

**40. Other than a synagogue or JCC, do you or does any other member of your household belong to, or regularly participate in, the activities of any other Jewish or Israel-related organization, or not?**

Yes	51%

**41. [IF YES] Do you belong to or participate in any of the following Israel-related organizations? Check all that apply**

AIPAC	4%
AJC	1%
Ameinu	10%
Friends of the IDF	4%
Americans for Peace Now	3%
Friends of any other Israel-related cause	5%
Hadassah	6%
J Street	9%
JVP	1%
NIF	6%
Partners for Progressive Israel	1%
ZOA	1%

**42. About how often do you personally attend any type of synagogue, temple, or organized Jewish religious service, if at all?**

Several (2-3) times a month or more	18%
About once a month	10%
A few (3-9) times a year	27%
Only on High Holidays	13%
Only on special occasions, such as a Bar Mitzvah or wedding	12%
Once or twice a year	8%
Not at all	12%
Total	100%

**43. Referring to Jewish religious denominations, what do you consider yourself, if any?**

Orthodox	3%
Conservative	25%
Reform	11%
Reconstructionist	10%
Other movement such as Renewal, Secular Humanist, etc.	4%
Just Jewish	12%
Other	7%
Secular Zionist	8%
Culturally Jewish	21%
Total	100%

## Jewish Background

### 44. While growing up, in which Jewish denomination, if any, were you raised?

Orthodox	8%
Conservative	49%
Reform	15%
Reconstructionist	5%
Renewal, Secular Humanist, or other movement	1%
Just Jewish	4%
Not raised Jewish	0%
Other	4%
Secular Jewish	6%
Culturally Jewish	8%
Total	100%

### 45. As a child, what was the main type of Jewish schooling you received, if any?

Jewish day school or yeshiva	25%
A part-time school that met twice a week or more often	50%
A part-time school that met once a week	16%
Tutor, but no schooling	2%
None	7%
Total	100%

### 46. Aside from a camp sponsored by Habonim Dror, did you ever attend or work in another overnight summer camp with Jewish content?

Yes	33%
-----	-----

**47. When you went to college, did you ever participate in Hillel or another Jewish organization, or not?**

Yes, and was a leader at some point(s)	20%
Yes, and was sometimes active	21%
Yes, but never active	23%
No, never	37%
Total	100%

## Volunteer Engagement

**48. During the past year, have you volunteered your time for any type of charitable organization, or NGO, be it related to Israel, Jewish affairs, or otherwise, or not?**

Yes	56%
-----	-----

**49. IF YES, VOLUNTEERED] Did you volunteer for Jewish or Israel-related groups, or for groups that are not specifically Jewish or Israel-related, or have you volunteered for both?**

Only Jewish or Israel-related groups	22%
Only groups that are not specifically Jewish or Israel-related	20%
Both Jewish and non-Jewish groups	53%
Not sure	6%
Total	100%

**50. Do you serve on the board, as an officer, or as a leader of any Jewish or Israel-related organization?**

Yes	19%
-----	-----

**51. Do you serve on the board, as an officer, or as a leader of any organization that is NOT Jewish or Israel-related?**

Yes	14%
-----	-----

**52. [IF YES, LEADER IN 42 OR 43] Please list the organizations in which you're involved as a leader, be they Jewish or Israel-related or not:**

--	--

**53. In 2012, did you (or any member of your household) contribute to:**

	% Yes	% No	% Not Sure
A social change oriented charity or cause, not under Jewish sponsorship?	64%	29%	7%
Any other charity or cause that is NOT specifically Jewish – like a museum, a cancer charity, or a university?	77%	19%	5%
A local UJA-Federation?	31%	61%	8%
A social change oriented charity or cause under Jewish sponsorship or is related to Israel?	49%	43%	8%
Any other Jewish charity, cause, organization, or to a congregation	61%	33%	6%

## Family & Background

### 54. Do you have any children?

Yes	61%
-----	-----

### 55. How old is your oldest child?

0-9	21%
10-19	20%
20-29	24%
30-39	16%
40+	18%
Total	100%

### 56. [IF CHILD AGE 9+] What is the main form of Jewish schooling before the age of 13 you're your oldest child received or is receiving, if any?

Jewish day school or yeshiva	38%
A congregation or other part-time school that meets twice a week or more often	31%
A congregation or other part time school that meets once a week	14%
Tutor, but no school	3%
None	14%
Total	100%

### 57. IF CHILD AGE 25 OR OLDER ASK]: Is your oldest child married?

Yes	45%
-----	-----

**58. [IF YES, CHILD MARRIED] Does the spouse of your oldest child consider himself or herself Jewish?**

Yes, Jewish	77%
Yes, Partially Jewish	7%
No, not Jewish	16%
Total	100%

**59. What is your gender?**

Male	43%
Female	57%
Total	100%

**60. In what year were you born? (Age)**

18-29	19%
30-39	20%
40-49	15%
50-64	30%
65-74	10%
75-83	6%
Total	100%

**61. IF BORN 1972 OR LATER ....Did you ever go to Israel on a Birthright Israel trip?**

Yes	11%
-----	-----

**62. Are you?**

Married	59%
Living with a partner	8%
Single – never married	24%
Divorced	6%
Separated	1%
Widowed	2%
Total	100%

**63. [IF MARRIED/PARTNERED] Does your (spouse/partner) consider himself or herself Jewish?**

Yes	78%
Yes, partially Jewish	4%
No	19%
Total	100%

**64. Did the following people ever attend a Habonim Dror camp, or were otherwise involved with Habonim Dror, or not?**

	Attended Camp	Otherwise involved	Never involved
Your mother	14%	14%	72%
Your father	13%	11%	76%
Your spouse/partner	20%	6%	74%

**65. In what country were you born?**

United States	76%
Canada	16%
Israel	5%
Former Soviet Union	0%
Other	3%
Total	100%

**66. What is the highest level of education you have achieved?**

High School	2%
Some college	10%
BA or BS or other undergraduate degree	30%
MSW	4%
MBA	3%
Law degree	6%
Other professional post-graduate degree	8%
Other MA or equivalent	22%
Doctor or Doctorate	14%
Total	100%

**67. Which of the following best describes your current employment status?**

Full-time employed	55%
Part-time employed	13%
Self-employed	12%
Unemployed or temporarily on layoff	5%
Retired	12%
Permanently disabled	0%
Homemaker	2%
Total	100%

**68. [IF EMPLOYED (1,2, or 3) and NOT LIVING IN ISRAEL] Would you characterize the organization or company for which you work as ...**

Israel-related	2%
A Jewish organization, but not specifically related to Israel	10%
A non-profit agency or cause, but not a "Jewish organization"	19%
A for-profit company	36%
Other (explain briefly): _____	32%
Total	100%

**69. [IF EMPLOYED (1,2, or 3)] Which of the following best describes your major occupation?**

Artist, cultural figure	4%
Business person	8%
Educator, teacher, administrator	16%
Engineer	3%
Finance industry	3%
Health professional	10%
High-tech	6%
Jewish communal professional	3%
Jewish communal volunteer	0%
Jewish educator	2%
Journalist, writer, etc.	3%
Lawyer in the private sector	4%
Lawyer in the public sector	2%
Manager	4%
Professor	3%
Rabbi	2%
Social worker, therapist	5%
Social activist	2%
Other	21%
Not Sure	1%
Total	100%

**70. [Thinking back over the last year, about what was your household's annual income before taxes?**

\$350,000 or more	6%
\$250,000 - \$349,999	6%
\$200,000 - \$249,999	7%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	10%
\$125,000 - \$149,999	8%
\$100,000 - \$124,999	12%
\$70,000 - \$99,999	15%
\$50,000 - \$69,999	11%
Less than \$50,000	25%
Total	100%