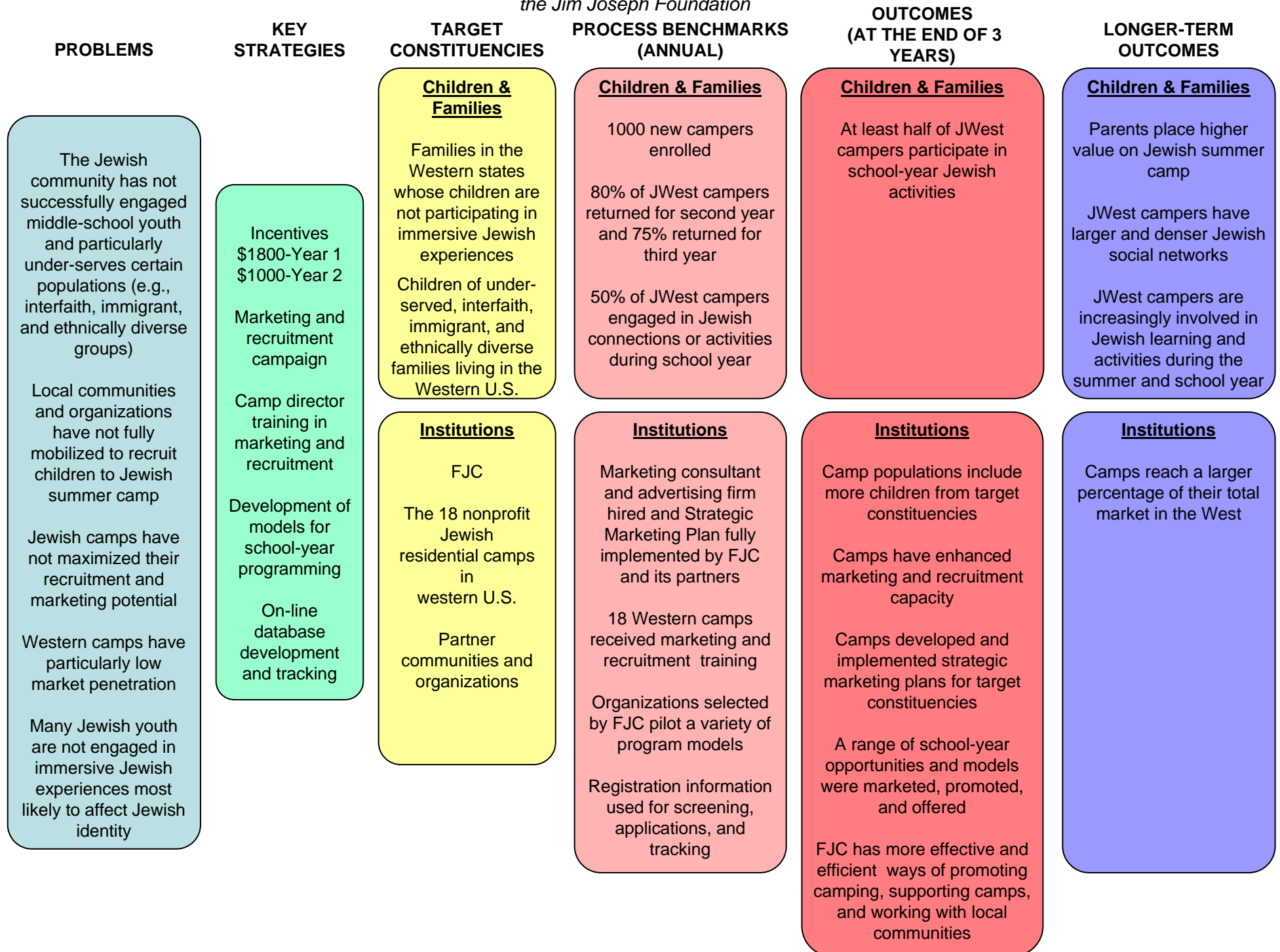


Foundation for Jewish Camping's JWest Campership Program: Theory of Change

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JWest Theory of Change: Narrative Summary

Purpose of JWest

JWest intends to attract to Jewish residential summer camps and school-year activities Jewish children who are not currently engaged in Jewish immersive experiences. The purposes are to change parents' perceptions of the value of Jewish summer camp, to attract new children to camp, to engage children in ongoing Jewish learning and connections and thereby to build Jewish identity.

Overview of JWest's Theory of Change

JWest combines an incentive program (\$1800 for the first year and \$1000 for the second year) with an intensive marketing and recruitment campaign to bring into Jewish camps, for sessions of at least three weeks, children entering grades 6, 7, and 8 who have not had previous immersive Jewish experiences (e.g., day school, yeshiva, or summer camp) and who live in the western United States. The program will attract 1000 new campers in each of its three years and retain 80% of each cohort for a second year. Further, the initiative will result in the retention of 75% of those campers who return for a second year (600 of the 1000) for a third year without monetary incentives. The project will sponsor and promote school-year Jewish programs that will reach at least 50% of the 3000 JWest campers and thereby link summer camp experiences with school-year Jewish experiences.

At the same time, the program will provide marketing and recruitment training for the 18 nonprofit Jewish residential camps in the West to help them attract new campers,

Assumptions

The following beliefs inform the design of the program and the hypotheses to be tested by the research:

1. There is a particularly large cadre of Jewish youth in the West who are not engaged in immersive Jewish experiences. This population includes, among others, the children of immigrants, ethnic minorities, and interfaith families.
2. Monetary incentives can motivate parents, who would not do so otherwise, to register their child for a Jewish summer camp.
3. Camp decisions are market-driven. Parents can find the information and resources they need to choose the best camp for their child. The Foundation for Jewish Camping will therefore not match children to camps but rather will serve as a "clearinghouse," making it easier for parents to find camps and for camps to reach out to families.

4. Camp provides a powerful immersive experience that positively affects how Jewish children see themselves as Jews. Children who attend Jewish camps build Jewish social connections which in turn impel them to engage in further Jewish activities. The result is a virtuous spiral of increasing Jewish connection, increasing Jewish engagement, and stronger Jewish identities.
5. Capturing the attention of Jewish youth through summer camp and school-year programs during their middle school years can lead to greater Jewish involvement in high school.
6. The Foundation for Jewish Camping (FJC) can organize and activate camps, local communities, organizations and synagogues to create opportunities for engagement and successfully recruit youth to summer camp and school-year programs.

Environmental Context

Factors such as the following lie beyond the scope of JWest's theory of change, but they may influence its success:

1. Although most camps currently have excess capacity, that capacity may not be available for the needs and preferences of applicants in terms of gender, age, level of Jewish observance, or the particular interests of the child.
2. Jewish camp must compete with a wide range of options for summer activities: secular and specialty camps, academic programs, overseas travel, art and music enrichment, family vacations, and so on.
3. Economic factors may affect parents' decision making. If the economy contracts, for example, parents may choose less expensive options for their children's summer activity. An economic slow-down might raise the attractiveness of the incentive. The increasing cost of airfares may deter parents from considering summer options beyond driving distance from their homes.
4. Safety and security issues may affect parents' decision making. Environmental dangers, such as the fires in Malibu, may deter parents from sending their children into certain areas. Security threats may deter them from sending their children far from home.

The Problems for which JWest is a Solution

1. The Jewish community has not successfully engaged middle-school youth and it particularly under-serves certain populations. For example, interfaith families often cannot find a comfortable home in the Jewish community. Some families from the FSU are assimilated, and many Persian Jews are deeply enmeshed in their own community and are not well integrated into the mainstream Jewish

community. Other immigrant groups such as Bukharin Jews and Israelis present similar problems.

2. Local communities and organizations in western United States have not fully mobilized to recruit children to Jewish summer camp, resulting in lower rates of camp attendance than in other regions of the country. Camps, too, have not maximized their recruitment and marketing potential. Both represent missed opportunities to engage more and different types of campers.
3. As a result of unfulfilled recruitment and marketing potential, many Jewish youth have little engagement in Jewish life and specifically lack the immersive Jewish experiences most likely to affect Jewish identity.

Key Strategies

Strategy 1. *Incentives*. JWest will pay \$1800 in tuition for campers from the western United States entering their first year in a Jewish residential camp and not participating in an immersive Jewish education experience, like a day school or yeshiva. JWest recipients must be first-time campers and they must be entering grades 6, 7, or 8 for their first year of camp. Those who re-enroll will receive \$1000 toward tuition in the following year. The incentives will be awarded to qualifying registrants but will be paid to the summer camps.

Strategy 2. *Marketing and recruitment campaign*. Several steps will be taken to market and recruit for JWest. (a) FJC will hire a marketing consultant who will prepare a Strategic Marketing Plan. (b) FJC will organize local communities and organizations to implement the plan. Along with FJC, the 18 camps in the West and local organizations (synagogues, federations, JCC's, etc.) will serve as channels to publicize and promote the incentives. (c) FJC will engage the services of an advertising firm to support the plan.

Strategy 3. *Camp director training in marketing and recruitment*. FJC's marketing consultant will train participating camp directors. He will teach them techniques for recruitment, market segmentation, and advertising and will help them develop greater customer awareness and sensitivity toward culturally-distinct groups. The consultant will also help the camps develop their own strategic marketing plans.

Strategy 4. *Post-camp engagement programs*. FJC will encourage camps and other partnering organizations to introduce campers to post-camp programming for JWest campers. FJC will also work with different partners to develop models for school-year programs. These may run the gamut from institutionally-based to self-organized activities, from educational to purely social activities, and from one-shot events to longer-term programs. Potential activities might include, among others, those embedded in a Zionist or religious movement;

nondenominational programs such as BBYO; Internet or technology-based, non-geographically limited activities; self-organized activities.

Strategy 5. *Database development and tracking.* FJC will use a system similar to that used by Taglit birthright israel to register and determine eligibility of incentive applicants. The system will enable FJC and the camps to track incentive recipients as they move from summer camp to post-camp programming to their next year of camp and beyond.

Process Benchmarks

The following process benchmarks indicate the extent to which strategies have been implemented and targets have been met in each year of the program. During the year:

1. FJC hired a marketing consultant and an advertising firm. The consultant created a Strategic Marketing Plan that was fully implemented by FJC and its partners. FJC organized local communities and organizations to publicize and promote JWest.
2. The consultant trained participating camp directors in recruitment and marketing and helped them develop their own strategic marketing plans.
3. The on-line registration system and database worked smoothly for incentive screening and application and for tracking families and campers.
4. JWest brought in 1,000 new campers from the western United States entering grades 6, 7, or 8, who participated in a camp session of at least three weeks duration at one of the 18 nonprofit Jewish residential camps in the western United States. None of the campers were currently engaged in immersive Jewish experiences (e.g., day school, yeshiva, or Jewish residential summer camp).
5. JWest achieved an 80% retention rate for campers returning for a second year and 75% for those returning for a third year. (See Table 1.)

Table 1: JWest Campership Enrollment by Year

	2008	2009	2010	2011
Incentive: new	1000	1000	1000	
Incentive: returning		800	800	800
No incentive: returning			600	600
Total	1000	1800	2400	1400

6. FJC encouraged camps and other partnering organizations to introduce campers to post-camp programming for JWest campers. Partners were selected for school-year programming and, with support from FJC, developed several models for these activities.

7. At least 50% of incentive recipients engaged in Jewish connections and/or activities during the school year.

Short-term Outcomes

In addition to meeting annual benchmarks, JWest is expected to achieve the following outcomes by the end of Year 3:

1. Using the techniques learned through JWest training, camps will have enhanced marketing and recruitment capacity.
2. Camps will have developed and implemented their own strategic marketing plans targeted to special populations (under-served, interfaith, immigrant, and ethnically diverse families). These will have positively affected parents' perceptions of the value of Jewish camps.
3. Camp populations will include greater numbers of campers who are not currently engaged in Jewish immersive experiences, including those from interfaith and ethnically diverse backgrounds.
4. A range of school-year opportunities and program models will have been created for this age group. Camps and partner organizations will have implemented marketing and promotion campaigns to create greater awareness of opportunities for Jewish engagement during the summer and school-year.
5. At least half of JWest campers will continue participating in Jewish activities during the summer and school-year.
6. FJC will efficiently and effectively work with local communities, organizations, and camps to increase the numbers and types of children attending residential Jewish summer camps.

Longer-term Outcomes

1. Parents will place higher value on Jewish summer camps and see that it is worth what it costs.
2. JWest campers will have larger and denser Jewish social networks, developing their Jewish social capital through their camp connections.
3. JWest participants will be increasingly involved in Jewish learning and activities during the summer and the school-year.
4. Camps will increase their penetration rates, reaching a greater percentage of their potential market.