



# Advocacy Update

Sent January 5, 2011

## **Jewish Population Growth**

New surveys of Jewish population size in the United States indicate growth of almost 20% since 1990 - from approximately 5.5 million people “to an estimated 6.5 million as of 2010.” This growth was reported by The Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University in the paper, “U.S. Jewry 2010: Estimates of the Size and Characteristics of the Population,” given at the Association for Jewish Studies meeting in Boston in December 2010.

Adult Jews identifying as “Jewish by religion” are a bit over 4.2 million, and 1.27 million are under eighteen. “The number of Jews who identify as Jewish by other criteria is almost 975,000.” The surveys indicate significant differences in Jewish living between those who identify themselves as Jewish by religion and those who identify by other criteria.

- “Forty-four percent of those who consider themselves Jewish by religion reported that they or someone in their household belongs to a synagogue compared to only four percent of those who identify by other criteria.
- Those who are Jewish by religion participated in greater numbers in Jewish lifecycle events than those Jewish not by religion. . . .
- The chance of marrying a Jewish partner was significantly greater among those Jewish by religion compared to those who identify as Jewish by other criteria. Among 18 to 29-year-olds, 50 percent married a Jew. None of those Jewish not by religion in this age group married a Jew.”

The findings reported on by the Cohen Center indicate the vital importance of engaging Jewish youth and their families in ongoing Jewish living and learning.

## **URJ Campaign for Teen Engagement**

The new Union for Reform Judaism’s Campaign for Teen Engagement seeks to respond to the ongoing problem of engaging our teens and strengthening their involvement in Jewish life. The campaign has developed many important resources, such as the Guide for Teen Engagement, as well as opportunities and strategies for teen engagement. Explore the website, perhaps some ideas and strategies can be incorporated in your sisterhood programming and some may be of interest individual leaders and members.

*For more information on WRJ and Social Justice, visit [www.wrj.org/social-justice-home](http://www.wrj.org/social-justice-home)*