New Pathways

An Evaluation of Two Pilot Initiatives
Serving Jewish Families with Young
Children in Suburban Boston

Submitted to:

Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston
The Metrowest Jewish Planning Committee

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NEW PATHWAYS: AN EVALUATION OF TWO PILOT INITIATIVES SERVING JEWISH FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN IN SUBURBAN BOSTON

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Overview: Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston has developed a strategy and provided funding for two initiatives that were designed to encourage families with young children to become more engaged in Jewish life. The initiatives were launched in Metrowest Boston, consisting of 26 western suburban communities, and the South Area, consisting of 34 southern suburban communities.

The Metrowest initiative, called the Jewish Family Network, was a collaboration between Jewish Family Service of Metrowest, based in Framingham, and the Jewish Community Centers of Greater Boston, based in Newton. The South Area initiative, called the South Area JCC, was a collaboration between Jewish Family and Children's Service, based in Waltham, and the JCCs of Greater Boston.

An evaluation of the initiatives was commissioned by Combined Jewish Philanthropies.

Design of the Initiatives: The design of each initiative was informed by a national study that described best practices for reaching parents with young children. Both initiatives incorporated specific strategies:

- the creation of three geographic hub centers staffed by "hub connectors," local parents with young children, who were tasked with generating new parent contacts
- customized programming for parents and families
- a Welcome Baby program for parents having or adopting a baby in which a staff member of volunteer visits new mothers at their home, describes local programming, and delivers a gift basket
- the establishment of a central database to track families and facilitate communication
- social networking and email newsletters to reach families and publicize programs

The two pilot initiatives have collaborative design features that are unique and not found elsewhere.

- A federation, two Jewish social service agencies, a JCC, and a number of synagogues were all working together to reach families with young children.
- The initiatives were not designed to further the mission of any one institution. There was no emphasis on generating members or donors. The initiatives were focused on

- meeting the needs of parents in the hope that they would subsequently make Jewish friends and begin to connect to the larger Jewish community.
- While programs were offered at agency facilities as well as in local communities, the emphasis was on connecting with parents where they lived. This enhanced attendance and fostered personal connections with parents, encouraging participation.

Effectiveness of Strategies for Reaching Parents: In general, all of the strategies have been effective in achieving the stated goals and have been implemented in a professional and thoughtful fashion:

- Hub connectors The hub connector model has worked exceptionally well. All of the current hub connectors were effective at identifying parents, establishing personal connections with them, and creating local programs that attracted them. Hub connectors were highly motivated, shared information frequently, and incorporated lessons learned to improve their activities. As a result of their efforts, parents made new Jewish friends. Since geographic areas covered by hub connectors were large, they would benefit from the input of volunteer parents who live in communities outside of their own.
- Welcome Baby visits Parents have been responding very enthusiastically to the Welcome Baby visits and there is now a strong "buzz" about the baskets, which consist of popular, trendy items sold exclusively at high-end baby stores. Some parents have now begun to call up and ask for a visit after hearing about the program from friends. Slightly less than half of the parents visited have subsequently attended a program. More parents have been visited in Metrowest than in the South Area. Additional parents could be identified if the referral network were to be expanded.
- Programs and Program Publicity Almost 300 new families have been identified and added to each of the two databases since the start of the initiatives. Both initiatives have made extensive use of social media to reach parents and send regular emails publicizing programs to parents in the database. Programs have been well-designed and cover virtually every possible parental interest. There are rotating get-togethers at playgrounds during the late spring, summer, and early fall, programs for new mothers, parenting programs, movement classes, baby massage, entertainers, musicians, gatherings at local businesses that cater to parents, and events at farms and parks. Feedback from parents is consistently positive, although response rates to online evaluation surveys tend to be low. Better feedback from parents could help to fine-tune programming.

Performance Against Objectives: Each of the pilot initiatives established initial goals regarding Welcome Baby visits and families participating in programs. In Metrowest, all of the initial goals were exceeded. The initial goal was to conduct 50 Welcome Baby visits and reach 300 families.

As of September 2010, 68 mothers had been visited and 336 families participated in programs. In the South Area, all of the goals were exceeded except for two. The initial goal was to visit 70 new mothers and reach 500 families. As of September 2010, 40 visits had taken place and 413 families had been reached.

Collaboration with Synagogues: Local synagogues did not receive funding from CJP for the initiatives, nor were they formally included in the initial proposals. Nevertheless, a number of synagogues as well as two day schools became involved with the initiatives in varying ways across both geographic areas. Agency staff worked hard to develop relationships with these institutions, and various types of collaborations grew over time. In Metrowest, 13 area institutions worked with the initiative, while in the South Area there were collaborations with 8 institutions. Continued collaboration with synagogues and day schools could help in identifying new families and facilitate transitions to these institutions if families are inspired by the initiatives and wish to become more deeply involved.

Recommendations: The following observations offer several suggestions for strengthening the initiatives:

- Volunteer Involvement With the exception of the Welcome Baby program in the South Area, the initiatives have not utilized volunteers or cultivated volunteer leaders. Volunteers could provide local intelligence about their communities and help identify new families.
- Branding Although the Welcome Baby brand is consistent across geographic areas, other programs are branded under different names in different areas. As the initiatives expand to new geographic areas, it may be advisable to explore common branding across Greater Boston.
- Learning More About Participating Parents and Families No systematic data from parents was obtained for this evaluation. A comprehensive survey of parents using the databases developed by the agencies would help to refine the initiatives while providing some degree of evidence for the impact of the initiatives on parents.
- Staff Development and Sharing of Best Practices CJP is advised to convene the staff from the various agencies so they can share best practices and learn from experts.
- Next Steps for Parents as Children Grow Older CJP is advised to develop a strategy for long-term engagement of families as children age out of the initiatives.
- Synagogue Involvement CJP is advised to provide funding and professional support to synagogues so that they can learn how to become more attractive to families with young children.
- Expansion of the Welcome Baby Program As the Welcome Baby program expands, CJP is advised to hire a Welcome Baby coordinator to work on building referral networks and marketing the program via social media.

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SECTION 1: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Overview

Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston (CJP) developed a strategy and provided funding for two pilot initiatives that were designed to encourage families with young children to become more engaged in Jewish life. The initiatives were launched in 26 western suburban communities, known as Metrowest, and 34 southern suburban communities, known as the South Area.

The Metrowest pilot initiative was a collaboration between two Boston-area agencies, Jewish Family Service of Metrowest (JFS), based in Framingham, and the JCCs of Greater Boston (JCCGB), based in Newton. The South Area initiative was a collaboration between Jewish Family and Children's Service (JF&CS), based in Waltham, and JCCGB.

This report presents an evaluation of these two initiatives. Section 1 discusses the origins of the initiatives, the demographics and institutional history of the two geographic areas, the design of the initiatives, and the methodological approach used to evaluate them. Section 2 presents the findings, and Section 3 offers recommendations.

Institutional History and Demographics

Origin of the Initiatives In the fall of 2006, Combined Jewish Philanthropies began a comprehensive strategic planning process. One of the planning subcommittees, Participation and Engagement, examined ways to engage Jewish families with young children.¹

This strategic planning process resulted in a report entitled Jewish Boston Connected: Our Strategic Plan for the Future. One of the three priorities identified in the report was "engaging" the next generation in Jewish life." To enhance engagement, the report suggested that a variety of low-barrier programming for new moms, dads, and families be supported so that these families would connect to Jewish life and to each other.

Following the publication of Strategic Plan for the Future, CJP allocated funding to support the implementation of these programs, and the position of Director of Family, Interfaith, and Community Programs was created by CJP to coordinate varies agencies and programs.

These developments are the source of the funding and oversight for the two initiatives under evaluation.

¹ The author of the current report was a member of this subcommittee.

² Available at http://www.cjp.org/local_includes/downloads/27353.pdf.

Demographics of Metrowest Boston The communities of Metrowest Boston included in the pilot program comprise a large geographic region of 26 suburbs west of Interstate 95 and east of Interstate 495 (see Table 1 for a listing). None of these suburbs have high concentrations of Jewish families. Anecdotally, it appears that a number of parents with young children originally grew up in the area, subsequently moved away, and then returned when they had children.

Table 1 presents population figures, median family income, annual births, birth rates, Jewish population density, and projected annual Jewish births for each community.

Within the broader Metrowest region, there are three relatively distinct areas – north, central, and south. Residents of each area are not inclined to travel outside of their area for events and programs, despite the fact that commuting distances may be relatively short. Residents tend to have mental barriers limiting travel from one area to another.

The north area is the most affluent of the three areas. There are a total of ten synagogues and Chabad centers. Birth rates tend to be on the low side for those north area communities that have higher Jewish population densities, such as Sudbury and Wayland, suggesting an older population. This is not surprising given the high housing costs in these communities. It would be expected that expectant couples or families with young children, who may not yet be established financially, would find it difficult to afford a home. Figures presented in Table 1 suggest that there are approximately 120 annual Jewish births in the north area.

The central area, which has a Jewish day school and a total of 6 synagogues and Chabad centers, has the largest Jewish population of the three areas of Metrowest. Most Jewish families are concentrated in Ashland, Natick and Framingham. All three of these communities have lower housing costs than in the north area. Birth rates are high among the general population. It is estimated that approximately 200 Jewish babies are born in the central area annually (see Table 1).

The south area within Metrowest, with a total of 5 synagogues and Chabad centers, is the largest of the three areas geographically. Holliston is the most affluent town. Perhaps 10 percent of its families are Jewish. The remaining communities all have lower Jewish population density and more affordable housing. This makes the area, especially the town of Franklin, particularly attractive to younger families who want to own a home but can't afford to live closer to Boston. Although no hard data on interfaith marriage rates for this area exists, Jewish professionals who live in the area indicate that many families are interfaith. Because of the low Jewish population density, it is estimated that about 50 Jewish babies are born annually in the area.

In total, it is projected that there are approximately 370 annual Jewish births in Metrowest.

	Table 1: Communities Covered by the Metrowest Initiative							
Area Covered by Hub Connector	Community	Median Family Income ³	2005 Population⁴	2008 Annual Births/ Births Per 1,000 ⁵	Estimated Percentage of Jewish Households ⁶	Projected Annual Jewish Births ⁷	Synagogues and Chabad ⁸	
	Acton	\$134,000	20,539	180/9	7%	13	Cong Beth Elohim (N) Chabad Center of Acton (O)	
	Carlisle	\$142,000	4,823	33/7	7%	2		
	Concord	\$136,000	16,858	103/6	9%	8	Kerem Shalom (N)	
	Hudson ⁹	\$70,000	18,847	241/13	~2%	5		
	Lincoln ¹⁰	\$88,000	7,935	95/12	10%	10		
	Marlborough	\$71,000	37,163	566/15	2%	11	Temple Emanuel (N)	
North	Maynard	\$72,000	10,221	154/15	2%	3		
1101111	Stow	\$103,000	6,159	68/11	4%	3		
	Sudbury	\$149,000	17,035	147/9	19%	28	Congregation Beth El (R) Cong B'nai Torah (R) Chabad Jewish Center (O)	
	Wayland	\$114,000	13,015	94/7	24%	23	Congregation Or Atid (C) Temple Shir Tikvah (R) Ma'yan Tikvah (N)	
	Weston ¹¹	\$230,000	11,591	61/5	24%	15		
	Ashland	\$78,000	15,431	265/17	11%	15	Shaarei Shalom (N)	
	Dover	\$157,000	5,634	29/5	12%	3		
Central	Framingham ¹²	\$67,000	65,651	1,059/16	13%	120	Cong Bais Chabad (O) Temple Beth Am (R) Temple Beth Sholom (C)	
	Natick	\$105,000	31,895	454/14	11%	50	Chabad Center of Natick (O) Temple Israel of Natick (C)	
	Sherborn	\$149,000	4,220	30/7	12%	4		
	Southborough	\$148,000	9,511	84/9	9%	8		

³ Median family income from Wikipedia.

⁴ 2005 population and 2008 birth data from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Center for Health Information, Statistics, Research, and Evaluation. See: http://www.mass.gov/Eeohhs2/docs/dph/research_epi/birth_report_2008.pdf.

⁵ The birth rate is traditionally expressed as births per 1,000 population. A lower birth rate suggests an older population.

 $^{^{\}rm 6}$ Estimates from 2005 Greater Boston Community Study commissioned by CJP.

⁷ Projected Jewish birth figures were calculated by multiplying annual births by the estimated Jewish population percentage. These numbers should be considered no more than educated guesses because the Jewish population percentage is only a rough estimate, and Jewish birth rates may not be equivalent to general birth rates. In general, Jewish birth rates are lower than birth rates among the general population, except among the highly educated. Among the highly-educated, Jewish birth rates are equivalent to general birth rates (see Kotler-Berkowitz, L., Cohen, S.M., Ament, J., Klaff, V., Mott F. & Peckerman-Neuman, D. (2003). *The National Jewish Population Study 2000-01: Strength, challenge and diversity in the American Jewish population.* New York: United Jewish Communities). Since many Metrowest suburbs do have affluent and highly educated residents, birth rates for the general population may indeed reflect birth rates for the Jewish population.

⁸ N = Not affiliated; R = Reform; C = Conservative; O = Orthodox.

⁹ Percentage of Jewish households unavailable from 2005 study. This figure based on percentages for Marlborough.

¹⁰ Lincoln is a highly affluent community. The median family income figure presented here understates the community's wealth because Lincoln subsidizes a number of affordable housing units.

¹¹ The estimated Jewish population percentage for Weston listed in the CJP data is probably too high.

¹² Framingham is the only Metrowest suburb that has both a moderately-sized Jewish population and a sizable non-Jewish working-class population. Because the residents of Framingham are not as highly-educated or affluent as other Metrowest suburbs, the birth rate for the general population is likely to overstate the Jewish birth rate. Accordingly, the figure for projected annual Jewish births has been adjusted downward.

Area Covered by Hub Connector	Community	Median Family Income	2005 Population	2008 Annual Births/ Births Per 1,000	Estimated Percentage of Jewish Households	Projected Annual Jewish Births	Synagogues and Chabad
	Bellingham	\$72,000	15,735	229/15	1%	2	
	Franklin	\$102,000	30,748	344/11	3%	10	Temple Etz Chaim (R)
	Holliston	\$168,000	13,830	132/10	9%	12	Temple Beth Torah (C)
	Hopkinton	\$103,000	14,048	138/10	5%	7	
South	Medfield	\$111,000	12,328	96/8	5%	5	
Jouth	Medway	\$108,000	12,780	120/9	4%	5	
	Milford	\$61,000	27,523	369/13	2%	7	Chabad Center (O) Temple Beth Shalom (N)
	Millis	\$72,000	7,949	80/10	3%	2	Congregation Ael Chunon (N)
	Norfolk	\$92,000	10,506	95/9	2%	2	

Institutional History of Metrowest Boston Prior to the 1990s, Metrowest had its own Jewish federation, the Jewish Federation of Greater Framingham, as well as some JCC programs and a Jewish social service agency, Jewish Family Service of Metrowest. The federation and JCC shared a converted ranch house. In the 1990s the federation merged with CJP. Some years later, JCCGB created a satellite office in Metrowest, sharing space in a building rented by the Metrowest Jewish Day School. In 2006, when the original ranch house was sold, proceeds from the sale were put into a fund managed by CJP for the use of the Metrowest Jewish community. Allocation decisions for these funds were subsequently made by the Metrowest Jewish Planning Commission, a body of Metrowest-based lay leaders that first convened in 2007 to discuss needs and priorities. Two allocations from this committee in fiscal years 2009 and 2010 provided the seed grants for the Jewish Family Network initiative and its evaluation. CJP agreed to assume fiscal responsibility for the continuation of JFN after the initial seed grant.

JCCGB's main facility is in Newton, which is not convenient for Metrowest residents. To provide services to Metrowest residents, JCCGB has continued to maintain its office in Metrowest, runs the Clearbrook outdoor pool in Framingham, and has early learning centers in the communities of Acton and Wayland. It also offers express buses from Metrowest to its Grossman Camp in the summer. In recent years, JCCGB has increasingly focused on offering programs in Metrowest and other local communities that are not located near its main facility.

Jewish Family Service of Metrowest was unaffected by the institutional changes that took place in the 1990s and has continued to thrive. The agency possesses considerable knowledge of Metrowest communities and institutions because of its longstanding history in the area. It also has strong relationships with the key individuals within them.

Starting in 2004, JFS began working closely with several local synagogues through an initiative called Kulanu, which focused on families. As a result of these efforts and other programs it offers, JFS has developed relationships with leaders in Metrowest synagogues. It also has acquired a degree of familiarity with the needs of the target population of interest to CJP.

Demographics of the South Area The South Area included in the pilot program consists of a very large geographic area that includes 34 suburbs south of Boston. Table 2 presents population figures, median family income, annual births, birth rates, Jewish population density, and projected annual Jewish births for each community.

Unlike Metrowest, the South Area has one community, Sharon, where Jewish families are highly concentrated. Just about half of all households in Sharon are Jewish, giving it the highest Jewish population density of any community in Greater Boston, and one of the highest in the United States. Several communities adjacent to Sharon have moderately-sized Jewish populations. The remaining 30 suburbs have relatively few Jewish families.

Sharon and Hingham are the two most affluent communities in the South Area. Overall, however, South Area suburbs are not as affluent as Metrowest suburbs and housing tends to be more affordable. For this reason, a number of families have moved from the city and have purchased homes in the area after having children. Sharon is especially desirable because of its natural beauty and commuter rail access.

The South Area has its own "personality" and is qualitatively different from Metrowest. Observers have commented on the following features of the area, which have implications for any programming initiatives:

- Residents tend to be parochial and are not very willing to travel to other communities for events
- Community events in general are not well-attended
- When parents wish to attend Jewish programs, they generally have to drive long distances
- Given the low Jewish population density, it is difficult to identify Jewish families, and parents are unlikely to know other Jewish parents in their community or in neighboring communities
- School-age children are often the only Jewish children in their schools
- Synagogues tend to be small and have limited resources for programming

For programming purposes, the South Area is divided into three groupings of communities (see Table 2). The southernmost grouping, centered around the community of Easton, is comprised of communities with low Jewish population density and has an estimated 50 annual Jewish births. Similarly, the easternmost grouping, focused on Braintree, is also comprised of communities with low Jewish population density. It is quite dispersed geographically, ranging from Quincy in the north to Kingston in the south. It is estimated that there are approximately 60 annual Jewish births in these communities. The westernmost grouping, centered around Sharon, has the most Jewish households by far, with approximately 200 annual Jewish births. In total, it is estimated that the South Area has 335 Jewish births annually.

	Table 2: Communities Covered by the South Area Initiative							
Area Covered by Hub Connector	Community	Median Family Income ¹³	2005 Population ¹⁴	2008 Annual Births/ Births Per 1,000 ¹⁵	Estimated Percentage of Jewish Households ¹⁶	Projected Annual Jewish Births ¹⁷	Synagogues and Chabad ¹⁸	
	Abington	\$69,000	16,305	212/13	1%	2		
	Bridgewater	\$74,000	25,769	252/10	1%	3		
	Brockton ¹⁹	\$46,000	100,366	1,541/15	2%	14	Temple Beth Emunah (C)	
	East Bridgewater	\$67,000	13,832	160/12	1%	2		
Easton Area	Easton	\$82,000	22,995	205/9	8%	16	Temple Chayai Shalom (R) Temple Israel (N)	
	Foxboro	\$79,000	16,288	163/10	4%	7		
	West Bridgewater	\$65,000	6,819	73/11	1%	1		
	Whitman	\$64,000	14,424	196/14	1%	2		
	Wrentham	\$89,000	11,066	129/12	2%	3		
	Avon	\$61,000	4,345	45/10	6%	3		
	Canton	\$83,000	21,481	237/11	13%	31	Temple Beth David (R) Temple Beth Abraham (C)	
	Holbrook	\$63,000	10,765	140/13	2%	3	Temple Beth Shalom (N)	
	Milton	\$107,000	26,243	314/12	6%	19	Temple Shalom (N)	
	Norwood	\$70,000	28,472	364/13	3%	11	Temple Shaare Tefilah (C)	
a.	Randolph	\$62,000	32,552	356/11	9%	32	Temple Beth Am (C) Young Israel-Kehillath Jacob (O)	
Sharon Area	Sharon	\$127,000	17,269	144/8	49%	72	Chabad Center of Sharon (O) Congregation Etz Chaim (O) Congregation Klal Yisrael (N) Temple Adath Sharon (C) Temple Israel of Sharon (C) Temple Sinai (R) Young Israel of Sharon (O)	
	Stoughton	\$70,000	26,782	283/11	16%	45	Ahavath Torah Cong (C) Shaloh House Chabad of the South Area (O)	
	Walpole	\$84,000	23,067	310/13	3%	9		

¹³ Median family income from Wikipedia.

¹⁴ 2005 population and 2008 birth data from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Center for Health Information, Statistics, Research, and Evaluation. See: http://www.mass.gov/Eeohhs2/docs/dph/research_epi/birth_report_2008.pdf.

The birth rate for a given geographic area is traditionally expressed as births per 1,000 population.

¹⁶ Estimates from 2005 Greater Boston Community Study commissioned by CJP.

¹⁷ Projected Jewish birth figures were calculated by multiplying annual births by the estimated Jewish population percentage. These numbers should be considered no more than educated guesses because the Jewish population percentage is only a rough estimate, and Jewish birth rates may not be equivalent to general birth rates. In general, Jewish birth rates are lower than birth rates among the general population, except among the highly educated. Among the highly-educated, Jewish birth rates are equivalent to general birth rates (see reference in footnote 6 under Table 1).

¹⁸ N = Not affiliated; R = Reform; C = Conservative; O = Orthodox.

¹⁹ Brockton has a sizable non-Jewish working-class population so the general birth rate is likely to be higher than the Jewish birth rate. Accordingly, the figure for projected annual Jewish births has been adjusted downward.

Area Covered by Hub Connector	Community	Median Family Income	2005 Population	2008 Annual Births/ Births Per 1,000	Estimated Percentage of Jewish Households	Projected Annual Jewish Births	Synagogues and Chabad
	Braintree	\$91,000	33,658	374/11	2%	7	Temple B'nai Shalom (N)
	Cohasset	\$100,000	7,219	80/11	3%	2	
	Duxbury	\$106,000	14,655	127/9	2%	3	
	Halifax	\$65,000	7,805	80/10	<1%	1	
	Hanover	\$87,000	14,077	136/10	1%	1	
	Hanson	\$69,000	9,915	47/12	<1%	1	
	Hingham	\$134,000	21,470	258/12	4%	10	Cong Shaaray Shalom (R) Hingham-Quincy Chabad (O)
Braintree Area	Hull	\$62,000	11,279	89/8	4%	4	Temple Beth Sholom (N) Temple Israel (N)
	Kingston	\$65,000	12,435	150/12	1%	2	
	Marshfield	\$104,000	24,879	290/12	1%	3	Congregation Shirat Hayam (Reconstructionist)
	Norwell	\$97,000	10,382	109/10	2%	2	
	Pembroke	\$96,000	18,069	202/11	<1%	2	
	Quincy	\$60,000	90,458	1,140/13	1%	10	Temple Beth El (N)
	Rockland	\$60,000	17,842	219/12	<1%	2	
	Scituate	\$86,000	18,119	175/10	2%	3	
	Weymouth	\$64,000	53,708	701/13	1%	7	

Institutional History of the South Area JCCGB has offered preschool and day care services in the South Area for over 30 years. Beginning in 1988, JCCGB services were offered in the Striar JCC building in Stoughton. The facility was closed and sold in February 2009 for financial reasons and the building became the Striar YMCA. While the community reacted negatively to this loss, JCCGB pledged to continue programming. It has maintained an office in a synagogue in Sharon in what is now called the JCC South Area and has moved the JCC preschool to the same synagogue in Sharon. It also has recently launched a new preschool at a synagogue in Hingham.

Jewish Family & Children's Service has been serving parents in the South Area for a number of years through its internationally known Center for Early Relationship Support, which sponsors a variety of programs for parents. Among these are support groups for new mothers, and Visiting Moms, a free program designed to help new mothers gain confidence in their new role as a parent. In the Visiting Moms program, volunteers come to the homes of new mothers one hour a week to provide support and companionship.

JF&CS has been providing these services to all interested parents in the South Area, regardless of religious background. By offering these programs, JF&CS has acquired a comprehensive understanding of the South Area and its families. It currently has an office in the Striar YMCA building.

Design of the Initiatives

The design of each pilot initiative was informed by a national study of Jewish organizations that described best practices for reaching parents with young children. ²⁰ To attract these families, the research suggests that program providers should:

- offer information and services to parents that are similar those offered by secular providers, with program content that is state-of-the-art
- be sensitive to the tendency of many parents to be self-conscious about their lack of Jewish knowledge
- develop programs that offer both practical information and Jewish content
- provide ample opportunities for parents to make friends with other parents
- offer parents multiple program options in a variety of settings to optimize the likelihood that they will find something that is appealing
- carefully select the professionals who work with parents
- make extensive use of peer volunteers
- utilize a network of involved parents, local Jewish leaders, and medical professionals to find Jewish parents
- help parents to establish meaningful relationships with rabbis, Jewish educators, and Jewish social workers
- develop partnerships with local early childhood/parenting experts
- periodically schedule large-scale events at attractive venues

Design of the Metrowest Pilot Initiative The Metrowest initiative, known as the Jewish Family Network, arose from a proposal jointly submitted to CJP by JFS and JCCGB. This was the first formal collaboration between the latter two agencies. Funding of \$150,000 to support the initial 18 months of the initiative came from the funds managed by the Metrowest Jewish Planning Commission.

The initial intent of the Jewish Family Network, as stated in the proposal, was to increase engagement of families with young children in Metrowest Boston with a particular focus on "those who have not yet engaged in Jewish community participation." The initial proposal set forth three general goals:

- Build a more open, inclusive, and welcoming community where all who want to participate in Jewish life can find pathways
- Increase Jewish engagement and strengthen connections among families with young children across the dispersed geographic communities in Metrowest
- Incubate a "next generation engagement model" that can be replicated at a later date via JFN throughout "Jewish Boston 2020"

²⁰ See Rosen, 2006; Wertlieb and Rosen, 2008.

Strategies for achieving these goals included:

- hiring of three part-time parents known as "hub connectors" who would generate new parent contacts in each of the three geographic areas of Metrowest
- customized programming for parents and families
- the creation of a database to track families
- a Welcome Baby program for parents having or adopting a baby
- a social networking site
- a bimonthly newsletter

The proposal sought to achieve the following outcomes:

- 500 families with children under 6 would be connected to the Jewish Family Network
- 300 families would participate in JFN events and communications
- JFS and JCCGB would work collaboratively
- young families would connect to each other and to the Jewish community
- peer leaders would be identified
- lessons learned would be incorporated to improve the initiative
- understanding of the Jewish portals used by parents would be enhanced

Coordination and planning for the Jewish Family Network was overseen by a JFS professional with a social work background who had previously worked on Kulanu, the earlier family program in Metrowest. Programming assistance was provided by a Metrowest-based JCCGB professional staff member, and marketing and publicity came from JCCGB offices in Newton.

The collaborative model called for JFS to find families and build relationships with them, while JCCGB was to run and publicize monthly programs for all of Metrowest. The JFS professional was largely behind the scenes – for the most part, she did not present herself as the face of the program to parents at events.

In addition to the monthly JCCGB-run programs, the Jewish Family Network offered local community programs on a weekly basis. There was also a Welcome Baby program in which families received visits and a gift basket when they had a baby or adopted one. The Jewish Family Network helped identify new babies and the JCCGB professional usually delivered the baskets. The three hub connectors worked 8 hours per week to identify and engage families locally as well as organize local programs. These individuals reported to the JFS professional and submitted regular written reports on their activities.

While the initial proposal did not include an explicit role for local synagogues or other local Jewish institutions, they have subsequently participated in a number of ways, as will be described in the Findings section below.

Design of the South Area Pilot Initiative The South Area initiative was launched in the fall of 2009, approximately 7 months after the launch of the initiative in Metrowest. The initial proposal presented the following goals:

- Build a welcoming community in which all who want to participate in Jewish life can find pathways to learn, grow, and connect with others
- Provide a variety of entry points into the Jewish community for families with newborns up to age five

Key program components were listed as follows:

- Identify Jewish households in the South Area
- Reach out to engage the youngest families
 - Welcome Baby program to welcome new parents
 - Low barrier enrichment classes
- Foster connections among families
 - Network of hub connectors
 - Peer groups
- Offer ongoing support and information
 - Groups for new moms
- Build skills and encourage exploration
 - Low barrier enrichment classes
- Celebrate Jewish life
 - Pluralistic programming for Shabbat and Jewish holidays

The proposal also presented targets for families reached:

- 70 Welcome Baby visits
- 45 families attending groups for new moms
- 60 families attending 10 playgroups and 6 enrichment classes
- 265 families attending 4 holiday programs
- 500 total participating families (figure includes attendance at multiple programs)

The South Area initiative did not adopt a distinct brand name as did its counterpart in Metrowest. Programs were marketed as JCC South Area programs. In the minds of local residents and organizations, the initiative is closely linked to the JCC.

Programming, publicity, and three hub connectors were coordinated by a JCCGB professional staff member who served as the public face of the program to parents. Recently, she left the position temporarily to take on another assignment at JCCGB, and has been replaced by her assistant.

The Welcome Baby program in the South Area was run by a staff professional from Jewish Family & Children's Service with a social work background. She was assisted by five volunteers, four of whom were associated with the agency's Visiting Moms program.

Not having a JCC building has proven to be an asset to the initiative, since parents came to programs sponsored by the JCC in various locations rather than coming to the former Striar JCC building. In effect, programs were now more accessible because they were held throughout the geographic area closer to where parents live, making attendance more convenient.

As was the case for Metrowest, the proposal did not include an explicit role for synagogues and other local institutions, although it did mention in the proposal's concluding paragraph that the South Area initiative would build "off a strong base of area temples and local institutions." The involvement of local institutions will be discussed in the Findings section below.

Unique Features of the Initiatives While there are many Jewish programs for parents of young children around the United States run by individual agencies, the pilot initiatives had collaborative design features that were atypical.

- A federation, two Jewish social service agencies, a JCC, and a number of synagogues were all working together to reach families with young children.
- The initiatives were not designed to further the mission of any one institution. There was no emphasis on generating members or donors. The initiatives were focused on meeting the needs of parents in the hope that they would subsequently make Jewish friends and begin to connect to the larger Jewish community.
- While programs were offered at agency facilities as well as in local communities, the emphasis was on connecting with parents where they lived. This enhanced attendance and fostered personal connections with parents, encouraging participation.

Role of the PJ Library Program The PJ Library[®], a national program developed by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation (HGF), sends Jewish-content books and music on a monthly basis to children beginning at age six months. The program is free to families who choose to enroll and is financed by a combination of support from federations, local donors, and HGF.²¹

In late 2007, prior to either of the two pilot initiatives, JCCGB launched the PJ Library across Greater Boston with support from CJP and local donors, generating a subscription list of several thousand families. This subscription list was used to publicize JCCGB programs. Once the two initiatives were launched, the list was subsequently used to publicize programs sponsored by the initiatives. Currently, new subscribers receive a free two-year subscription. All parents receiving Welcome Baby visits have the opportunity to subscribe with funding from CJP.

²¹ See www.pjlibrary.org for more information about the program.

Evaluation Approach and Methodology

This evaluation was tailored to the specific circumstances of the initiatives being evaluated. The evaluation was complex, since it involved two distinct geographic areas, four different collaborating agencies, multiple programmatic components, and two separate funding sources,

The evaluation also included local institutions that were not formally part of the initiatives. Each of the local synagogues in Metrowest and the South Area, as well as both of the local day schools, had their own reactions to the programs being offered by the initiatives. Each also had an interest in attracting the parents the initiatives were reaching. In addition, a number of these synagogues and both day schools cooperated with the agencies sponsoring the initiatives to offer programs. Thus these institutions played a role in the success of the initiatives, and this role merited examination.

Stakeholders associated with all four of the participating agencies were interested in the findings of this evaluation. While the interests of these stakeholders were taken into consideration in shaping the evaluation, the interests of Combined Jewish Philanthropies were most prominent. CJP developed the strategic plan leading to the initiatives, funded them, commissioned the evaluation, and will be using the results of the evaluation to make decisions regarding future funding. The Metrowest Jewish Planning Commission also played a role in shaping the evaluation, since it provided funding for the Metrowest initiative as well as the Metrowest component of this evaluation.

Evaluation Questions The evaluation literature describes four program stages: the program planning stage, the initial implementation stage, the mature implementation stage, and the outcome stage. ²² Since both of the initiatives being evaluated are at the initial implementation stage, the following generic questions are appropriate to consider:

- Is the program being implemented according to the initial plan?
- Is the target population being reached?
- What are the initial reactions of the target population to the program?
- What is working successfully?
- What obstacles to implementation are arising?
- Are there any immediate changes that should be made to the program?
- Are there any differences across sites?
- Do community institutions support the program?
- If multiple agencies are involved, how effectively are they working together?

²² See Appendix A for more information about the stages of program evaluation and the evaluation questions appropriate for each stage.

In addition to these generic questions, context-specific questions shaped the evaluation for each of the programmatic components in the initiatives. These questions are presented in the Findings section of this report.

Data Sources Data for this evaluation was obtained from the following sources:

- Periodic interviews with professional staff in the four participating agencies
- Interviews with all hub connectors
- Reviews of hub connector progress reports
- Interviews with all Welcome Baby volunteers
- Interviews with Welcome Baby mothers
- Interviews with local community synagogue representatives
- Observations of professional staff meetings
- Reviews and/or analyses of quantitative data provided by the agencies
- Observations of programs
- Spontaneous interviews with participating parents before, during, and after programs
- A focus group with parents
- Ongoing review of publicity materials
- Ongoing review of online feedback survey data from parents provided by agencies
- Ongoing review of emails sent by the agencies to parents

Data collection took place from September 2009 through December 2010.²³

One major limitation of this evaluation is the absence of systematic data from participating parents. This is because the agencies involved felt it was important to maintain parents' privacy and to avoid any interference with parents' nascent Jewish involvement. From the outset, it was agreed that for the evaluation the agencies would not be asked to share a complete list of participating parents.

While agencies did agree to provide names of selected parents who indicated a willingness to be interviewed, this was not adequate for evaluation purposes since surveys could not be randomly administered to parents, and parents could not be randomly contacted for interviews. Given this limitation, it cannot be determined whether the parents who were interviewed are representative of all participants in the initiatives, and the reactions of parents to various aspects of the initiatives cannot be adequately assessed.

²³ Shirah Hecht, Ph.D. assisted with data collection in the South Area.

SECTION 2: FINDINGS

This section presents the findings for the pilot initiatives in both geographic areas, drawing comparisons where appropriate.

In the first part of the Findings section, the three programmatic components of the initiatives involving direct connections with parents are examined: the hub connector model, the Welcome Baby program, and the community-based programming for parents. In the second part, initial goals of the initiatives are contrasted with actual totals, and in the third part, collaborations with local institutions and across agencies are examined.

Connections with Parents

The Hub Connector Model The hub connector model recognized the advantages of employing peers of parents, rather than professional staff, to connect with the target population. The logic of the model was to hire parents who were similar to the families of interest and encourage them to develop personal connections with these parents where they live, foster connections among parents who live near each other, and offer local programs for parents that would be easily accessible. In Metrowest, the hub connectors were hired and supervised by JFS. In the South Area, the hub connectors were hired and supervised by JCCGB. Each initiative had three hub connectors corresponding to the geographic groupings of suburbs. These groupings are listed in Tables 1 and 2 above.

In Metrowest, hub connectors were given the explicit goal of generating names of two new families a week. They also were required to submit a weekly progress report using a standardized form. Hub connectors in the South Area also submitted reports but were evaluated more on program attendance and program quality than on new contacts.

All six hub connectors were interviewed for this report. Agency staff were also interviewed regarding hub connector performance, and hub connector progress reports were reviewed. The evaluation investigated the following aspects of the hub connector model:

- Did the hub connectors develop relationships with parents, and did they reach parents who might not otherwise be reached?
- What strategies appeared to be most successful in reaching parents?
- Were relationships among parents fostered through the efforts of the hub connectors?
- Did the participating agencies make appropriate hiring decisions?
- Were there differences in the hub connector model between the two geographic areas?
- What lessons were learned that can be used to improve the hub connector model?

Both the hub connector progress reports and interviews indicated that the hub connectors made numerous connections with parents in their community. Hub connectors attributed their success in part to their knowledge of the local community. They mentioned, for example, that it was important to learn about such things as which secular parenting businesses and organizations parents utilized, where they met their friends for coffee, and which playgrounds they frequented. Several noted, however, that it was harder to acquire local intelligence in the towns where they don't live.

Despite the various strategies they employed for identifying parents, it was invariably the case that sometimes parents they had never seen before just showed up at programs or events.

Hub connectors mentioned that some of the parents they encountered had moved to the suburbs from the city after having a child, and were looking to establish new Jewish connections to replace the ones they had where they previously lived. Hub connectors reported numerous situations in which they facilitated interactions among parents who lived near each other, had common interests, or had children the same age. These efforts sometimes led to subsequent friendships among parents. One-on-one conversations between hub connectors and parents during programs and events helped to facilitate these connections once hub connectors were able to glean information that would help to make connections.

Hub connectors' personalities appeared to play a major role in whether they were successful in making connections. If parents liked hub connectors, they came to events regardless of the topic, and were more willing to share information about themselves. Hub connectors felt that they always needed to be "on" in public because in the eyes of parents they represent the Jewish community.

The agency staff responsible for hiring hub connectors were discerning in their selection process. Five of the six hub connectors hired initially performed well. In Metrowest, one of the hub connectors did not perform according to expectations, largely because she had no prior experience with the organized Jewish community. She was replaced after a few months. Her replacement has also performed well.

Summary and Observations: In general, for both initiatives, the hub connector model appears to be very successful and effective in finding parents and helping them to make connections to each other and to the Jewish community. Hub connectors appear dedicated despite the low pay and the expectation to put in time beyond the eight hours they are paid to work.

One area for improvement was suggested by hub connectors during interviews. Since hub connectors cannot effectively cover all of the communities for which they are responsible in the hours they have dedicated to the position, and because the geographic areas to be covered are so large, it would be beneficial to identify and recruit volunteer parents who live in other communities, particularly those communities with relatively high projected Jewish birth rates. These volunteers could help identify parents and provide additional community intelligence.

Welcome Baby Visits The Welcome Baby program involved home visits to Jewish mothers, or mothers raised in another faith who had a Jewish partner. Fathers were rarely involved. Mothers were eligible for a visit if they gave birth during the six previous months. Parents who adopted a child were also eligible, but age criteria for children were more flexible. During the visit, a trained volunteer or staff member delivered a gift basket, described the contents, and provided an overview of the programming options and institutions available for parents in the area. While the contents of the baskets and their purchase were centrally coordinated, the two Welcome Baby programs were administered separately.

The Welcome Baby programs were evaluated through interviews with agency staff and Welcome Baby volunteers. Several mothers who received Welcome Baby baskets were also interviewed by phone. These mothers were selected by the agencies and asked if they were willing to be interviewed.

It was not possible to randomly select Welcome Baby mothers or systematically survey Welcome Baby parents. Nor was it possible to observe actual Welcome Baby visits or attend Welcome Baby events. The agencies involved felt strongly that the involvement of an evaluator would be intrusive at a moment when parents are first becoming acquainted with the Jewish community.

The evaluation did, however, examine the following aspects of the Welcome Baby program:

- What differences existed in the program between the two geographic areas?
- How many families were identified and how many visits took place?
- What percentage of families attended follow-up programs after a visit?
- How were families referred to the program?
- Were the contents of the gift basket appropriate?
- What transpired during the visits?
- What was the role of the PJ Library program?
- How did parents react to the visits?
- What lessons were learned that could improve the Welcome Baby program?

Geographic Differences The two geographic areas had slightly different strategies for finding families and for delivering the baskets. In Metrowest, Jewish Family Service of Metrowest identified potential recipients, and a staff professional from JCCGB did most of the basket delivery.

In the South Area, initially, Jewish Family & Children's Service identified families and delivered the baskets. Subsequently, it was agreed that JCCGB would take over responsibility for the identification of families. Baskets were delivered by five JF&CS volunteers.

Identification of Families and Delivery of Baskets In Metrowest, as of July 19, 2010, 112 families had been identified as potential recipients of gift baskets and 68 baskets had been delivered. In the South Area, 66 families had been identified and 40 baskets had been delivered.

While there is no objective data explaining why there is a discrepancy in delivery figures between the two areas, a number of explanations can be suggested, which in combination might explain the gap:

- The South Area initiative started seven months later than the Metrowest initiative.
- Jewish population density is greater in Metrowest than in the South Area, and Jewish parents in Metrowest may be more socially connected with each other than in the South Area, which is more dispersed geographically. If this is the case, then word of mouth about the program in Metrowest would be stronger than in the South Area.
- Jewish Family Service of Metrowest, which finds the babies, has been actively developing relationships for a number of years with Metrowest Jews wherever they live and has a longstanding presence in most of the communities.
- Jewish Family & Children's Service has more than a decade of experience with its Visiting Moms program in the South Area, and its experience there suggests that these types of program simply take longer to catch on than might be the case in other geographic areas.

If the figures for projected births in Tables 1 and 2 above are reasonable estimates, then Metrowest has identified roughly one-third of all of the babies born in a year's time, and the South Area has identified about 15 percent. Compared to other Shalom Baby programs in the United States, the Metrowest percentage is quite good, while the South Area figure is more typical.²⁴

Post-Visit Participation In Metrowest, 45 percent of families who received baskets participated in a subsequent Jewish Family Network program. In the South Area, 47 percent participated in a subsequent program sponsored by JCCGB. No comparison data is available for other cities, so it is not clear whether these figures are high, low, or typical.

Why is it that half of all basket recipients did not choose to participate in a subsequent program? There are a number of possible explanations. It may simply be the case that children were too young and too little time had passed – as children become older and are able to crawl or walk, parents may be more inclined to attend. Perhaps follow-up publicity is inadequate. Or, parents may simply be uninterested in anything more. The only way to determine the reasons would be to survey or interview a substantial sample of these parents, which could not be done given the limitations on data collection.

²⁴ For national data on Shalom Baby programs, see Rosen, M.I. (2006). *Jewish engagement from birth: A blueprint for outreach to first-time parents.* Waltham, MA: Brandeis University, Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies.

Referrals Table 3 below presents data obtained from agency staff describing the various ways that families were referred to the program. The largest percentage of referrals in Metrowest came from parents who contacted the Jewish Family Network on their own behalf, while in the South Area the single largest percentage came from JCCGB and JF&CS staff.

In the South Area, nearly half of the referrals came from a combination of hub connectors and community informants, while in Metrowest less than a quarter of referrals came from these sources.

It would appear that word of mouth "buzz" among parents in Metrowest about the Welcome Baby program is stronger than in the South Area, generating more self-referrals, while in the South Area, there is a stronger referral network in the community.

Referrals from synagogues were weak in both areas. In Metrowest, there were only a few referrals from synagogues. There were none in the South Area.

Table 3: Welcome Baby Referrals						
Course of Deformal	Meti	owest	South Area			
Source of Referral	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage		
Self-referral	21	31%	4	10%		
Agency staff	15	22%	13	33%		
Hub connectors	6	9%	7	18%		
Community informants	9	13%	12	30%		
Grandparents	5	7%	1	3%		
CJP Family Connections newsletter	0		3	8%		
PJ Library	3	4%	0			
Synagogues	4	6%	0			
MetroWest Jewish Day school	2	3%	0			
Other	3	4%	0			
Totals	68		40			

Basket Contents The baskets themselves have proven to be an attractive feature of the program. The contents of the baskets were selected in partnership with a co-owner of Magic Beans, a successful Boston-based business specializing in baby gear, nursery furniture, and toys. The items are popular and trendy, sold exclusively at high-end baby stores. The baskets also contained a Jewish community resource guide.

Gift baskets in other communities around the country are invariably designed by lay committees; it is often the case that most of the contents of these baskets end up gathering dust in a closet. In contrast, because every item in the Welcome Baby basket has been carefully

selected by a parenting expert and has practical utility, parents are excited about receiving the baskets and word of mouth buzz about them appears to be pervasive.

Visits by Staff and Volunteers In Metrowest, a staff member from JCCGB with young children of her own delivered the majority of the baskets (59 as of July 14, 2010). She used the contents of the baskets as a conversational device to establish a rapport with mothers. In an interview, she indicated that each visit was unique, tailored to the mother being visited based on whether visual clues in the home environment indicate a Jewishly involved or uninvolved family. She reported that her approach became progressively more refined with each visit.

Because she had done almost all of the visits, she established a rapport with the families, and when she saw them again at subsequent Jewish Family Network programs she was able to engage with them in a personal fashion.

During this staff member's maternity leave, some of the Metrowest visits were conducted by JFS staff or hub connectors, who participated in a training program. An outline of this training program can be found in Appendix B.

In the South Area, visits were divided among five volunteers. Four of the volunteers were already associated with the Visiting Moms program administered by JF&CS. All five were older than the target population – none had young children of their own. Before their first visit, each of the South Area volunteers participated in a training session that included the background of the program, role-play exercises, and dos and don'ts.

South Area Volunteers indicated that their focus was primarily on the well-being of the mother, rather than on Jewish concerns, unless the mother specifically raised Jewish issues. Volunteers reported that some of the mothers appeared tired and overwhelmed from the responsibility of having a young baby, and they gently offered support and suggestions, depending upon an individual mother's interests and receptivity. The volunteers indicated that a number of the mothers were new to the area and did not have family members nearby to provide support.

All of the volunteers found the experience rewarding and felt that the mothers responded very positively to the visits. The South Area visits were intended as one-time events and none of the volunteers had subsequent contact with the mothers they visited.

After the visit, the JF&CS staff member who was responsible for the program followed up each visit with a phone call. Parents were invariably positive about the program. Some have chosen to enroll in the Center for Early Relationship Support's Visiting Moms program as a result.²⁵

Role of the PJ Library Program A two-year subscription to the PJ Library program was included with every gift basket. Parents were "enthusiastic and happy to receive the books" according to the staff person responsible for the South Area Welcome Baby program. An additional benefit

²⁵ Visiting Moms is not a part of the current initiative and does not have a Jewish focus.

of the PJ Library subscription was that requests for a subscription helped identify families that would not otherwise be identified.

On occasion, calls came in requesting a Welcome Baby visit from families that did not live in Metrowest or the South Area. In these cases, the availability of the PJ Library program was ideal because rather than saying no to these requests, families could still receive the two-year subscription.

Reactions of Parents All indications are that mothers were extremely pleased with the visits and the gift baskets. Several mothers who had received visits indicated in phone interviews that they had a very positive view of their visit. All of them mentioned that they found the contents of the baskets to be very high quality and that the items continued to be used.

One mother in the South Area indicated that she would have preferred to have maintained contact with her volunteer after the visit. Instead, her questions were referred to the JF&CS staff person, with whom she did not have a personal relationship.

Summary and Observations The Welcome Baby program has been very well-received thus far. Several suggestions can be made to further improve the Welcome Baby program, especially as it expands to new geographic areas.

First, more referrals, particularly from synagogues, could increase the number of families identified. More attention needs to be paid to generating a referral network.

Second, there appears to be little or no communication between the two different Welcome Baby programs. Through periodic meetings, each could benefit from learning about successful approaches and techniques that the other is using.

Third, while there does not appear to be a clear advantage to using staff members or volunteers to deliver the baskets, there does appear to be a preference on the part of parents to have ongoing contact with the person who delivers the basket. In the current Metrowest approach which relies on a single staff person, the staff person develops a relationship with each mother which facilitates subsequent interactions and creates a comfort level for parents. If it is not practical to have a staff person do the visits as the program expands geographically and numerically, then it might be helpful to revisit the current "one time only" approach for volunteer visits.

Fourth, integrating the Metrowest and South Area approaches is advisable. The JF&CS approach in the South Area focuses on what new mothers are going through as mothers, while the JCC approach in Metrowest focuses on determining the mother's receptivity to Judaism. Both are important and complementary. One way to do this is to have a single training program for those delivering the baskets moving forward.

Programs and Program Publicity The hub connector model and the Welcome Baby program discussed previously were both new for Boston, so none of the agency staff had prior experience with either. In contrast, all three of the agencies had many years of prior experience with programming for parents of young children. Programming and publicity were largely built upon previous efforts. The only significant difference was program venues. Many of the programs were run in community locations such as libraries, coffee shops, playgrounds, and businesses that cater to parents, rather than in agency facilities or other Jewish institutions as had been the case previously.

Programs and program publicity were evaluated from a number of perspectives: publicity materials and online newsletters were reviewed; feedback surveys from parents were examined; agency staff and hub connectors were interviewed; parents were interviewed informally before, during, and after programs; and six programs were observed. Guidelines used for program observation can be found in Appendix C.

The following questions were addressed:

- How many families participated in programs, and how many new families were identified?
- What were the characteristics of participating families?
- How were programs publicized and how effective was program publicity?
- What types of programs were offered?
- How did parents react to programs?
- What took place during programs?
- How did parents feel about the Jewish content of programs, and how much Jewish content did programs have?
- What lessons were learned regarding programs and program publicity?

Characteristics of Participating Parents At the start of each initiative, agencies already possessed lists of several hundred parents acquired from previous programming efforts, CJP event newsletters, and the PJ Library program subscription list. These were used initially to publicize programs. Whenever parents showed up for the first time at programs or events, the following additional information was collected:

- Contact information
- Children's names and birthdates
- How parents learned about the program
- Whether parents belong to the JCC or to the PJ Library
- Whether the family is interfaith
- Whether children attend a preschool, and whether it is a Jewish preschool
- Whether parents belong to a synagogue

Agency staff for each of the initiatives combined existing names and new names into a database, which was then analyzed to understand the characteristics of attending parents.

The Metrowest database contains over 750 families. Of these families, 336 participated in Jewish Family Network programs. Since April 2009, 287 new families were identified. Of these families, 29 percent were interfaith.

In Metrowest, among families where both parents identify as Jewish, 32 percent belonged to synagogues. Among interfaith families, 25 percent were affiliated with synagogues. Among parents whose children attend preschool, 38 percent chose a Jewish preschool.

The latest count of the families in the South Area database indicated that it contained a total of 426 families with at least one child under 5. Of these families, 291 were new families identified through attendance at South Area programs since the start of the initiative.

The South Area further reported that 19 percent of families in the database were interfaith. Forty percent of families in the database belonged to a synagogue.

Program Publicity Programs were publicized to parents through a variety of mechanisms. Both the Jewish Family Network and the South Area JCC sent regular e-newsletters to every name in their database. CJP also sent out a monthly e-newsletter called CJP Family Connections, which contained program listings for programs both within and outside of Metrowest and the South Area, as well as coupons.

The marketing department at JCCGB designed colorful, attractive flyers and other materials to publicize programs. These materials were distributed to appropriate sites and posted at local businesses where parents were likely to see them.

The Jewish Family Network created a Facebook page which had 242 fans by December 2010. The South Area JCC did not choose to use Facebook but did make use of a number of websites that parents use, such as BostonCentral, WhoFish, GoCityKids, and MomsandDadsGuide. Both Metrowest and the South Area also made use of the MeetUp website to create groups.

Program Offerings Programs and program publicity were similar in format and content across the two geographic areas because the agency with primary responsibility for programming, JCCGB, was involved with both.

There were two general types of programs, monthly programs focused primarily on Jewish holidays designed to draw a larger crowd, and more intimate, immersive programs designed to capture families with varying interests. JCCGB had sole responsibility for the monthly programs, while all three agencies offered the other types of programs on an ongoing basis in a variety of settings. Program topics appeared to be targeted appropriately for families with young children and attendance was generally strong for both types of programs.

Topics and content for the ongoing programs covered every possible parental interest. There were rotating get togethers at playgrounds during the late spring, summer, and early fall, programs for new mothers, parenting programs, movement classes, baby massage, entertainers, musicians, gatherings at local businesses that cater to parents, and events at zoos, farms, state parks, and beaches. Metrowest co-sponsored a Tot Shabbat at different local synagogue each month. There were a few events specifically for fathers, and more were planned.

Both Metrowest and the South Area had pre-program checklists to make sure that a positive tone was created, parents were properly welcomed, the event site was properly arranged, all necessary supplies were available, registration was conducted efficiently, and information about various community events and organizations was accessible.

Feedback from Parents After each program, Metrowest and the South Area JCC solicited feedback from program participants via Zoomerang, an online survey website. Response rates to these surveys tended to be low – most program participants didn't bother to complete them. There appeared to be a degree of "evaluation fatigue." Those parents that did complete the evaluation generally offered positive feedback. In Metrowest, 58 percent of participants reported that they met someone new at a program.

Observations of Programs Impressions were very positive for all six of the programs observed for the evaluation. At all programs, parents were greeted warmly by staff when they arrived, rooms were appropriate and properly organized, and program content seemed to engage parents and their children. Leaders were professional and competent.

There were, however, missed opportunities at several of the Metrowest programs that were observed. At one holiday program, for example, hub connectors were not introduced to parents when the entire group was convened. Doing so would have clarified their role and created potential opportunities for local connections with parents in the future. At another monthly program, parents were not even convened as a group, they just engaged in separate craft activities with their children, and as a result they did not learn more about the Jewish Family Network or learn about other programs and opportunities that might be of interest. Some of the programs that were observed lacked unstructured time so parents did not have a natural opportunity to meet or interact with one another. Omissions like these may not have been noticed by parents, but they tend to dilute the impact of programs.

Jewish Content of Programs Regarding the Jewish nature of programs, the hub connector interviews indicated that some parents simply wanted to come to a Jewish event with their children and meet other parents - what actually went on during the program seemed to be of lesser importance. This does not suggest that program quality and content are irrelevant, but

rather that programs only need to be "good enough" to attract parents and keep them coming back. This certainly seemed to be the case for both initiatives.

Hub connectors indicated that some parents weren't looking for anything more than social contacts and didn't necessarily want to do something Jewish when they came to a program. They cautioned that it was important not to be too pushy about Judaism. As one illustration, when feedback was solicited for a program with no Jewish content at all, parents indicated that the amount of Jewish content was "just right."

Jewish programs appeared to be especially well-received by parents who live in areas with low Jewish population density. Attendance may be modest, but those who do come are happy to be there. They were willing to drive fairly long distances, as much as half an hour, to attend.

It appears that finding the right mix of Jewish and secular content is an ongoing quest. Programs that are too Jewish may potentially turn off some parents. Programs that are entirely secular, on the other hand, are no different than programs offered by businesses and nonprofits, and don't serve the broader mission of the initiatives.

Lessons Learned Agency staff and hub connectors made a number of observations about programs and program publicity from their experiences organizing and leading programs:

- Finding the right publicity approach involves trial and error.
- Use of social media is important for generating interest.
- Parents don't always read emails, but they do tend to open and read Evite invitations.
- Each individual community has its own idiosyncrasies. Programs that work in one suburb might not work in another.
- It is important to come up with new ideas and approaches. Parents are always looking for something new to do with their children.
- Consistency is also important. Parents like knowing that a certain event will be held regularly at the same time and place.
- Free events and local events are two draws for attracting parents.
- Parents' schedules are an important consideration for program scheduling. Children's nap times in particular have a significant effect on attendance. Sunday programs are especially popular.
- It is difficult to create programs that simultaneously serve the needs of parents working full-time and part-time. Parents who work full-time want weekend programs, while parents who work part-time see weekends as family time.
- Programs need to be held in the right physical space one that keeps young children safe and nearby.

- The age of children is critical in organizing programs. Parents determine whether the program is appropriate for their child's age. In general, parents are most likely to come when their children are between 20 and 30 months old.
- When programs are held in public spaces and signs are visible to passersby, Jewish parents who didn't know about the program but happened to be in the right place at the right time will stop by.
- Programs need unstructured time so parents can chat and get to know each other.
- Social action programs seem to be appealing to parents.
- Fathers only come to Sunday events with their families. Most aren't that interested in making connections with other fathers. Mothers, however, are very interested in meeting other mothers.

Summary and Recommendations: Overall, programming was strong at both initiatives, although programs could benefit from fine-tuning. If more feedback surveys were returned, and if there were parent advisory groups in each area, information for program refinement that is currently lacking could be acquired. Perhaps there could be a random drawing associated with each feedback survey that would reward parents for providing feedback with a free program or other incentive.

Performance Against Objectives

Tables 4 and 5 summarize the data presented above and contrast the goals of the initiatives as listed in the initial proposals with the actual totals as of September 2010. For Metrowest, all goals were exceeded. For the South Area, all goals were exceeded except for the Welcome Baby totals and the total number of families reached.

Table 4: Initial Goals and Actual Totals for Metrowest							
Programs	Initial Goals	Actual Totals (as of September 2010)					
Welcome Baby Visits	50	68					
New Families Identified		287					
Families Participating in Programs	300	336					
Families in the JFN Database	500	750					
Social Networking Site (Facebook)		242 fans					

Table 5: Initial Goals and Actual Totals for the South Area							
Programs	Initial Goals	Actual Totals (as of September 2010)					
Welcome Baby Visits	70	40					
Families Attending Playgroups	60 families/10 groups	124 families/12 groups					
Families Attending Enrichment Classes	60 families/6 programs	70 families/8 programs					
Families Attending Holiday Programs	265 families/4 programs	206 families/8 programs					
Other Programs		288 families/20 programs					
Total Families Reached	500	413					
Total Attendance	1,500	2,064					

Institutional Considerations

This section considers various aspects of synagogue and day school involvement with the initiatives, and discusses the roles played by each participating agency.

Collaboration With Synagogues As noted earlier in this report, local synagogues did not receive funding from CJP, nor were they formally included in the initial proposals for funding submitted to CJP by JCCGB, JFS, and JF&CS. Yet, over time, a number became involved with the initiatives in varying ways. To understand these collaborations, interviews were conducted with a range of synagogue clergy, staff, and lay leaders.

When the proposals for the initiatives were first presented to CJP by the participating agencies and funding support was sought, the primary focus was to attract unengaged families who were not currently involved with the Jewish community. The assumption was that a sizable percentage of these parents, while not necessarily averse to exposing their children to Judaism, would be largely uninterested in becoming part of a synagogue community. These parents would be unlikely to attend a Jewish program for the first time if it were to be held in a Jewish institution.

While this assumption was reasonable, it did not take into consideration other reasons that would suggest including synagogues and synagogue leaders in the initiatives. Families who already belong to synagogues or who send their children to day schools have Jewish friends, and many of these friends are not involved with the Jewish community. Since parents often learn about programs from their peers, if parents who are engaged with the Jewish community and motivated to spread the word – know about the initiatives and tell their friends who are not engaged, then many more families could potentially be reached by the initiatives.

Furthermore, when parents are not involved with synagogues, they are much less likely to have contact with Jewish role models who have the potential to inspire them. If rabbis, cantors, or Jewish educators participate in programs held at neutral venues outside of their local synagogue, parents will be exposed to these role models and may develop more positive perceptions of Judaism and Jewish leaders. Parents initially reluctant to get involved with a synagogue may subsequently be inspired to become part of a synagogue community if their experiences with these Jewish role models are positive.

In order for engaged parents to learn about programs so they can tell their friends, and in order for unengaged parents to meet Jewish clergy and educators, it is necessary for the agencies conducting the initiatives to work cooperatively with synagogue leaders. The more that agency staff are in regular communication with synagogue leaders, the more likely it is that these leaders will acquire favorable attitudes toward the initiatives. Hopefully, they will then become more motivated to share information about the initiatives with their members and become involved themselves. Building these relationships requires time and effort.

To better understand these relationships and the varying roles played by local synagogues in the initiatives, the evaluation included 13 interviews with synagogue leaders in 11 synagogues that were involved with the initiatives as well as those that were not. Appendix D presents the interview protocol that was used to conduct these interviews. Interviews were conducted during the summer of 2010.

The interviews revealed that relationships between the initiatives and synagogues were highly complex and individualized:

- Agencies do not have relationships with synagogues; rather, people in agencies have relationships with people in synagogues. Thus, the success of any given collaboration between a specific agency and a specific synagogue depends on the relevant interpersonal relationships.
- Institutional history plays a major role in the tone of these relationships.
- It is not always clear initially who the appropriate person is to work with at a given synagogue. Rabbis are busy with many responsibilities, and older rabbis may not feel a strong connection to families with young children. Assistant rabbis, cantors, educators, or highly motivated lay leaders may sometimes turn out to be the right contact, but that is not necessarily apparent when contact is first initiated.
- Communication within synagogues can sometimes be problematic. Information provided to one synagogue representative may not be passed along to others.
- Some smaller synagogues are struggling financially. Synagogues did not receive funding from CJP, and some of them resent being left out. These feelings would be present regardless of what the agencies conducting the initiatives are doing.

- Some synagogues tend to view themselves as the central Jewish address in their community. They expect to be informed when other agencies conduct Jewish programming in their area. Along the same lines, rabbis tend to view Jewish content as their domain, so when Jewish programs are offered in their community and they are not consulted or involved, they don't always have a neutral reaction.
- Some synagogues have progressive and dynamic clergy, staff, and volunteers, and these synagogues are inherently attractive to families with young children. Others have an older membership that makes them less attractive to these families.
- Some synagogues don't have a history of collaboration with each other or with Jewish agencies.
- Most synagogues have undeveloped publicity and marketing efforts. Many synagogues either have no brochures, or brochures that are outdated and unappealing to families with young children who are uninterested in traditional synagogue activities. This makes it difficult for the agencies to promote synagogues at their programs and events.
- Most synagogues are not skilled at publicizing their activities to young families. When synagogues conduct publicity, they tend to use traditional methods such as mailings, flyers, and newspaper announcements that are less effective in an era when many parents have smart phones and obtain virtually all of their information via the Internet and social media. Synagogues staff or lay leaders are often from a generation that is not familiar with the use of social media and they don't always recognize its importance in reaching parents.
- While it is clear that there are some parents who aren't comfortable coming to a synagogue or are wary of membership solicitations, certain synagogue leaders are reluctant to accept this reality and view the initiatives as competition for the pool of local parents. Unless these leaders are informed in a fashion that enables them to appreciate the role of the initiatives, relationships with the initiatives are likely to remain distant. They need to understand that if the initiatives did not exist, many parents would simply not be involved with anything Jewish.

The interviews indicated that synagogues had a range of reactions to the initiatives. There were a number of synagogue leaders who held positive perceptions of the initiatives. These leaders welcomed the initiatives, viewed them favorably, and chose to work cooperatively with the staff of the initiatives. Appendix E and Appendix F present listings of all collaborations between synagogues and the two initiatives.

There were, however, other synagogue leaders who were either unaware of the initiatives or were indifferent. A few viewed them negatively, considering them to be competition for parents' allegiances. When negative reactions were present, they did not appear to be a result of anything specific done by agency staff. Rather, they arose from prior institutional history.

Agency staff worked at developing relationships with synagogue leaders, and some synagogue reactions did appear to change over time as a result of these efforts. The longer the initiatives were in place, the more favorable the reactions. It was apparent that the desired relationships between synagogue leadership and the staff of the initiatives took time to build. Some synagogue leaders who had initially started off with unfavorable perceptions began to appreciate the initiatives after gaining a better understanding over the passage of time.

Overall, synagogue involvement in Metrowest appeared to be further along than in the South Area, although a definite "warming" trend among synagogues was observed in the South Area over the course of time. In Metrowest, there were collaborations with 12 synagogues and the MetroWest Jewish Day School, while in the South Area there were collaborations with 7 synagogues and the South Area Solomon Schechter Day School. The differences between the two areas can be attributed to several factors:

- The Metrowest initiative had a seven-month head start over the South Area initiative.
- Jewish Family Service of Metrowest had a number of relationships with synagogue leaders prior to the start of the initiative since their mission has always involved working with synagogues, while relationships between JCC staff and synagogue leaders in the South Area were not as strongly established.
- Jewish Family Services of Metrowest does not run any preschools and is not in competition with local synagogues. In the South Area, there are synagogue-based preschools that feel they compete directly with JCC-sponsored preschools for the enrollment of children.
- It appears that there are still some residual effects in the South Area from the closing of the Striar JCC.

In Metrowest, agency staff created a framework for four types of collaborative relationships with other institutions:

- The "good neighbor" model at Jewish Family Network events, JFN distributes information about events taking place at other institutions.
- The "parallel play" model individuals from other institutions are free to come to JFN events informally and to encourage their participants to attend.
- The "partnership" model if the goals of the other institution and the goals of JFN match, and if the program is open to all members of JFN's target group, then JFN determines if it wants to co-brand. The other institution assumes most of the responsibility for organizing the event.
- The "collaborative" model the event is jointly planned and funded by JFN and the other institution if it meets JFN's goals.

In Metrowest, one synagogue appointed a lay leader to serve as a liaison with the Jewish Family Network. The Jewish Family Network also convened a meeting of the leaders of all of the Jewish preschools in the area. In addition, the Jewish Family Network's monthly newsletter to Metrowest parents provides links to all of the area synagogues and Jewish preschools.

Summary and Observations There is a symbiotic relationship between the initiatives and local synagogues. The initiatives need synagogues to help them identify new families through synagogue members, and synagogues need the initiatives to inspire families who are currently uninterested in synagogues so that they will consider future synagogue involvement.

Continued collaboration with synagogues that builds upon what has been accomplished thus far would increase the number of families reached. The Welcome Baby program in particular would benefit from greater synagogue involvement, since very few referrals are coming from synagogues.

To survive and thrive, synagogues need an influx of families with young children, while the initiatives have continually been striving to identify these families. Parents who initially were not interested in a synagogue may, over time, develop an interest, especially after participating in programs led by synagogue clergy.

It remains to be seen just how many of these families will end up joining synagogues in the future.

Agency Contributions Although each of the agencies involved in the initiatives had prior experience offering programs for families with young children, the collaborative arrangements between JCCGB and the two social service agencies, JFS and JF&CS, were a first. This section addresses the strengths and limitations of each agency, offers suggestions, and addresses the collaboration.

Jewish Family Service of Metrowest Jewish Family Service of Metrowest has programming experience and expertise, understands the parent population it serves, and has historic connections to the community. It has built strong, positive relationships with local synagogues. Its only limitation is the flip side of its strengths – it is the ideal agency to engage parents in Metrowest, but not anywhere else.

Its experience and expertise is, however, exportable, and institutions in other areas would be likely to benefit from the agency's accumulated wisdom.

Jewish Family and Children's Service As noted previously, the Center for Early Relationship Support at JF&CS has an international reputation for its expertise regarding new mothers, and it has been bringing that expertise to the South Area for a number of years. JF&CS has done an excellent job of connecting with mothers in the South Area after they have been found.

As is the case with JFS, other institutions would benefit from the in-house expertise at JF&CS.

Jewish Community Centers of Greater Boston JCCGB has considerable programming experience and expertise, and its marketing and publicity department is first-rate. It has been successful at bringing parents in and has offered exceptionally well-designed programs.

Because it runs its own Jewish preschools, some synagogue-based preschools view it as competition. This creates difficulties in fostering collaboration with these synagogues.

The larger business strategy of JCCGB is to increase revenues via preschool and camping tuition. Children of parents participating in the initiatives are prime candidates in the future for preschools and summer camps. JCCGB deserves a great deal of credit for putting parents' needs first and not aggressively promoting this strategy through the initiatives. Nonetheless, there is still a gap between what JCCGB is striving to accomplish through its involvement with the initiatives, and the broader vision of CJP, which seeks a greater role for synagogues.

Combined Jewish Philanthropies The CJP Family Connections Newsletter and the recently established website JewishBoston.com are important mechanisms for informing parents about available programs. Both of the initiatives have arisen out of CJP's strategic plan, and CJP has the sole big picture perspective for all of Boston. As the funder, CJP has the ability to influence and shape the initiatives. CJP also has relationships with every synagogue and Jewish institution in Greater Boston, and its mission explicitly involves supporting and strengthening these institutions.

The role of CJP in shaping the initiatives and working with the implementing agencies is still evolving. Specific recommendations regarding CJP's role will be presented in Section 3.

Collaboration Among Agencies JFS of Metrowest and JCCGB seem to be working together effectively, although meetings to discuss common concerns are somewhat infrequent. Similarly, JF&CS and JCCGB are also working together effectively, although their responsibilities appear to be fairly independent of each other.

SECTION 3: RECOMMENDATIONS

Both family service agencies and JCCGB have done an excellent job of reaching families and offering programs, and have clearly been effective at achieving their initial goals. Still, several broad issues across the initiatives merit attention and fine tuning, as would be expected with any pilot program. This section raises these issues and offers suggestions to both the participating agencies and to Combined Jewish Philanthropies that could potentially improve the existing initiatives and shape expansion to new communities.

Volunteer Involvement

In the initial year of the initiatives, staff time was intensely focused on a myriad of start-up activities – hiring and supervising hub connectors, developing the Welcome Baby program, creating the database, establishing the Facebook fan page and other social media approaches, trying out different programs, and establishing relationships with various individuals and their institutions in each community.

As the two initiatives evolve over time, less time will need to be devoted to setting up the initial frameworks, and more time will need to be devoted to finding parents, since it is probable that it will become increasingly more difficult to continue finding new families who have not previously been reached.

It is advisable for program staff to begin to focus on identifying and recruiting leaders among parents. These volunteers could provide local intelligence about the specifics of their community and help identify Jewish parents who haven't previously been identified. The potential is considerable. Without exception, all of the successful programs of this type in other parts of the United States use volunteers extensively.

Taking on a volunteer leadership role could be very attractive to certain individuals with young children who are devoted to being good parents and who recognize the value of Jewish tradition. Synagogue members might be an especially rich source of volunteers, and their involvement could serve a dual purpose through publicizing the Welcome Baby program to synagogue membership.

Thus far, with the exception of the South Area Welcome Baby volunteers, the initiatives have been entirely staff driven and there have been few efforts to recruit volunteer assistance. Clearly, increasing volunteer involvement will require more staff time to recruit, train, and supervise volunteers. However, unless this step is taken, it is hard to imagine continued growth in the identification of new families over the long-term.

Branding

When a parent attends a program for the first time, they are unlikely to pay much attention to who is sponsoring the program or what it is called – they are simply interested in the topic and the opportunity to meet other parents. Over time, however, programs that are consistently high-quality develop a reputation that continually brings parents in. It is at this point that branding becomes important, because once parents see that a particular organization is sponsoring an event, and they have a positive association toward that organization, they will be more likely to attend.

While the brand "Welcome Baby!" is consistent across communities, programming in Metrowest and the South Area has different names at present. In some ways, using the JCC name in the South Area was an advantage because JCCGB already had a reputation there. It was also an advantage to dissociate the name of Jewish Family Service of Metrowest from the name of the initiative in Metrowest, because there will always be individuals who associate a family service agency with personal problems and therapy, rather than engagement programs.

As the initiatives expand, having a single brand across all of Boston could be considered. Parents who live in one community invariably have friends elsewhere in Boston. A given parent may live, for example, in Holliston, but they may have friends and co-workers in Cambridge and Sharon. Without common branding, it is confusing for parents to refer their friends who live in other areas.

There is another reason for common branding, and that is to foster more a sense of common purpose. If there is a different brand name in different areas, then agency staff are more likely to think and focus locally, rather than having an awareness that they are part of a larger strategic plan.

For these reasons, the recommendation is that consistent branding be considered across all present and future initiatives, and that this branding be generic and not be associated with any one institution so that all institutions feel that they are equally represented.

Learning More About Participating Parents and Families

One of the major shortcomings of this evaluation is the absence of systematic data from parents. While there is some feedback from parents about specific programs, and rudimentary demographic data, little is known about parents' preferences for program topics, schedules, venues, or leaders, or how the initiatives might be affecting their Jewish identity. In what ways have parents been influenced by their participation? It is strongly recommended that a comprehensive survey of parents be conducted using the databases developed by the agencies. This can only be done properly if the agencies provide their databases to researchers so that acceptable response rates are achieved.

Staff Development and Sharing of Best Practices

In any organizational setting, the key to program improvement is staff development. To maximize success, the two initiatives would benefit from increasing their expertise in such areas as parenting, child development, Jewish early childhood curricula, community organizing, marketing and publicity, use of social media, survey administration, and database management. Workshops or webinars led by experts that cover these topics would help staff to fine-tune the initiatives and reach more parents. CJP could take the lead in organizing these staff development gatherings.

In addition, the participating agencies have acquired considerable experience and expertise in connecting to parents with young children over the course of time. CJP could also take a leadership role in convening JFS, JF&CS, and JCCGB regularly to share best practices and develop new approaches.

Next Steps for Parents as Children Grow Older

The initiatives have connected parents to each other and have provided opportunities for them to participate in programs with Jewish sponsorship. However, children will inevitably age out of the programming provided by the initiatives. What comes next?

The ideal scenario would be for parents to engage more formally with the Jewish community as their children grow older. Will some of these parents join synagogues and/or the JCC? Will they send their children to Jewish preschools, Jewish day schools, or Jewish summer camps? At present, there are no clear transitional mechanisms in place to help parents make these choices.

CJP could take a leadership role in working with the agencies to help formulate a clear strategy and guidelines that will increase the likelihood that parents learn about all possible options and end up making Jewish choices for their children. Capturing contact information from parents who participate in the initiatives is a critical first step.

Synagogue Involvement

Although some synagogues did become involved with the initiatives, synagogues were not formally a part of the initiatives, nor did they receive any funding from CJP to engage young families. CJP is advised to provide funding for synagogues, as well as support from local experts, so that they can develop their own programs and learn how to become more attractive to families with young children.

Expansion of Welcome Baby

The Welcome Baby program is clearly a success and has been well-received by parents. Word of mouth, particularly in Metrowest, is strong. As the Welcome Baby program expands to other areas of Boston, it is advisable for CJP to hire a coordinator to focus on building referral networks and marketing the program across all of Boston in conjunction with JewishBoston.com and other social media outlets.

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Mark I. Rosen January 2011

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Evaluation Across the Stages of Program Evolution

Program Stage	Key Stakeholder Questions	Role of Evaluator
Program Planning Stage	 What is the optimal program design to achieve the desired results? Which organizations are best equipped to implement the program? Who will staff the program and how will staff be selected? Which program partners should be chosen? What contextual factors might influence program success? What is the best way to reach and engage the target population? 	 Provides information about successes and failures of other programs (literature review) to identify factors that could potentially influence the proposed program Gathers relevant data on community and target population (market research) to assist in program design Obtains baseline pre-intervention data that will be used for subsequent comparisons in order to assess the effects of the program
Initial Implementation Stage	 Is the program being implemented according to the initial plan? Is the target population being reached? What are the initial reactions of the target population to the program? What is working successfully? What obstacles to implementation are arising? Are there any immediate changes that should be made to the program? Are there any differences across sites? Do community institutions support the program? 	 Troubleshoots and identifies specific problem sources: structure of implementing organization communication/coordination between partners and implementing organization staff contextual factors participation of target population Provides timely feedback before problems have serious repercussions Provides specific recommendations to help stabilize the program
Mature Implementation Stage	 What further improvements can be made the program? Are there any internal or external events that are affecting the program, the staff, or the target population? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the program? 	 Helps to identify and resolve problems that were not apparent at an earlier stage Provides global recommendations for program improvement Provides data on the effectiveness of implementation and efficiency of service delivery
Outcome Stage	 Is the program achieving the desired results? Is there evidence to justify continuation/cancellation of the program? 	 Determines if program is ready for outcome evaluation If not, evaluator provides advice to build program capacity Monitors progress of target population Gathers data to determine the effects of the program

Based on Chen (2005); Love (2004)

Appendix B: Metrowest Welcome Baby Visit Training Outline

- 1) General Information
 - a) History of Jewish Family Network/Welcome Baby
 - b) Overall goals of Welcome Baby
 - c) Setting up visit
 - i) Initial call
 - ii) Referral source
 - iii) Emergency contact
 - iv) Confirmation
 - d) Basket contents
- 2) Visit (30 minutes)
 - a) Goals
 - i) Welcome, have a connection, community cares
 - ii) Community connections Jewish Family Network
 - b) Introductions
 - c) Go through basket
 - i) Upcoming programs Moms Connect
 - ii) PJ Library program
 - iii) Jewish Reporter
 - d) Building rapport and getting information
 - i) What are they looking for?
 - ii) What are their needs?
 - e) Photo permission to release
 - f) Things to look for...
 - g) Uncomfortable visits
 - h) Questions
 - i) Role play a visit
- 3) Follow Up
 - a) Follow up with anything promised
 - b) Report visit
 - c) Follow up phone call or email in 2 weeks

Appendix C: Program Observation Questions

Venue:

- Clean and attractive?
- Easy to find?
- Adequate parking?
- Neutral or Jewish?
- Appropriate, safe space for toddlers to roam?
- Appropriate signage?

Registration Table:

- How are parents being greeted when they arrive?
- Is there literature available for parents to take? Whose?
- Are there flyers for upcoming events?
- Are there sign-up sheets for first-time participants?

Introduction/Welcome:

- Formal or informal?
- Are sponsoring agencies mentioned?
- Were hub connectors introduced?
- What tone is set?

Program:

- Does the leader make eye contact, interact with children, address both parents and children?
- Is the audience paying attention both parents and children?
- Are they having fun?
- Is the material suitable for the audience?
- Is there unstructured schmooze time?
- Are there any activities specifically designed to facilitate interactions among parents?
- Did hub connectors circulate and introduce themselves?

Participants:

- Mostly moms with children, or mostly families?
- Ages of children present?
- Any representatives from other local organizations?

Program Ending:

- Are parents thanked for coming?
- Are suggestions made regarding next steps?

Appendix D: Interview Protocol for Synagogues

Questions about the synagogue:

- 1. I'd like to ask a few questions to begin about your synagogue.
 - How large is the synagogue how many members?
 - What is the age make-up of the synagogue how many young families?
 - How effective has the synagogue been at attracting young families?
 - How much programming do you offer, if any, for young families?
- 2. I'd also like to understand how the congregational roles relate to young families.
 - What is your role in programming for young families?
 - Who else, if anyone, is closely connected to programming for young families in the synagogue as a professional or volunteer?

Questions about early childhood programming in general:

- 3. From what you know, how well do you think the needs of young families are being met in your area in general – families with children from birth to pre-school-age?
 - Are there specific needs you feel are not being met? If so, what?
 - Are there specific strengths in the programming that you see or provide?
 - What, in your opinion, has worked well, in serving young families?
 - What, in your opinion, are the challenges of serving young families in your area?
- 4. We're interested in your thoughts on how congregations view and perhaps serve the needs of young families in your area.
 - What resources do congregations provide to these families, including yours?
 - To what extent do you feel that the resources provided by local congregations to young families in are sufficient?
 - What needs, if any, do you see which you believe further programming could address?
- 5. CJP is specifically interested in programming that brings families into the Jewish community, who may not be closely affiliated right now.
 - What challenges do you see in accomplishing this goal?
 - What opportunities do you see, in order to reach this goal?

Questions about the initiatives:

- 6. We are wondering about the relationship between synagogues and CJP-funded initiatives run by [name of local agencies] in providing programming for young families.
 - To what extent are you aware of efforts by [name of agencies] in this area?
 - How, if at all, have you worked with these agencies on programming?
 - How would you like to work with these agencies in the future?
 - How would you assess the efforts of the agencies, if you are aware of them at all?

- 7. What is your view of the relationship between synagogues and programs sponsored by these agencies for young families?
 - What opportunities do you see here for congregations, if any?
 - What challenges do you see here for congregations, if any?
 - What would need to happen for the programming to work for your congregation and its goals?
- 8. Please describe the experience have you had so far with individuals involved with programming for families with young children through the Jewish community.
 - What contact have you had, if any? What follow-up did you expect or hope for, if any?

Appendix E: Metrowest Contacts and Collaborations Between the Jewish Family Network and Jewish Community Institutions (2009 to 2011)

Area	Community	Institution	Description
North	Acton	Congregation Beth Elohim	 Chanukah Havdalah program with Cantor Sara Spier Service for families with young children
	Concord	Kerem Shalom	 Meeting with Nancy Kaplan, Family Life Educator Tot Shabbat publicized to JFN database
	Sudbury	Congregation B'nai Torah	 Meeting with Debbie Schwartz, Jewish Family Life Educator Monthly music class: Shalom Sunday Tot Shabbat publicized to JFN database
		Congregation Beth El of the Sudbury River Valley	 Meetings with Rabbi Judy Spicehandler and Roanne Miller, Director of Beth El Preschool Shabbat Gan
	Wayland	Congregation Or Atid	 Meeting with Joyce Seigel, Family Life Educator Eight-week class for parents and children: Mommy and Me Music Together Tot Shabbat publicized to JFN database
		Temple Shir Tikvah	 Meeting with Rabbi Greg Litcofsky Class for parents: Raising a Jewish Child – What Does It Mean? Presentation to Rabbi Litcofsky's young families group Rabbi Litcofsky profiled in Jewish Family Network newsletter Shabbat Mishpacha
Central	Ashland	Shaarei Shalom	Meeting with Rabbi Sonia SaltzmanTot Shabbat publicized to JFN database
	Framingham	Temple Beth Am	 Meeting with Amy Salinger, Director of Temple Beth Am Nursery School Concert: Martin Luther King Day Community-wide Mitzvah Day (in 2010 and scheduled for 2011) Cantor Jodie Schechtman appointed a congregant, Joy Levin, as the liaison between the synagogue and the Jewish Family Network Tot Shabbat publicized to JFN database
		Temple Beth Sholom	 Monthly support group: Opening Doors – Raising a Jewish Child with Special Needs Tot Shabbat publicized to JFN database

Area	Community	Institution	Description
Framingham Metrowest Jewish Day School Central Natick Temple Israel of Natick Temple Israel of Natick Temple Israel of Natick Car nev Car nev Car nev	Framingham		Development; Risa Werblin, Director of Admissions; and Dara Seidman, Tikkum Olam liaison Story Time Brunch Community-wide Mitzvah Day (in 2010 and scheduled for 2011)
	 Liben Class for parents and children: Sing Shalom (two of eight sessions) Jewish Family Network events published in synagogue e-newsletter Cantor Richmond profiled in Jewish Family Network newsletter Cantor Richmond scheduled to lead Passover program in 2011 		
South	Franklin	Temple Etz Chaim	 Meeting with Rabbi David Widzer Tot Shabbat publicized to JFN database Class for parents and children: Sing Shalom (one of eight sessions)
	Holliston	Temple Beth Torah	 Tot Shabbat publicized to JFN database Jewish Family Network events published in synagogue e-newsletter Chanu-Plex program

Appendix F: South Area Contacts and Collaborations Between JCCGB and Jewish Community Institutions (2010 to 2011)

Area	Community	Institution	Description
Easton Area	Brockton	Temple Beth Emunah	 Meeting with Rabbi Arye Berk PJ Storytime Brunch (Temple Shalom of Milton brought Hebrew School) South Area parents invited to JCC Women's Seder held at Temple Beth Emunah
	Easton	Temple Chayai Shalom	 Meeting with Rabbi Jodi Seewald-Smith Trumpeting in the New Year held at Easton public school, featured Rabbi Jodi Seewald-Smith Rabbi Jodi Seewald Smith featured panelist at December Dilemma Blessings of a Skinned Knee workshop originally held at local restaurant extended at request of parents; subsequent sessions held at Temple Chayai Shalom Noah's Ark Storytime Havdalah held at Temple Chayai Shalom, featured cantorial soloist David Rothberg New Mom's group (ongoing)
		Temple Israel South Shore	 Meeting with Rabbi Randy Kafka Taste and See, Shabbat and Me held at Easton public library featured reading by Rabbi Randy Kafka
Sharon Area	Canton	Temple Beth David	 Meeting with Rabbi Allison Berry Taste and See Shabbat and Me at Canton Public Library featuring Rabbi Berry Taste and See, Shabbat and Me with a Chanukah Twist at Sharon Community Center, featuring Rabbi Berry
	Milton	Temple Shalom	 Meeting with Rabbi Alfred Benjamin Archaeological Dig Hebrew School attended PJ Storytime Brunch (at Temple Beth Emunah in Brockton)
	Norwood	South Area Solomon Schechter Day School	 Purim Palooza Puppet Purim Shpiel (scheduled) Boston Jewish Book Fair parent program featuring author Lenore Skenazy

Area	Community	Institution	Description
Sharon Area	Randolph	Temple Beth Am	Meeting with Rabbi Loel Weiss
	Sharon	Temple Sinai	 Meeting with Rabbi Joseph Meszler Welcome Baby Brunch held at Temple Sinai; Rabbi Joseph Meszler introduced himself PJ Library Bagels and Books Drop In; Rabbi Meszler and Cantor Klepper are "guest readers" Vanessa Trien concert for children Program for parents on bullying
		Temple Israel	 Meeting with Rabbi Barry Starr Meeting with Religious School Family Educator Alisa Levine
Braintree Area	Hingham	Congregation Shaaray Shalom	 Meeting with Rabbi Shira Joseph and Cantor Steven Weiss PJ Bagels and Books Drop-In with Rabbi Joseph and Cantor Weiss as "guest readers" Teddy Bear Brigade social action program (involves stuffing teddy bears for local ambulances to give to ill children who are being transported to hospitals) Navigating the Holiday Season featured author Anita Diamant Chanukah Storytime with Cantor Steven Weiss