

Renewing and Expanding Moving Traditions

Teens need us. Now more than ever, teens are confronted with greater academic and social pressure, at an earlier age and a faster pace than ever before. In these turbulent times, teens are asking big questions about their identities and society.

At Moving Traditions, we believe Jewish values and community can offer powerful guidance.

However, this generation is less likely to continue in Jewish life after b’nai mitzvah, and they spend more time on screens than with friends.

Moving Traditions recognizes that to keep teens healthy and connected with Jewish life, we need to link enduring Jewish values to the everyday challenges they face. That’s why we take a whole teen approach, training adult mentors and providing teens — 20,000 to date — with guidance and a supportive community of peers.

At Relevant Times & In Relevant Ways

Inspired by our positive impact and driven by investments from the Jim Joseph Foundation, Project Accelerate, and others, we are now building on our success.

Moving Traditions is now starting earlier, opening new pathways at the critical transition from pre-teen to teen, taking on leading edge sexuality education, and expanding to more teens — at more relevant times and in more relevant ways.

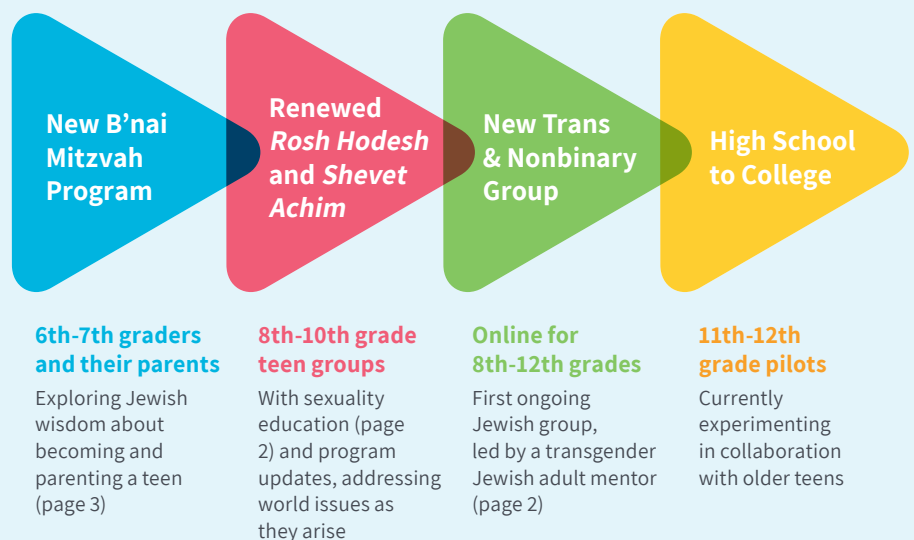


“My parents pushed me to join—and now I really value *Rosh Hodesh*. Since I started I’ve been a lot happier. Seeing these girls once a month, it’s something I look forward to.”

— Phoebe, 8th Grade Moving Traditions Participant

Opening New Pathways to Help Jewish Teens Thrive

By addressing the joys and challenges of middle and high school in safe Jewish spaces, more teens are growing up confident, compassionate, and connected to Jewish life.



Trans and Nonbinary Teens

First Jewish Online, Ongoing Group

Where do Jewish transgender, nonbinary, gender fluid and questioning teens go to talk regularly among themselves about the issues they most care about, with the guidance of an adult mentor?

Until now the answer was: Nowhere. Moving Traditions is thrilled to announce we're filling this gap.

For teens that identify as girls or guys, we have a track record of creating fun, safe spaces that draw on Jewish and gender teachings to honestly explore issues they deal with every day — such as friendship, academic pressure, and sexuality.

Now Moving Traditions is offering this experience to Jewish teens exploring gender and identity beyond the binary, using online conferencing technology for 90-minute gatherings each month.

Judaism in Gender/Gender in Judaism

Guided by Rafi Daugherty, a Jewish transgender adult mentor, participating teens are benefiting while co-creating an experience that Moving Traditions will replicate for others.

"It's an excited and energetic group. They are enthusiastic about exploring Judaism in a gender context and exploring gender in a Jewish context with other teens who share these aspects of their identities," said Rafi.

Once a year the teens will have the opportunity to meet in person at a Keshet LGBTQ and ally teen Shabbaton, co-sponsored by Moving Traditions. Keshet partnered with Moving Traditions in the research and teen recruitment for this program.

Together, the teens in the Moving Traditions trans and nonbinary group are forging a community based on empathy, trust, friendship, and Jewish wisdom.

Healthy Sexuality and Jewish Teens

News stories of sexual harassment and rape are difficult for adults and even more so for teens. Compounding the challenge, most children now stumble upon online pornography well before puberty.

Unfortunately, few schools provide sexuality education that helps teens explore and resist sexual objectification and understand and practice securing consent.

With this backdrop, Moving Traditions is stepping up as a leader in the arena of sexuality education for Jewish teens. We have the experience, knowledge, and trust of teens, clergy, camp directors, and Jewish teen educators, and we are inspired to tackle this challenge.

Moving Traditions is now training our adult mentors and other Jewish educators to use our new program materials to help teens lay the foundation for healthy sexuality — with self-knowledge, and relationships based on the secular and Jewish values of intimacy, respect, pleasure, good communication, and reciprocity.

We envision that, as a result, Jewish teens will live more satisfying lives and they will be inspired to pursue affirmative consent and intimate justice, creating more equitable relationships and communities.

"We've gone from somewhat distant friends to being brothers. Ultimately, by learning about the world in the group, you learn about yourself and how you can be a better person."

— Levi, 10th Grade
Moving Traditions
Participant



B'nai Mitzvah

Becoming and Parenting a Teen

Finding the perfect outfit. Being a host and a guest. Meeting parental expectations. The b'nai mitzvah is exciting and it is terrifying.

How can b'nai mitzvah preparation address the psycho-social issues that families care about, while they are most active in Jewish life?

This question inspired Moving Traditions to create a new b'nai mitzvah program for 6th and 7th graders and their families, exploring what it means to become a teen and to parent a teen in America.

Transformative Experiences at a Younger Age

Moving Traditions and our program partners have found that teens in our *Rosh Hodesh* and *Shevet Achim* groups are profoundly transformed by drawing on Jewish wisdom and social and emotional learning to explore key issues in their daily lives.

While congregations excel at preparing b'nai mitzvah students to read the Torah and lead the service, few focus on the interpersonal issues connected to the coming of age ritual, which are so central to families.

For the first time, this program, designed by rabbis and social workers, extends Moving Traditions' successful approach to b'nai mitzvah education.

We are now pilot-testing the program — following Moving Traditions' rigorous, research-based process — in collaboration with 19 congregations in Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York so that it will be ready for national launch in the 2018-19 program year.

Through the **Carol Lowenstein Moving Traditions B'nai Mitzvah Training Institute**, we are training clergy and Jewish educators, providing them with the educational tools they need to lead sessions for families and pre-teens that address the complicated joys and challenges of this phase of life.

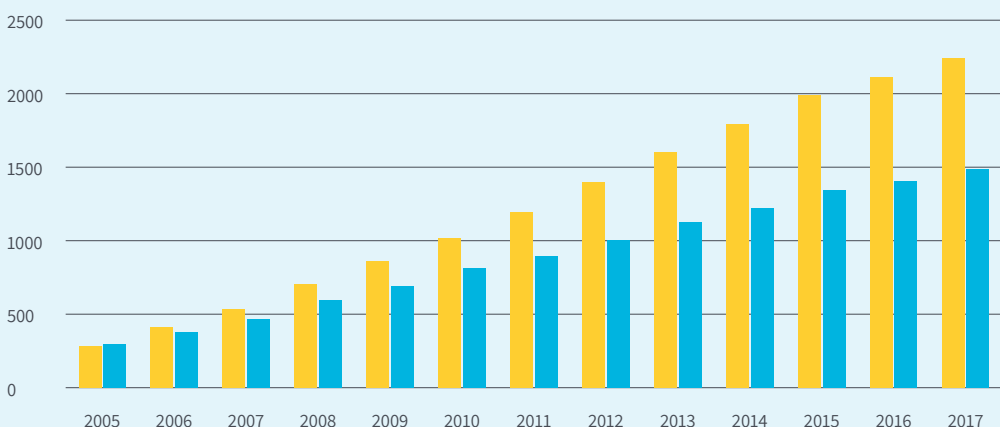


“I benefited from understanding where my daughter and I were similar and different in our perspectives, stressors, and emphases.”

— Parent of a 6th grader,
Moving Traditions
B'nai Mitzvah Program

▶ 20,000 Teens to Date

Our growing impact — Moving Traditions has trained nearly 1,500 adult mentors to lead our immersive groups, transforming the lives of more than 20,000 teens.



2,231
Total groups

1,483
Total group leaders trained

Moving Traditions emboldens teens by fostering self-discovery, challenging sexism, and inspiring a commitment to Jewish life and learning.

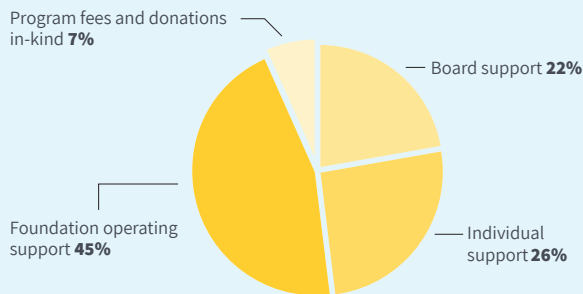
National Impact

Together with our partners across North America, Moving Traditions is helping more Jewish teens grow into adulthood with confidence, compassion, and a lifelong commitment to Jewish community.

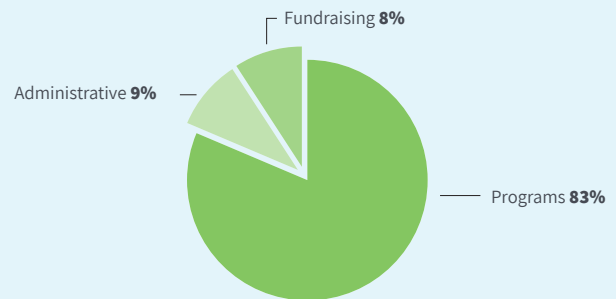
● Moving Traditions staffed cities
 ● Partners in other cities



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