

Stefanie Zelkind, Jewish Teen Funders Network Introduction to Jewish Teen Philanthropy

(Notes below were taken by Mollie Feldman, Areyvut Intern, from Stefanie Zelkind's presentation on June 17, 2010.)

- What is Jewish Teen Philanthropy? The word Jewish refers to the values and traditions of the religion, teen refers to people aged 13-18 and philanthropy is about giving money away in an intentional and strategic manner.
- There are two prevalent program models
 - A) **Jewish Teen Foundation Model:** This is collective giving by the group. Each teen raises/gives a certain amount and the pool is equal to number of teens x \$'s per teen. Frequently, an independent donor or foundation matches the amount the teens raised.
 - B) **Individual (B'nai Tzedek) Accounts Model:** There are Giving Accounts which are held by the host organization. The teens get philanthropic advice and counseling. There are also endowment accounts where there will be a family donation that can be matched by a donor and the foundation. With these, the teens make their own decisions.
- Programs often include: values clarification, mission statement, grant-making, Jewish values and traditions, requests for proposals, site visits, consensus building and grant decisions/allocations.
- People who can relate to teens should be the ones to speak with them.
- Programs like these are an opportunity for teens to learn how to make group decisions.
- In the late 1980's, the first major youth philanthropy program was started. In the late 90's and early 2000's, Jewish programs followed suit. In 2006 there was a national conference and JTFN (Jewish Teen Funders Network) was created.
- Today, JTFN is an established organization which supports more than 80 programs.
- JTFN's core goals are: a) teaching philanthropic principles with relation to giving with Jewish values, b) developing teen leadership and c) teaching group decision making.
- In 2008, 24 programs granted over \$650,000 to nonprofits.
- The process allows them to be part of adult decisions.
- The top issues for teen grants are; youth and children, education and the Jewish community.
- Jewish Teen Philanthropy groups are more than just education experiences; they are an opportunity for recreation, fun, social comfort and socialization.
- It will give teens the skills and right mindset to become a more active member of the Jewish community.
- It is important that a program feels relevant, is a new way to explore Judaism, and has the teens being taken seriously by adults.