

The Charlotte JEWISH news

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Let's Build Together! Volunteers Needed To Help Construct New Shalom Park Playground

The Shalom Park partners are proud to announce the upcoming construction of a custom designed playstructure that will be available to all users of Shalom Park facilities.

The new, high quality equipment, will replace the existing playground structures and will include: capacity to accommodate up to 50 children, simultaneously; 3 slides; a clatterbridge; a variety of different climbers; swings; and, an assortment of specialized play features such as a bubble wall, talk phones, steering wheels and an underdeck store front.

One of the most exciting characteristics of the new playstructure is that its layout is consciously fashioned for use by children with special needs. The structure will feature handicapped accessible stairs, a transfer station and a wheel chair ramp. In addition, the installation of "wood carpet" will provide a soft, safe and wheel chair accessible ground cover.



The new playground project was initiated by an extremely generous grant from an anonymous donor. This grant was matched by a contribution from the management committee of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte. Additional funding for the \$30,000 project include donations from the parent teachers organization of the Charlotte Jewish Preschool (a joint program of Temple Israel and Temple Beth El), the "special children's fund" of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte, the Jewish Community Center and other individual donors.

The project, launched more than 7 months ago, has been spearheaded by a committee of dedicated volunteers who have spent countless hours learning about the playground design and equipment industry. Their work included per-

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Team Charlotte Off To The JCC Maccabi Youth Games

Mickey Mouse, Goofy, Shaq and the JCC's Team Charlotte. What do they have in common? The answer, Orlando, Florida. Yes, Orlando, Florida, the site of the 13th Maccabi youth games that will be held there from August 13-17. And, this year, Team Charlotte will be there.

The JCC Maccabi youth games is a highly organized athletic competition for Jewish athletes from North America and around the world. Last year more than 2700 young Jewish athletes participated in the national competition in Cleveland. This summer there will be more than 350 athletes participating in Orlando (one of 5 regional competition sites).

The Team Charlotte delegation is 30 strong and includes individuals who will participate in basketball, swimming, tennis, and track & field events. Our delegates to Orlando are: Phillip Brodsky, Adam Goldfarb, Matthew Gordan, Chad Jaben, Ryan Karp, Ben Linderman,



Team Charlotte's Mitzvah Project-Painting the CAJE Trailer

Matthew Manes, Sean Ostrow, Stuart Shapiro, Robbie Slavin, Michael Zelickson, Joseph Fuerstman, Derrick Hoffman, Adam Horner, Jason Kaplan, Austin Karp, Benjamin Levine, Bradley Nathanson, Matt Shapiro, Andrew Coen, Jonathan Friend, Adam Linderman, Micah Monosoff, Erin Naman, David Sheffer, Darren Katz, Corey Goldfarb, Marissa Lieberman, Ryan Pinion, and Brett Elko.

The Charlotte JCC youth Maccabi team and coaches have been hard at work for more than 5 months, preparing for Team Charlotte's first entry in the games. The athletes have practiced hard and will be poised and proud representatives of our community.

The delegation will be leaving Charlotte on Saturday evening, August 12, after a Havdalah service, final practice and a rousing send off from parents and friends. The team bus will travel all night, arriving in Orlando on Sunday morning in time for some sight-seeing, registration and preparation for the opening ceremonies.

While the games provide serious, quality competition, they are geared to provide a memorable, personal Jewish experience for all participants. All athletes are housed with Jewish families in Orlando and each delegation has participated in a mitzvah project in their home community.

The JCC Maccabi Youth Games is proud to have Coca Cola, USA as a national sponsor.

Good luck! Play hard! Have a great time. Your home community will be rooting for the JCC Team Charlotte.



Study Of Jewish Teens Reveals Concerns From Anti-Semitism To Dating

More than 40 percent of Jewish teens worry about being a target of anti-Semitism. Marrying someone who is Jewish is "very important" to 52 percent, but dating a Jewish person is of great importance to only 37 percent. Those are just a few of the findings in Values and Concerns of American Jewish Youth, a national study of 1,115 Jewish teens published by the Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University and the Jewish Community Center (JCC) Association of North America. The study is part of the Youth Development Project funded by the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund.

Research on Jewish youth has been scarce and the lack of systematic information has affected planning for youth programs, according to Amy Sales, senior research associate at the Cohen Center and author of the study. Community planning for youth tends to be based on adult perceptions of the teen world.

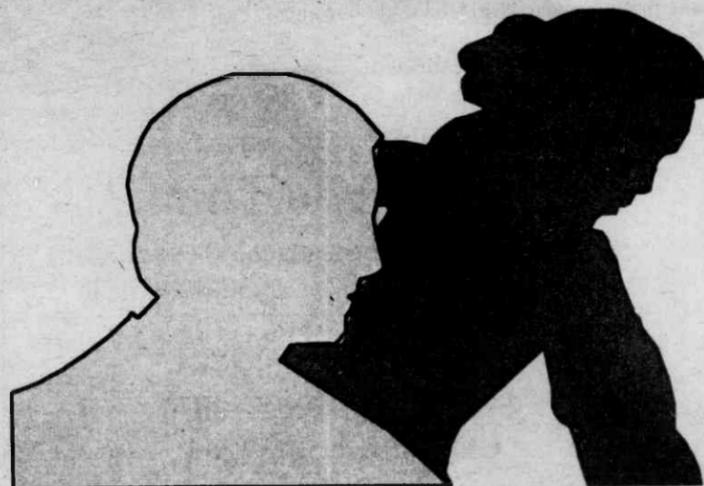
"This study opens a window onto the lives, interests, and con-

cerns of Jewish teenagers," Sales said. "Its findings will be a valuable resource for communal leaders and youth workers."

Semitism, and crime and violence. More than 80 percent of the teens studied said being Jewish is at least "somewhat important" to them. The data show that Jewish identity is set by the time children reach seventh grade and does not change during the middle and high school years, Sales said.

Sales noted that social practices are key indicators of teenagers' Jewish identity since spending time with friends and "hanging out" are rated "very important" by 85 percent of the Jewish teens. The study found that teens who live in entirely Jewish households are significantly more likely than those in interfaith families to form close friendships with other Jewish teens. They are also much more likely to place a high value on dating and marrying a Jewish person.

The study affirms communal concerns about Jewish continuity, Sales said. It clearly shows that children of interfaith families have significantly lower levels of Jewish identity than do children in families with two Jewish parents. The effects of these differences are pervasive - from teens' social ac-



tion interests, to social and communal attachments, to feelings about Jewish life. The report suggests that Jewish organizations need to be more hospitable to teens with more meaningful and engaging programming. Staff and other adults must be more sensitive to the teens' interests and concerns.

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The study shows that Jewish youth place the most emphasis on personal achievement - their greatest interest and greatest concern. Nearly 90 percent of the teens studied said developing their skills and abilities - in sports, the arts, technology, or other areas - is highly important. A similar percentage also expressed deep concerns about their future college and career.

As might be expected, Jewish teens are not immune to the growing climate of violence in the United States. Some 40 percent are very concerned about being a victim of violence; 42 percent are highly concerned about being a target of anti-Semitism. Asked which social problems they would like to help solve, teens in the study most often said AIDS, anti-

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