

FINDING 1: IDENTITY CENTRALITY 12

The data analyses pointed to three key findings about Jewish teens' well-being.*

FINDING 1:

Teens who said that being Jewish is important to them reported higher levels of overall well-being.

Adolescence is a crucial period in overall health and development. Although measuring positive emotional, spiritual, and social development is complicated, measures of well-being can serve as key indicators of healthy development. Well-being encompasses multiple dimensions of human flourishing, including emotional equilibrium, social connectedness, and a sense of purpose. Using the EPOCH Measure of Adolescent Well-Being in conjunction with seven newly developed measures of Jewish experiences, we examined which aspects of teens' Jewish experiences correlated with both overall well-being and each of the five dimensions in the EPOCH scale.

Jewish identity centrality—the personal importance teens place on being Jewish—showed the strongest statistical relationship with well-being across all five measures. Teens who reported higher levels of Jewish identity centrality also reported higher scores across all five dimensions of the EPOCH measure.

Jewish family identity centrality—teens' perceptions of how important being Jewish is to their families—also predicted greater well-being; however, the effects were less pronounced than those of teens' own Jewish identity centrality. More frequent participation in Jewish teen programming showed a minimal, yet positive, relationship with teens' well-being in terms of engagement, but not perseverance, optimism, connectedness, or happiness. Participation in Jewish programs had no effect on four of the EPOCH measures but it did exert a medium effect on teens' sense of optimism.

UNDERSTANDING IDENTITY CENTRALITY

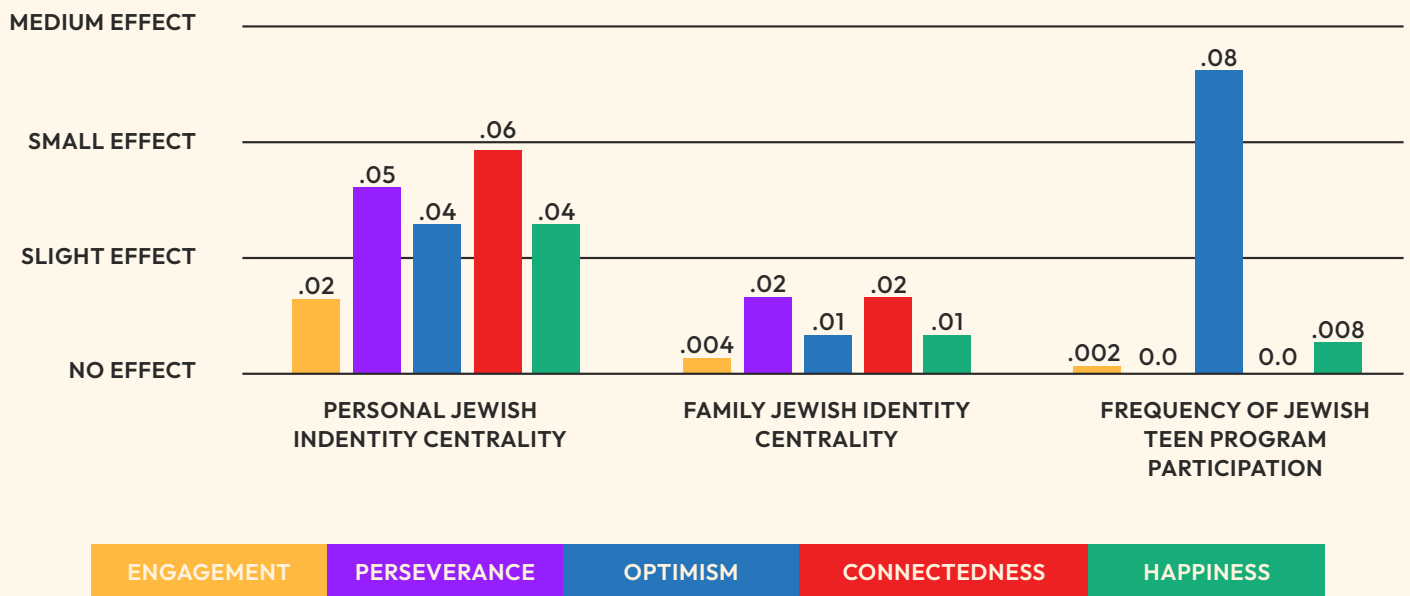
Identity centrality theory posits that individuals assign varying degrees of importance to their multiple social identities. While people possess numerous social identities—including cultural background, family status, and gender—these identities do not uniformly shape how people view themselves. Research indicates that more centralized identities tend to exert greater influence on their cognitive processes, emotional reactions, and behavioral choices. Importantly, identity centrality is measured through subjective self-reporting, distinguishing it from observable behavioral manifestations of identity that can be objectively assessed.

* See Appendix C for in-depth statistical analyses.

FINDING 1: IDENTITY CENTRALITY 13

Three of the seven aspects of teens' Jewish experiences were positively correlated with well-being.

Both personal and family Jewish identity centrality significantly predicted all dimensions of well-being assessed using the EPOCH scale. However, teens' personal identity centrality had larger effects on well-being compared to their family's identity centrality. Frequency of participation in Jewish teen programming significantly predicted optimism but not the other dimensions of well-being.



EFFECT SIZE IS MEASURED USING ETA-SQUARED AND INDICATES HOW MEANINGFUL THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TWO VARIABLES IS. THE LARGER THE EFFECT SIZE, THE MORE MEANINGFUL THE RELATIONSHIP.