

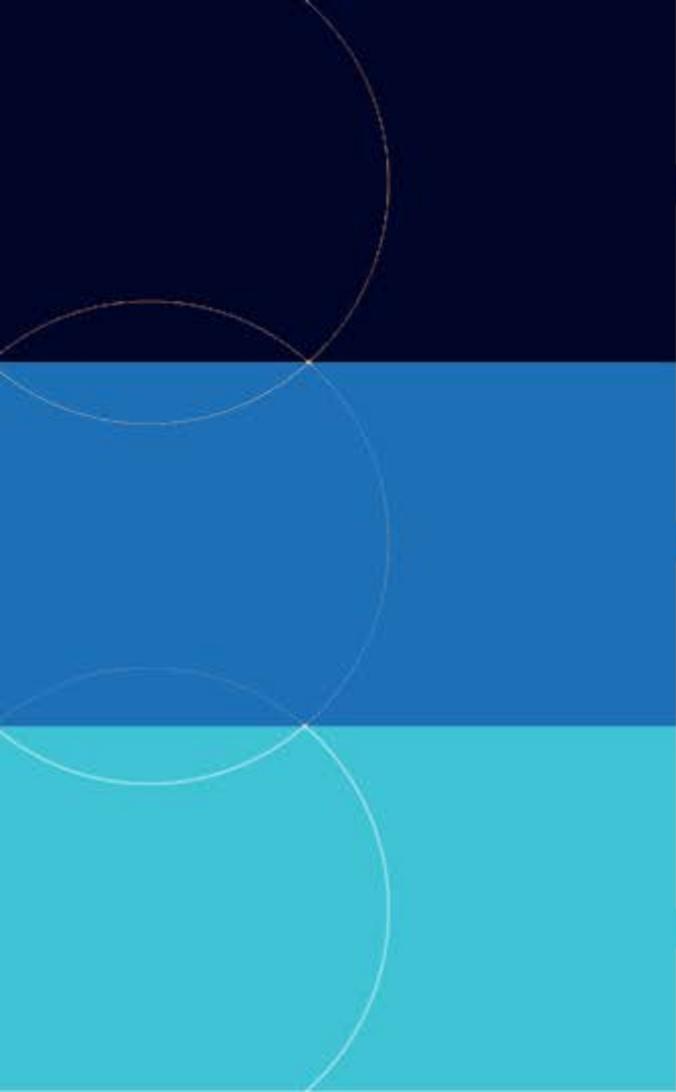


Why Be Jewish
Research & Recommendations

Full Version
December 19, 2016

Presented by

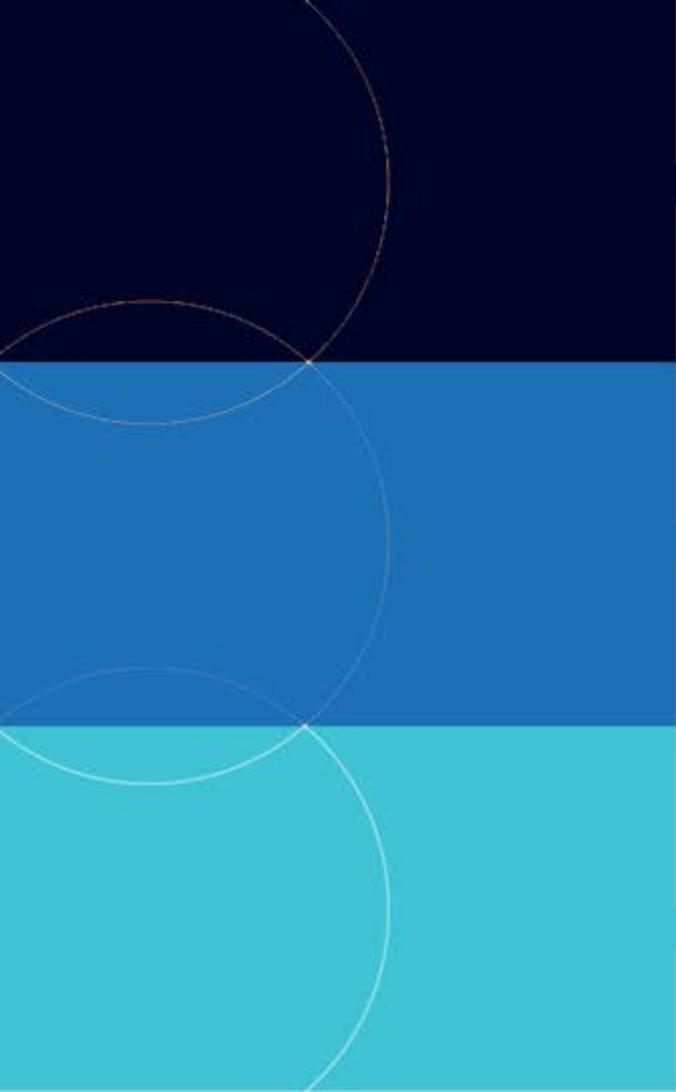




Overview & Methodology

Key Findings

Recommendations & Actions



Overview & Methodology

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Recommendations & Actions

Engagement Objectives

1. Diagnose why many young American Jews don't feel connected to their faith and culture
2. Identify the barriers standing in the way of creating real change with this group
3. Develop recommendations for a strategy to connect with today's Jewish youth



Research Process

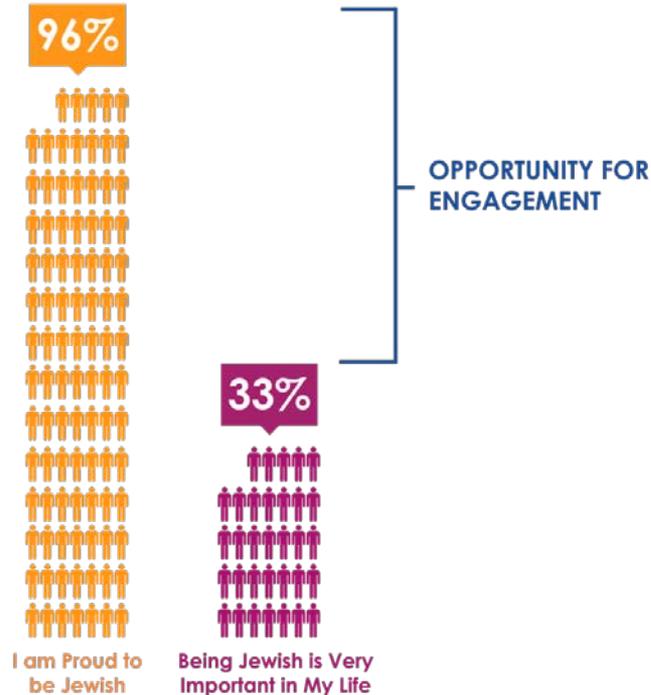
A detailed three phase research process was conducted by Finch Brands.



Under-Engaged Definition

This research defines 'under-engaged' as those who don't rate being Jewish as 'very important' in their lives. 2/3 of Jews between the ages of 18-29 fall within this category.

Attitudes Among 18-29-Year-Olds



How important is being Jewish in your life?

Response	Category
Very Important	Engaged
Somewhat Important	Under-engaged
Not too Important	
Not at All Important	
Don't Know	



Secondary Research

More than a dozen existing studies served as the foundation for this new primary research.

PewResearchCenter



- A Portrait of Jewish Americans: Overview (Pew 2013)
- Effective Strategies for Educating and Engaging Jewish Teens (Jim Joseph 2013)
- Will Creek Church Case Study (Stanford 2012)
- Chosen for What (PRRI 2012)
- Birthright 2012 Report (Brandeis 2012)
- Camp Works (Foundation for Jewish Camp 2011)
- To Go or Not To Go: Jewish Day Schools (UJA-F NY 2008)
- Engaging Jewish Teens (Brandeis 2011)
- Hillel Two Year Evaluation Report (Hillel 2012)
- Hillel Student Participation (Hillel 2012)
- Millennials and Hillel's Future (Hillel 2006)
- Jerusalem U Staff Presentation (Laszlo 2015)
- Tourists, Travelers, and Citizens Jewish Identity & Community in a Time of Unlimited Choice (Brandeis 2009)
- Latte Report (Reboot 2006)
- Being A Jewish Teenager in America: Trying to Make It (Brandeis 2000)



Primary Research - Qualitative Focus Groups

A total of 12 focus groups were held in Philadelphia and Los Angeles to discuss life perspectives, attitudes toward religion/Judaism, and roadblocks/onramps.



	Focus Group Segmentation			
	High School Students (15-18)	College Students (19-22)	Young Adults (23-26)	Total Groups
Male	2	2	2	6
Female	2	2	2	6
Total Groups	4	4	4	12

Screening Criteria

- Mother is/was Jewish
- Consider themselves Jewish (by whatever definition they apply)
- Not Orthodox
- Don't feel that Judaism is "Very Important" in their life today.
- Don't have "Very Negative" views toward the state of Israel



Primary Research – Quantitative Survey

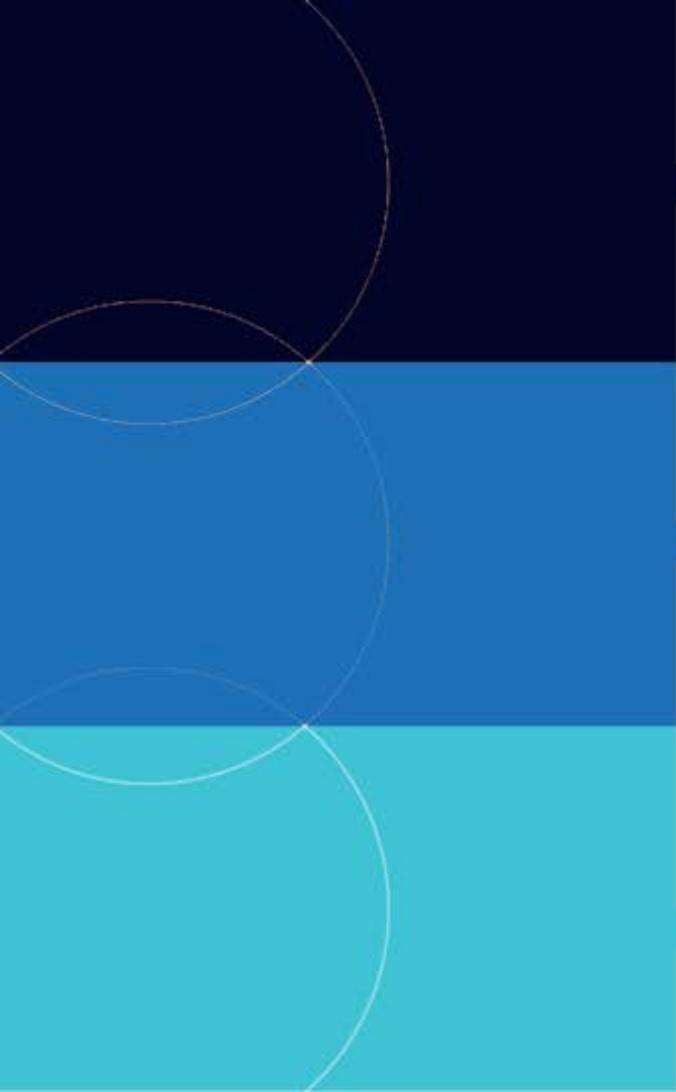
Finch Brands conducted a quantitative survey among Jewish youth ages 15-26 to explore the religious and cultural assets that we have to work with and the liabilities we must overcome.



Screening Criteria

- Sample size = 998
- 458 respondents qualified as ‘under-engaged’
- 540 respondents qualified as ‘engaged’
- Between ages of 15-26
- At least 1 Jewish parent
- Identify as Jewish (not required if mother Jewish)





Overview & Methodology

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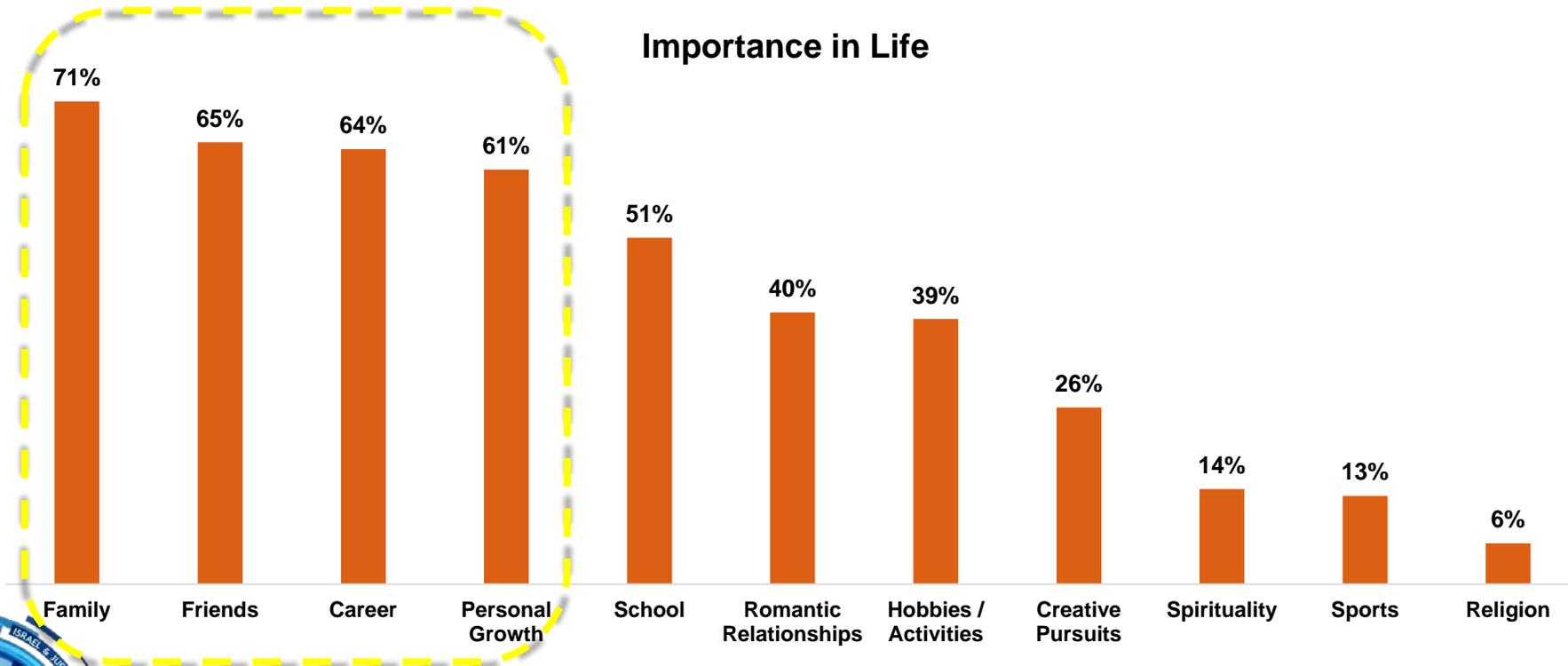
NON-JEWISH IDENTITY & INTERESTS

Key Insight

Family, Friends, Career, and Personal Growth are most important to young, under-engaged Jews. Religion and Spirituality play a comparatively small role in their life today.

Importance in Life

Family, Friends, Career, and Personal Growth are most important to young, under-engaged Jews. Religion and Spirituality play a comparatively small role in their life today.



Q. How important are each of the following in your life today? - Summary of Top Box Base: All under-engaged

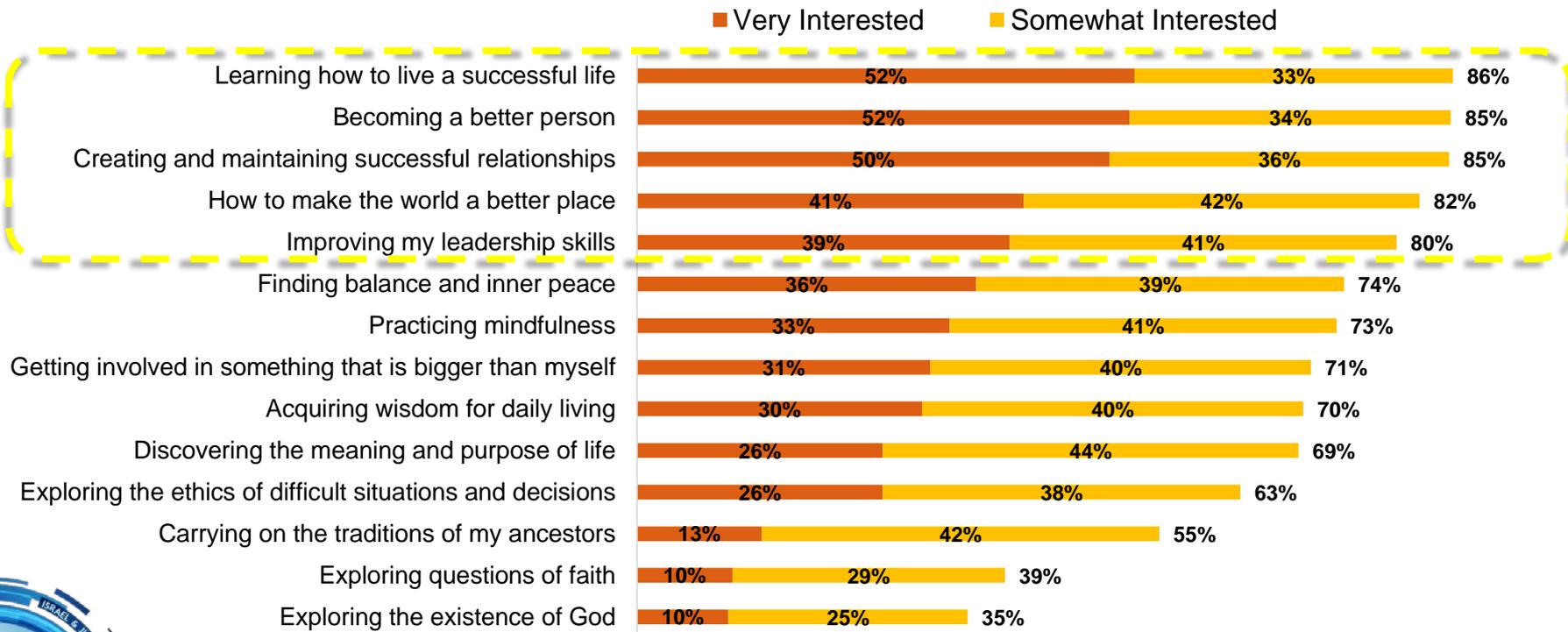
Source: under-engaged Jewish Youth Survey (Finch Brands 2015)

Key Insight

Self-improvement and connection dominate under-engaged Jews' topics of interest, with questions of religion trailing far behind.

Topic Interest

Self-improvement and connection dominate under-engaged Jews' topics of interest.

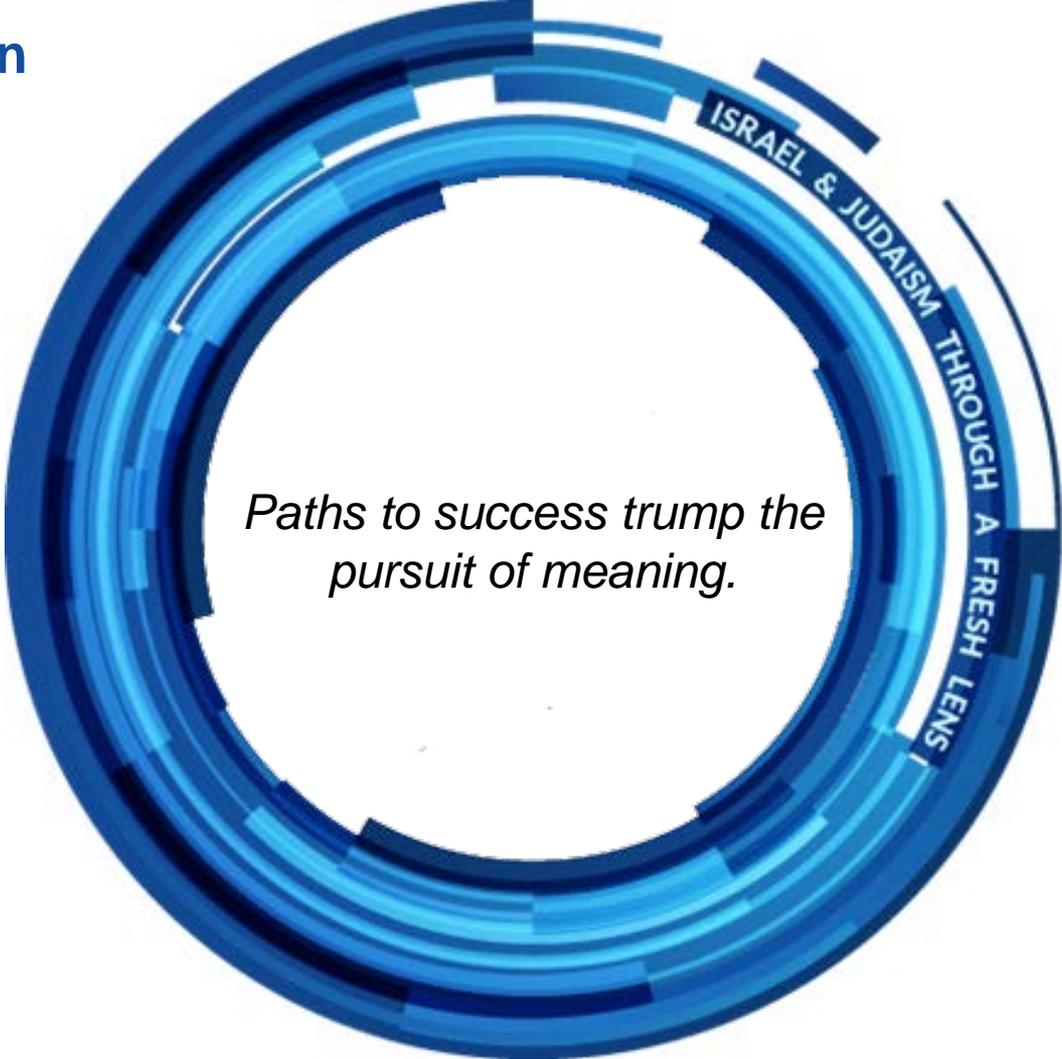


Q. How interested would you be in exploring the following topics? All under-engaged

Source: under-engaged Jewish Youth Survey (Finch Brands 2015)



Key Implication



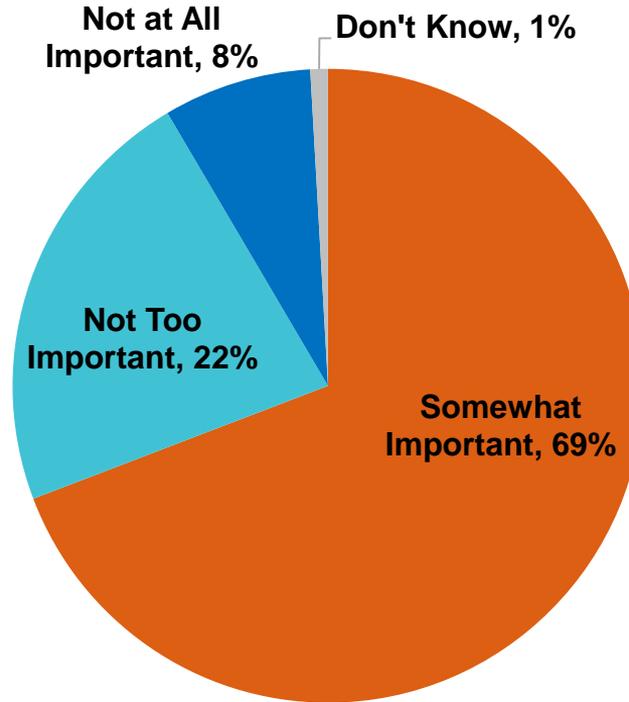
JEWISH IDENTITY

Key Insight

The vast majority of under-engaged Jews feel that being Jewish is at least somewhat important in their lives, indicating that this is more of an issue of under engagement than complete alienation.

Importance of Being Jewish

The vast majority of under-engaged Jews feel that being Jewish is at least somewhat important in their lives.



Q. How important is being Jewish in your life? Base: All under-engaged

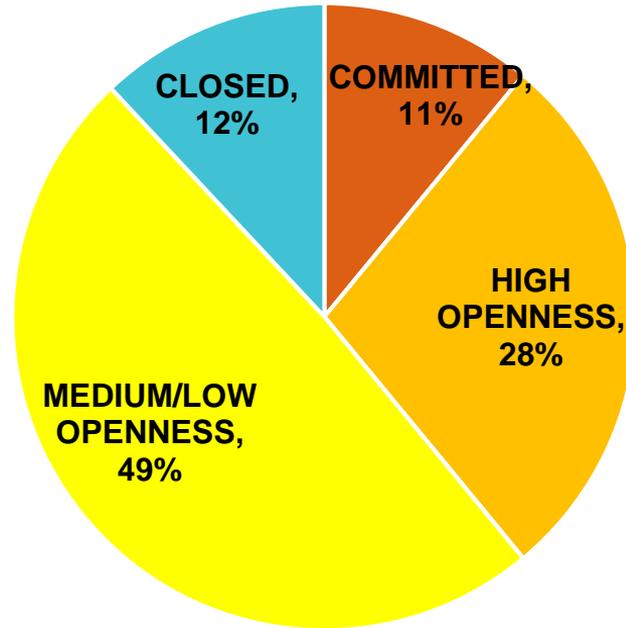
Source: under-engaged Jewish Youth Survey (Finch Brands 2015)



Role of Judaism in Their Life

Only 12% of under-engaged Jews appear to be firmly in the camp that Judaism is not for them.

Attitude Toward Role of Judaism



Q. Which of the statements below comes closest to describing what Judaism means to you? Base: All under-engaged

Source: under-engaged Jewish Youth Survey (Finch Brands 2015)



Key Implication



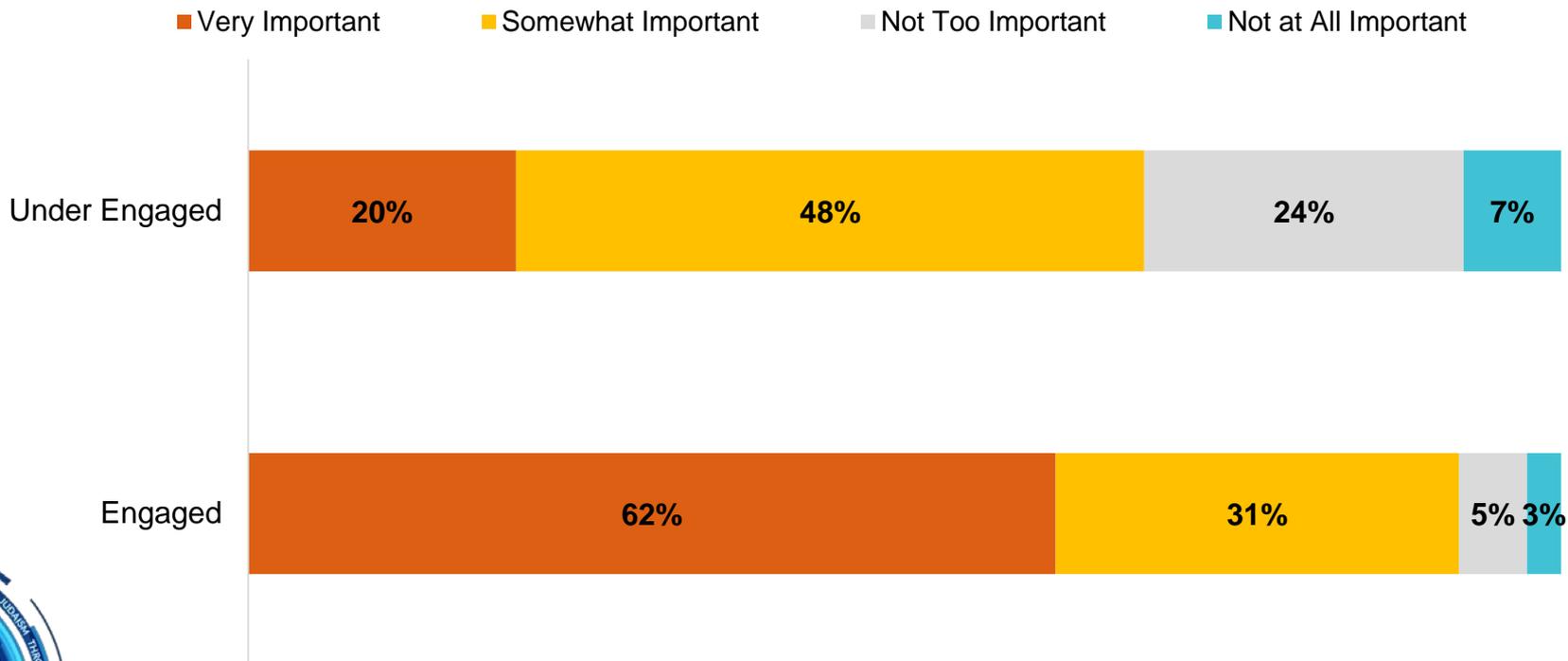
Key Insight

Under-engagement is largely a function of a lack of importance placed on Judaism in the household growing up. As parents drift their kids drift too.

Importance of Judaism Growing Up

Under-engaged young Jews are far more likely to have been raised by under-engaged parents.

Importance of Judaism in Household Growing Up



Q: How important was Judaism in your household growing up?

Source: under-engaged Jewish Youth Survey (Finch Brands 2015)



Key Implication

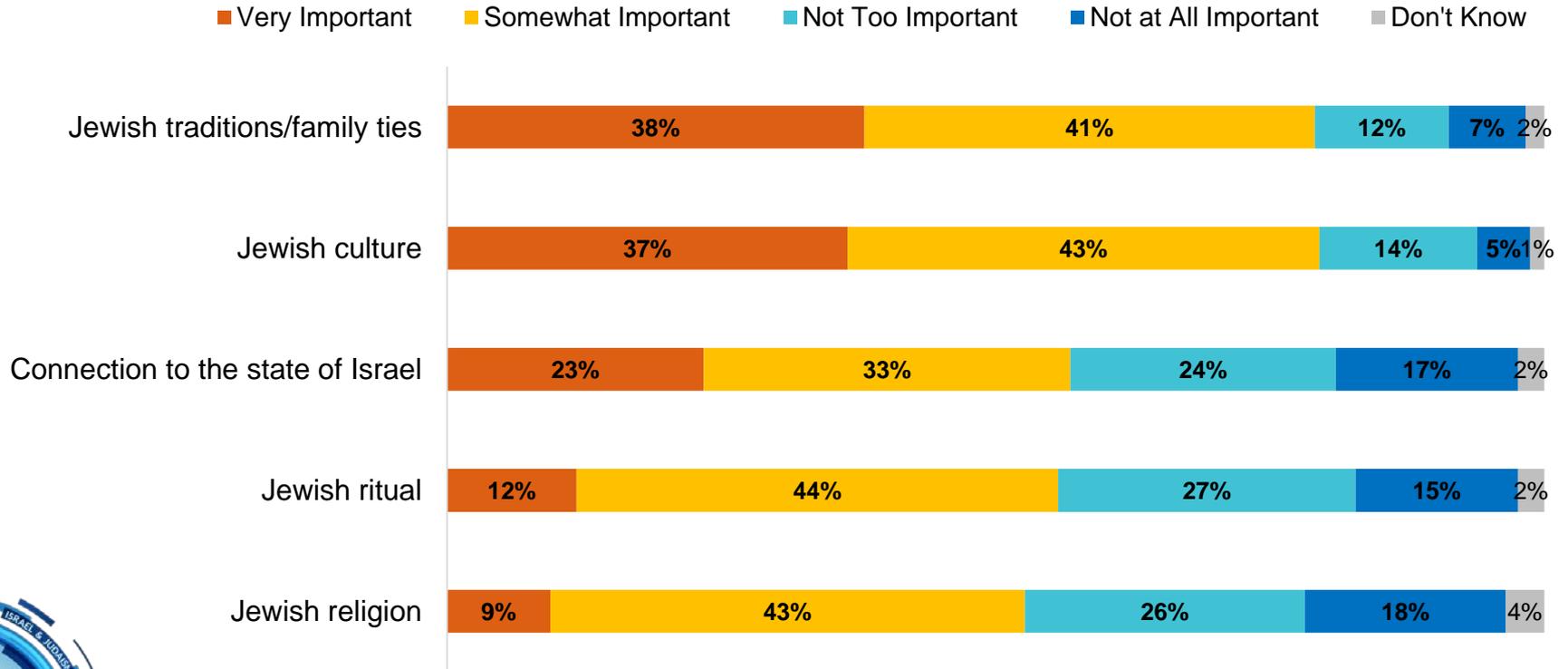


Key Insight

Tradition, family and culture are important aspects of under-engaged Jews' lives, while religion, ritual, prayer and even spirituality lack relevance today. Jewish Values may be a key link to bridge the two.

Aspects of Jewish Identity

Tradition, family ties, and culture dominate the connections that under-engaged Jews feel toward their Jewish identity.



Q. Please rate how important each of these are to your Jewish identity - Base: All under-engaged

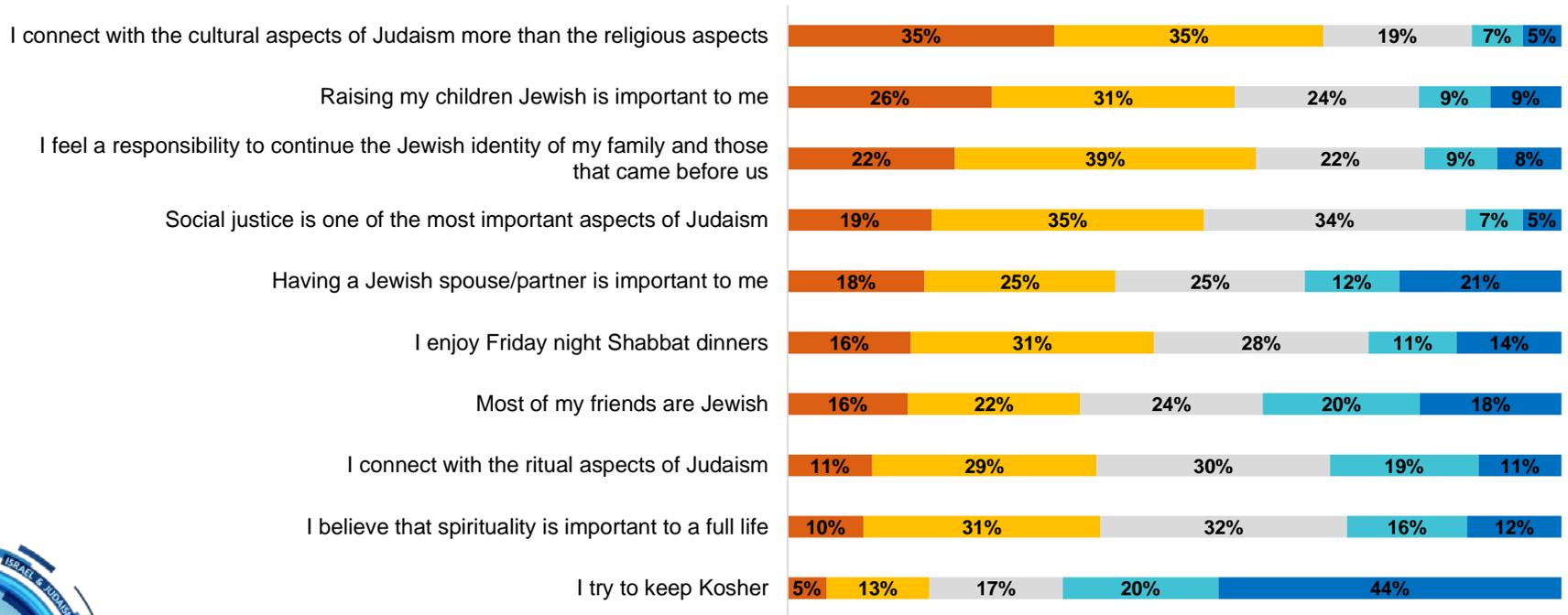
Source: under-engaged Jewish Youth Survey (Finch Brands 2015)



Views Toward Jewish Life

Though under-engaged Jews connect more with the cultural than the religious aspects of Judaism, they still want to carry on their Jewish identity through future generations.

■ Strongly Agree
 ■ Somewhat Agree
 ■ Neither Agree Nor Disagree
 ■ Somewhat Disagree
 ■ Strongly Disagree



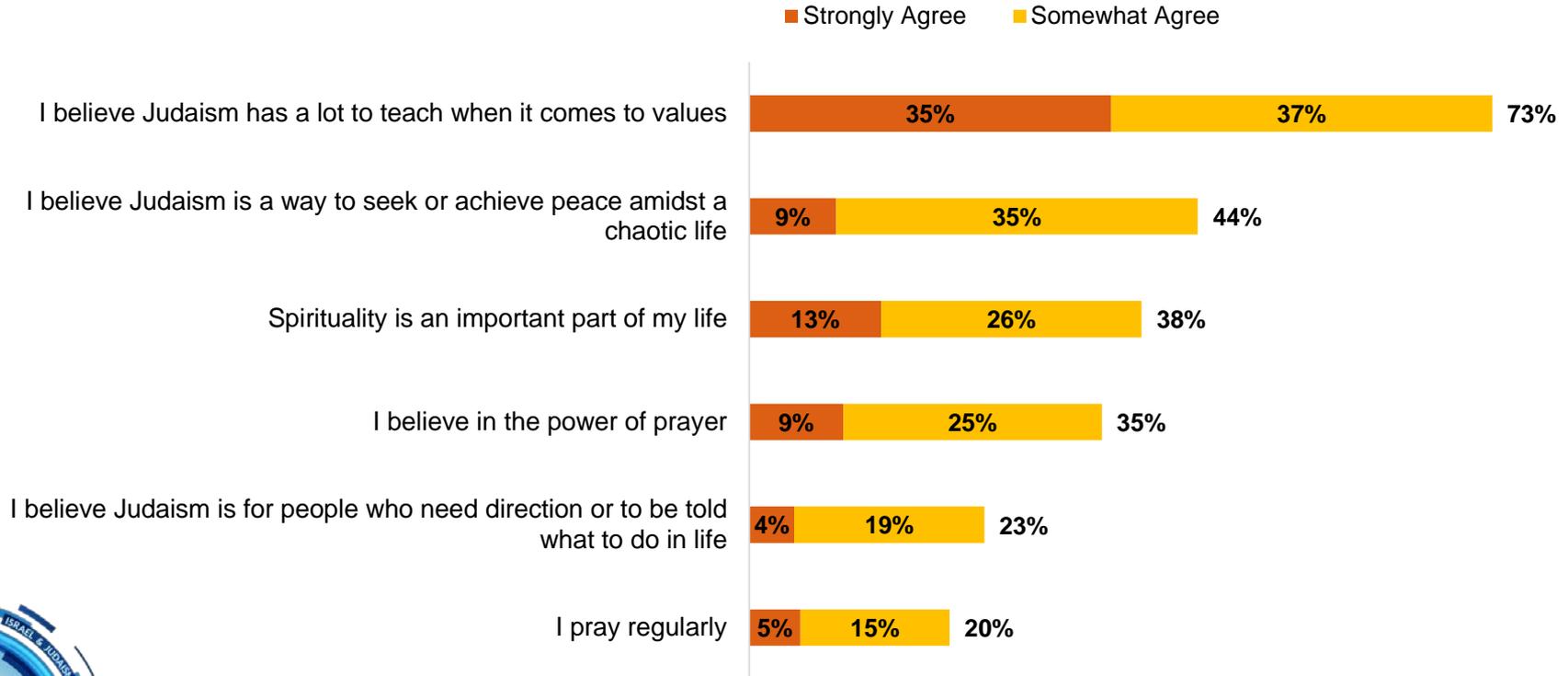
Q. For each of the statements below, please select the option that best describes your personal views - Base: All under-engaged

Source: under-engaged Jewish Youth Survey (Finch Brands 2015)



Spirituality and Values

While a vast majority of under-engaged Jews don't embrace spirituality or prayer today, they overwhelmingly believe that Judaism has a lot to teach when it comes to values.



Q. Please rate the level to which you agree with the following statements - Base: All under-engaged

Source: under-engaged Jewish Youth Survey (Finch Brands 2015)



Key Implication



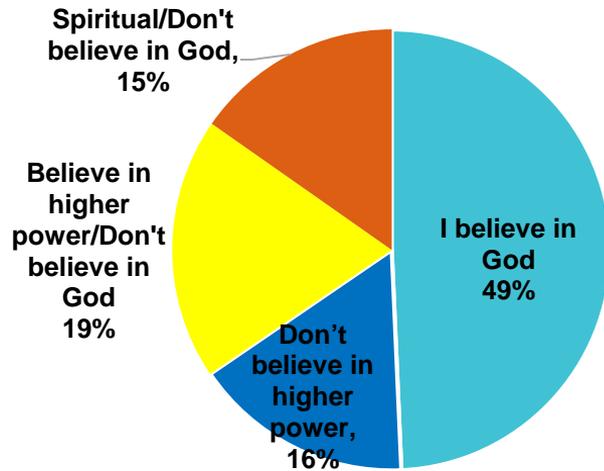
Key Insight

Nearly half of the under-engaged Jews believe in a traditional conception of G-d, and roughly half of believers want a deeper understanding of G-d.

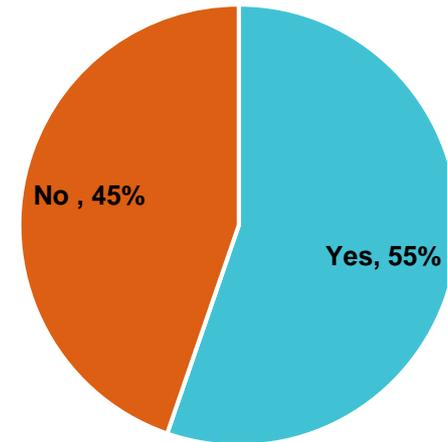
Belief G-d / Higher Power

Nearly half of the under-engaged Jews believe in a traditional conception of G-d, and roughly half of believers want a deeper understanding of G-d.

Belief in a Higher Power



Desire for Deeper Understanding in G-d Among Believers



Q: Which of the following choices most closely matches your personal beliefs? Base: All under-engaged
Q: Do you feel like you need or want a deeper understanding of God? Base: All under-engaged

Source: under-engaged Jewish Youth Survey (Finch Brands 2015)



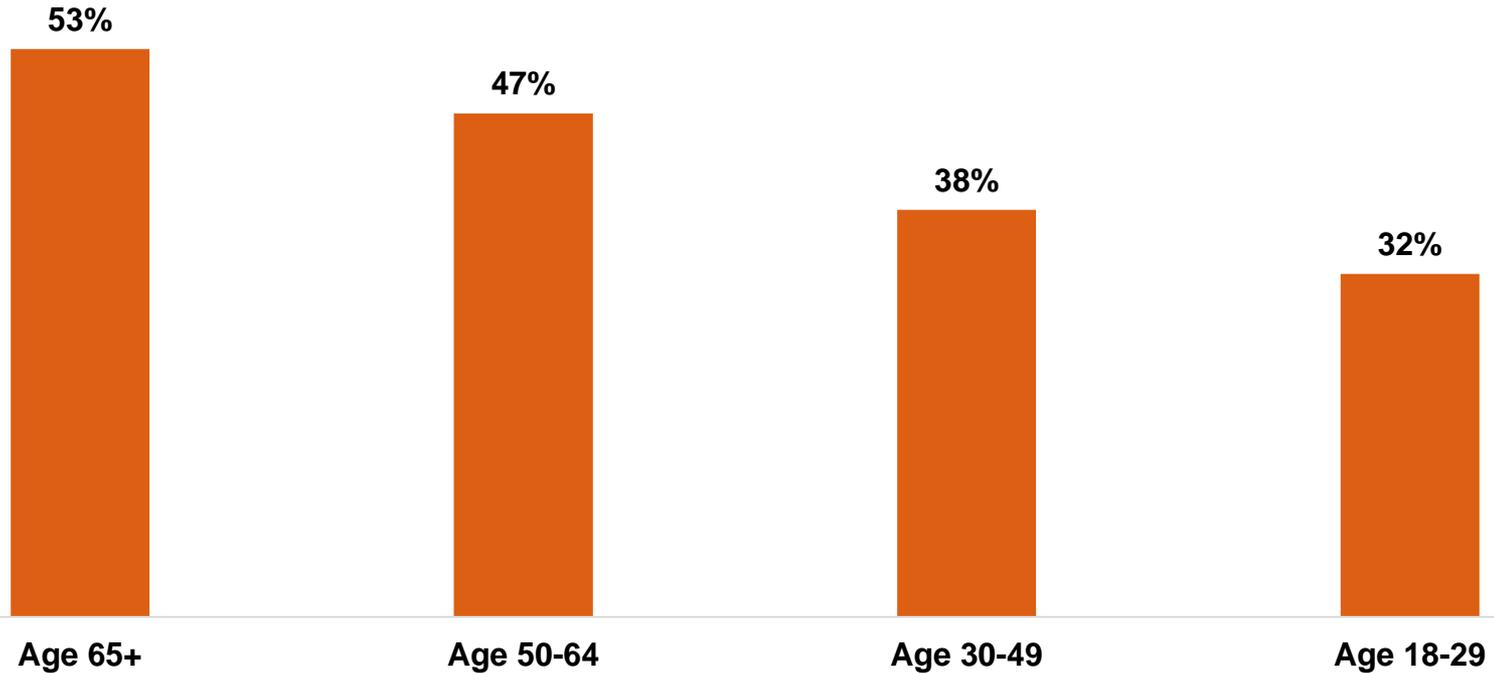
Key Insight

Despite weaker connections to Israel than prior generations, nearly 3 out of 4 under-engaged Jews view Israel in a positive light. Under-engaged college students are particularly pro-Israel.

Views Toward Israel

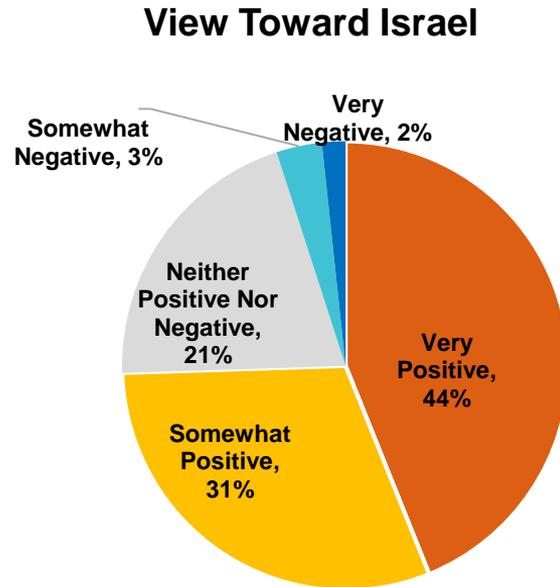
The Pew study revealed that young Jews are less likely than other generations to believe that caring about Israel is essential to being Jewish.

'Caring About Israel is an Essential Part of Being Jewish'



Views Toward Israel

Despite this lack of a strong connection, nearly 3 out of 4 under-engaged Jews view Israel positively.



'I think very positively about Israel. Jewish people themselves are very strong people. To be hated and wanted to be pushed out... to try to fight for a country and a safe place to be is respectable.'

'If something like the holocaust ever happened in America I could go to Israel and be safe there.'

'I have mixed feelings about the government and how it deals with things but positive views toward the people protecting that little piece of land.'

Q: Which of the following choices best describes your view toward the state of Israel? Base: under-engaged

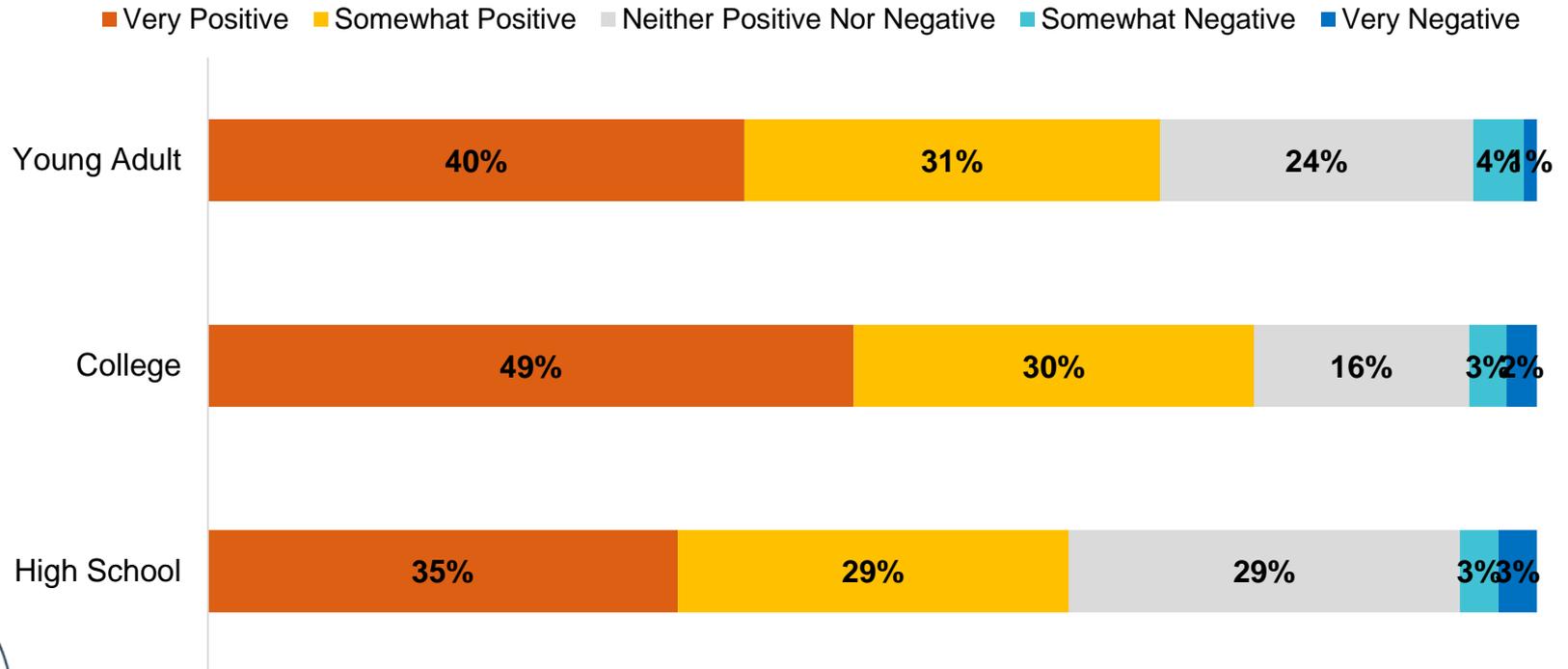
Source: under-engaged Jewish Youth Survey & Why Be Jewish Focus Groups (Finch Brands 2015)



Views Toward Israel

Under-engaged college students are particularly pro-Israel.

Views Toward Israel



Q: Which of the following choices best describes your view toward the state of Israel? Base: under-engaged

Source: under-engaged Jewish Youth Survey (Finch Brands 2015)

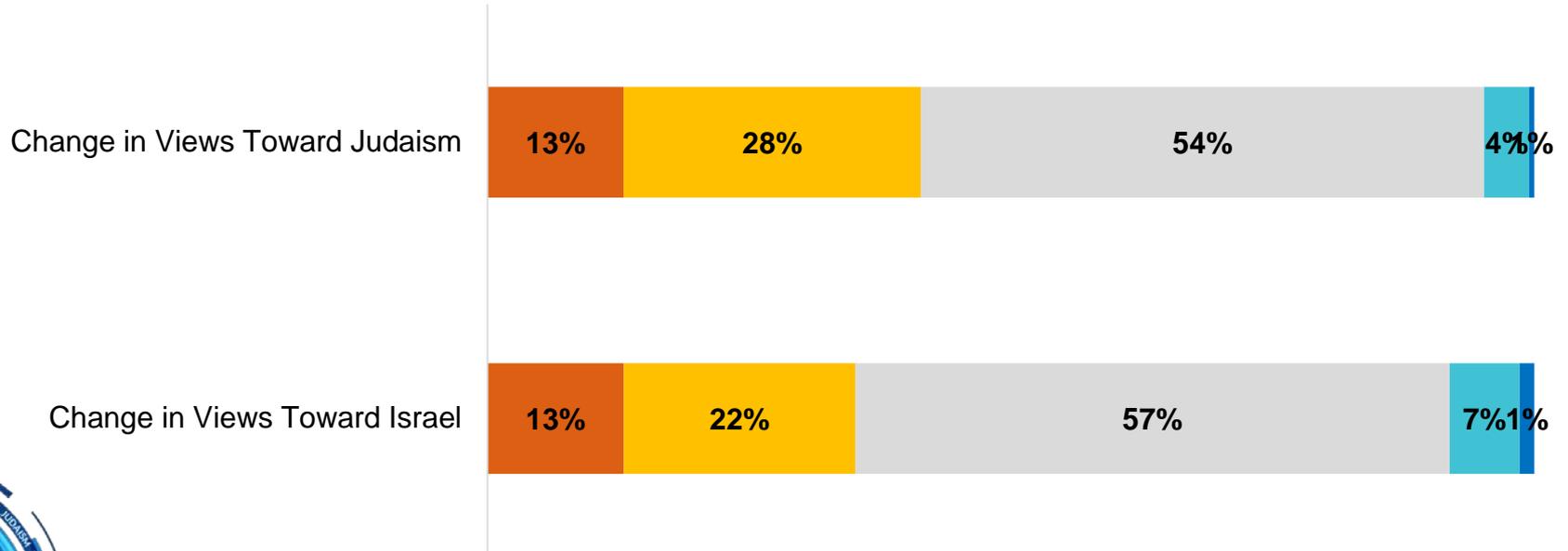


Impact of College Experience on Views Toward Judaism / Israel

Over 1/3 of under-engaged Jews that have been to college say that the experience positively impacted their views toward Judaism and Israel.

Views Toward Israel

Very Positively Somewhat Positively Neither Positively Nor Negatively Somewhat Negatively Very Negatively



Q: How did college affect your views on Judaism? Base: under-engaged
Q: How did college affect your views on Israel? Base: under-engaged

Source: under-engaged Jewish Youth Survey (Finch Brands 2015)



Views Toward Israel

A heightened connection among college students is likely due to Jewish organizations on campus and a defensive reaction to anti-Israel movements and anti-Semitism on campus.

'I didn't feel 100% safe in a heavily Christian community like when I visited Duke.'

'I went to school at IUP and was one of two Jewish people. I was never even bar mitzvahed but still got all the jokes. I defended Judaism because of the pride.'

'My brother was at a Jewish frat. You can relate to people with your background whether you practice religion or not. It's a special thing.'

'I don't support Judaism or Israel aggressively but if someone talks bad about it, it's on.'

'I went to WCU and was asked one time why I didn't have horns. I went to college knowing I would be making temporary friends.'

'If people burn an American flag it's because they're jealous. If they burn an Israeli flag it's meant to be a real threat.'



Key Implication



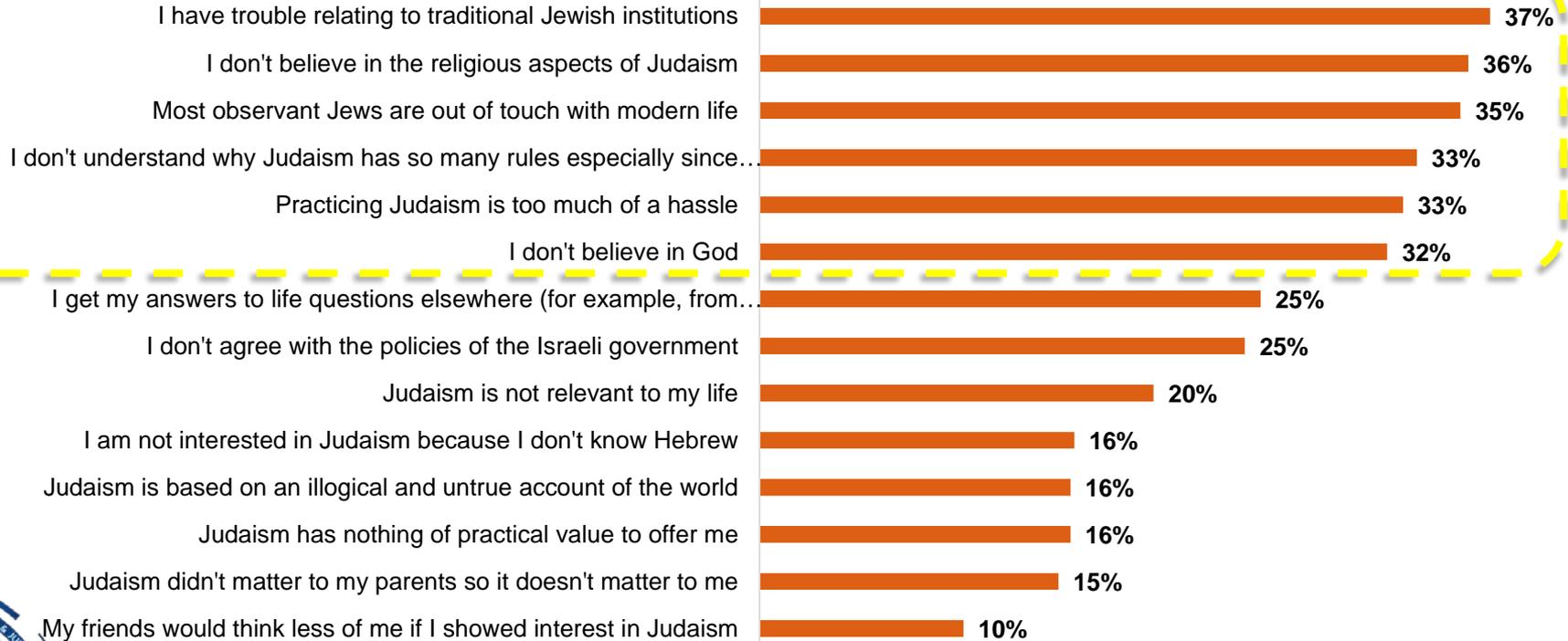
ROADBLOCKS

Key Insight

A general feeling that Judaism is somehow out of touch with today's world is a key barrier, along with an underlying lack of belief in religion.

Roadblocks to Engagement

A general feeling that Judaism is out of touch with today's world is a key barrier, along with an underlying lack of belief in religion.



Q. At the beginning of this survey, you said that being Jewish is not "very important" in your life. Please rate your level of agreement with the following reasons why this might be the case- Summary of Top 2 Box Base: All under-engaged

Source: under-engaged Jewish Youth Survey (Finch Brands 2015)



Key Insight

Negative views and stereotypes related to highly religious people are also a key turnoff for the under-engaged. They are seen as illogical and judgmental.

Views Toward Religious People – Image as Illogical

Highly religious people are seen as illogical ‘drones’ in the eyes of under-engaged Jews.



‘It’s inappropriate to talk about politics, religion, etc. It shows a lack of empathy. If you don’t have self awareness to know that it makes people feel uncomfortable, you’re selfish.’

‘Religion is conforming to a pre existing set of beliefs that aren’t yours. If I see someone very religious I assume they are less accepting of science or rational thought.’

‘I definitely feel when I meet someone deeply religious, almost definitely that’s just how their family was. Very few people like that just became that way.’



Views Toward Religious People – Feeling Judged

Under-engaged Jews feel like they are put under a harsh lens of judgement by Orthodox Jews. Ironically, they return the perceived judgment with judgements of their own that are very intense.



'Orthodox people look down on people who are conservative or reform. That they're not real Jewish people because don't follow every rule.'

'The black hats, they eliminate half the potential Jews in the world. Yeah, it's written, but we live in a different climate. We're a minority on top of it. I'm off put when I see it. I just don't think it's the best face for our religion or culture.'

'They're so in their own world. I don't think that's healthy. In a community you want to get to know your neighbors. I just don't get how you can raise children to be so excluded from the world.'



ONRAMPS

Key Insight

Culture and Tradition through the lens of family is an existing source of strength that can be activated. It activates warm feelings of nostalgia, connection, and personal pride. The collective effect is some 'pull' toward continuity.

Onramp – Culture & Tradition

Warms feelings toward culture and tradition through the perspective of positive family memories form the backbone of connection to a positive Jewish self-image.



'I feel a strong connection to Jewish people. I had to go to Camden for a trip and found out the founder was Jewish. The rest of the day I just kind of stuck by him. Instantly we had a connection. Being Jewish helps me relate to people.'

'Cultural Jewishness comes first. It's not as much about being a minority as being a Jew. When I want to feel proud, different, or stand out, being culturally Jewish comes first.'

'For me, being Jewish is the culture and tradition my family and community brought me up in.'



Onramp – Continuity

Even the under-engaged feel pulled in the direction of continuing the journey of the Jewish people.



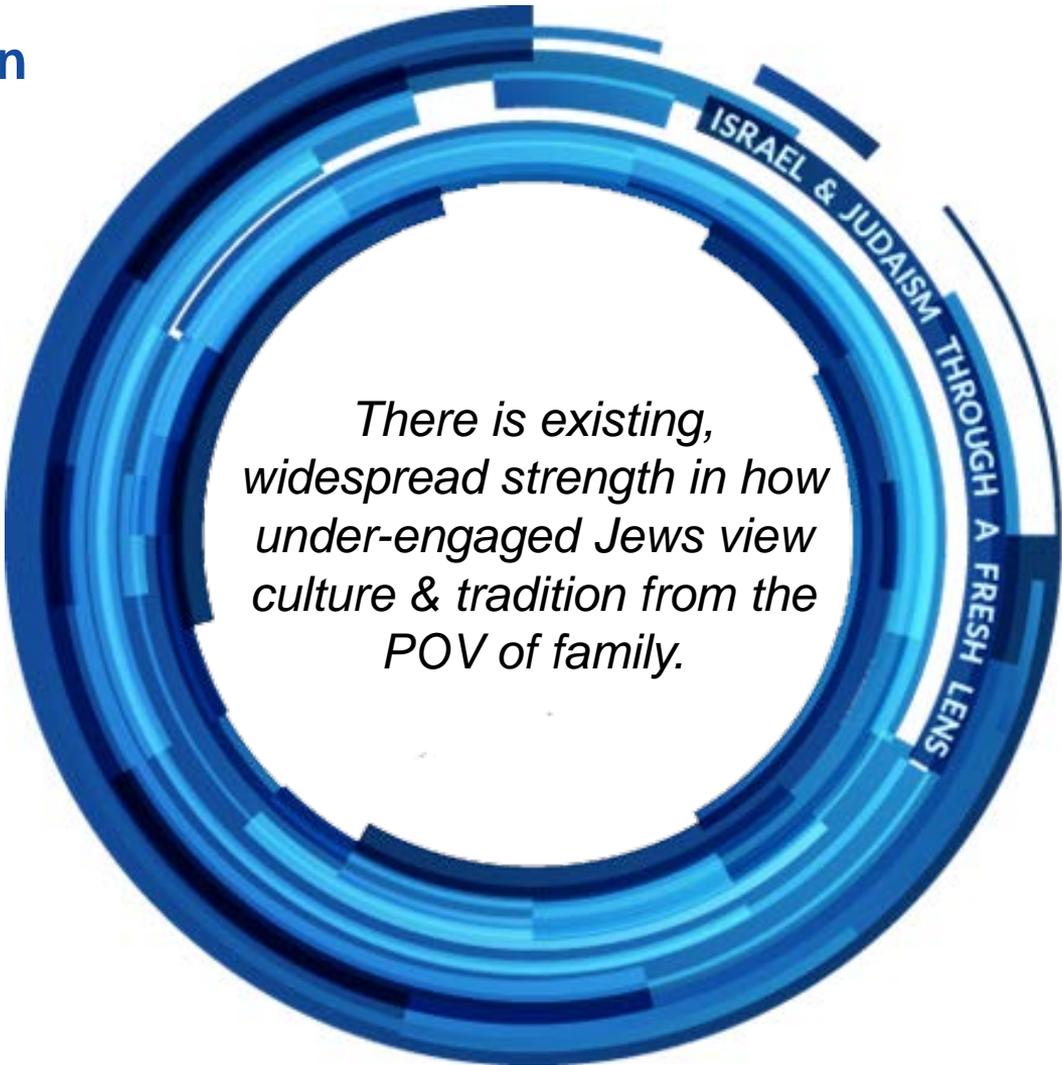
'It means following the steps of my ancestors and passing it on to my children. It's a chain of relating across families.'

'It's a family thing. I don't connect with prayers. I connect with everything my people went through.'

'My grandfather was in the holocaust so I wouldn't want to throw that away.'



Key Implication



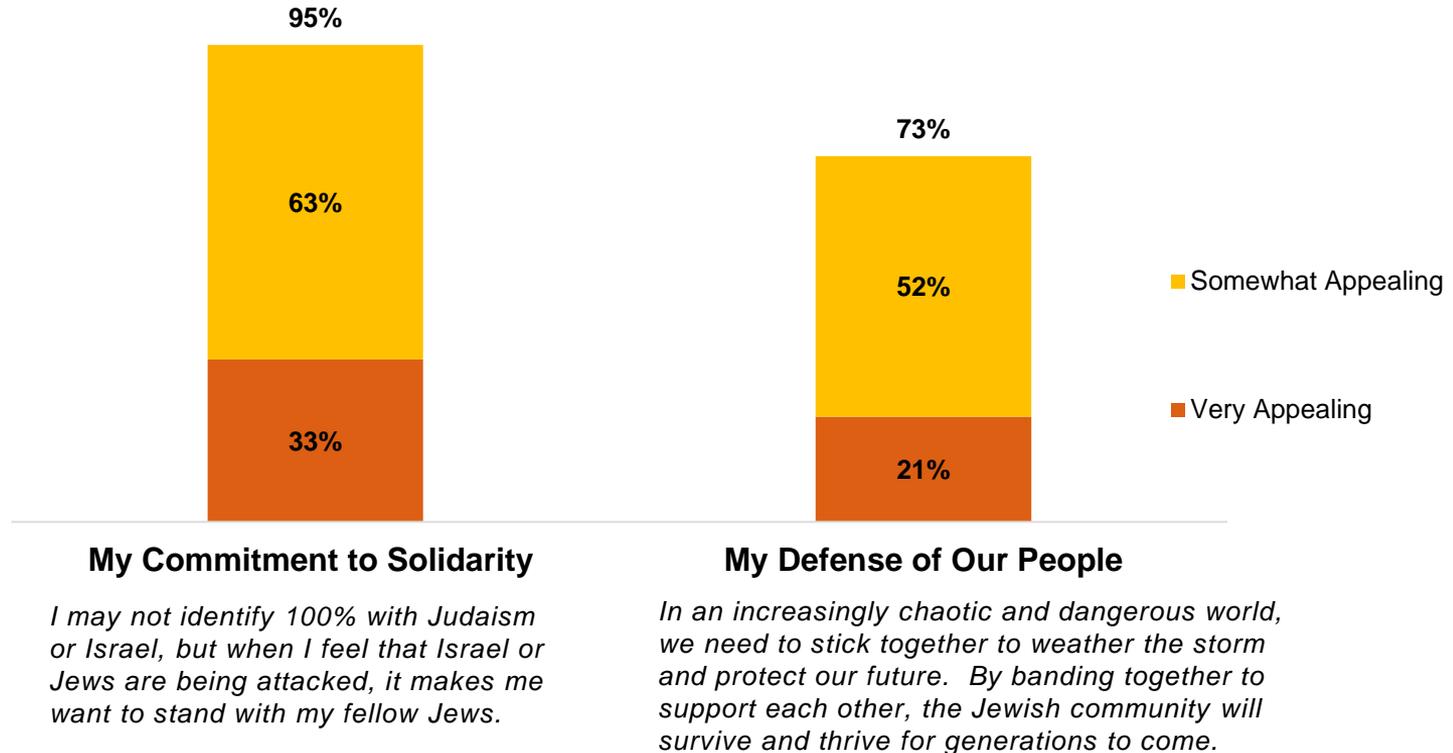
There is existing, widespread strength in how under-engaged Jews view culture & tradition from the POV of family.

Key Insight

Messages pertaining to a shared sense of pride and connection to today's Jewish world were the most compelling.

Concept Appeal

The reactive message about protection (solidarity) outperformed the proactive one (defense).



Q. Please rate how appealing you find each of the following ideas - Summary of Top 2 Box Base: All under-engaged

Source: under-engaged Jewish Youth Survey (Finch Brands 2015)

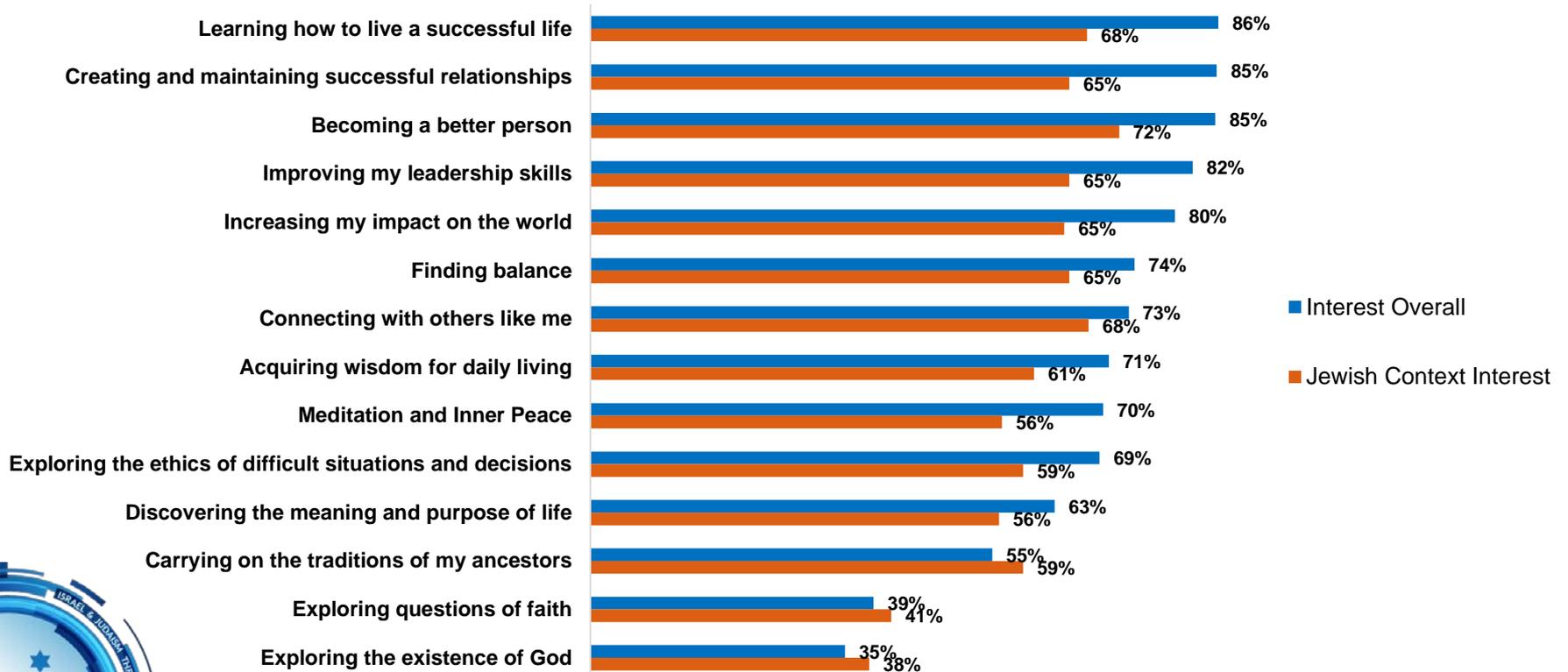


Key Insight

Self-improvement, connection, culture, family, and overall guidance on how to live a good life are the topics of highest interest to under-engaged Jews. Interest in religious topics is very low.

Self Improvement Through a Jewish Lens

Consistent with their performance in a non-Jewish context, self improvement and connection were the most interesting themes in a Jewish context. Faith and religion still lag far behind.



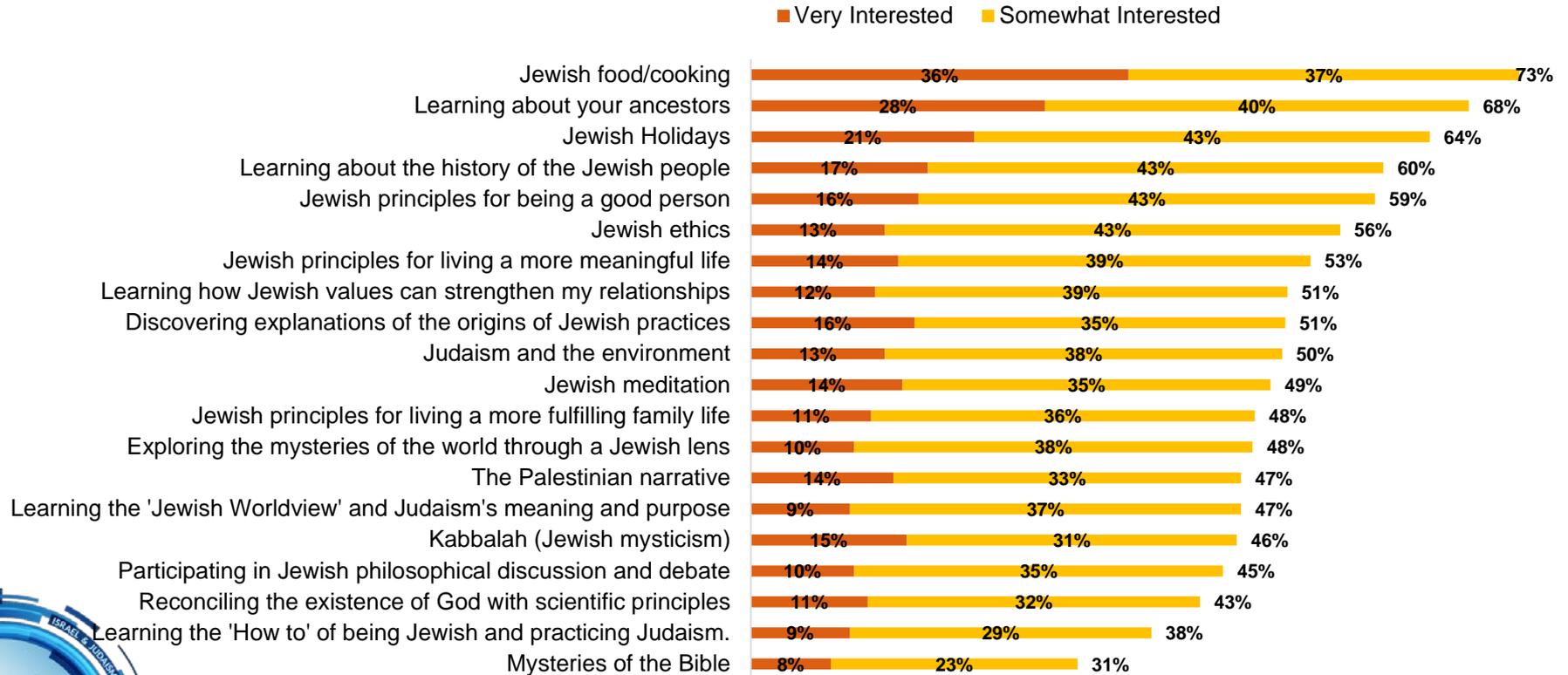
Q. How interested would you be in exploring the following? - Summary of Top 2 Box Base: All under-engaged

Source: under-engaged Jewish Youth Survey (Finch Brands 2015)



Interest in Jewish Topics

Topics pertaining to culture, family, and living a good life were of highest interest while religious topics performed at the bottom of the pack.



Q. How interested would you be in exploring the following topics? - Base: All under-engaged

Source: under-engaged Jewish Youth Survey (Finch Brands 2015)

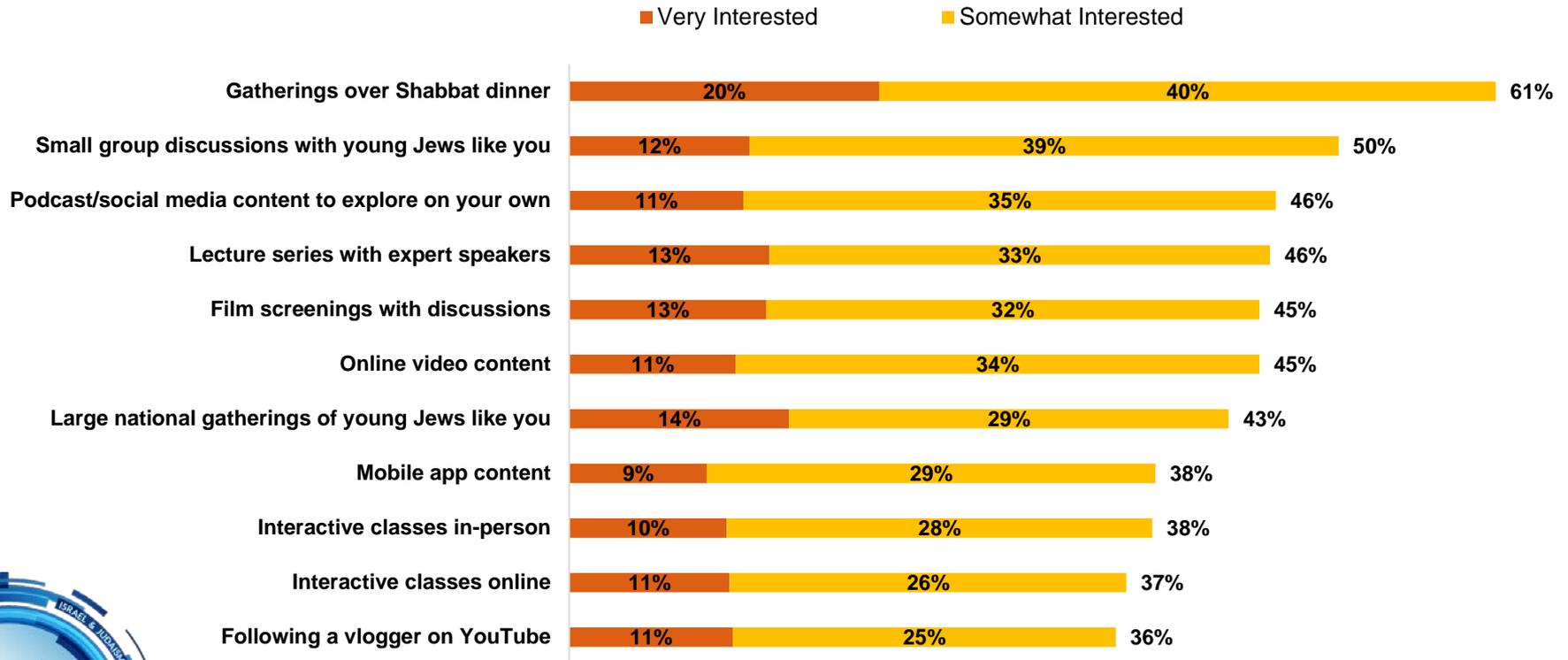


Key Insight

Informal, intimate engagement tactics with a human connection perform best, followed by digital content for self-exploration, such as podcasts, social content, and video. Formal classes are less favored.

Tactics for Engagement

Engagement tactics with a human connection perform best, followed by digital content for self-exploration, such as podcasts, social content, and video.



Q. How interested would you be in the following ways to learn more about Judaism?- Base: All under-engaged

Source: under-engaged Jewish Youth Survey (Finch Brands 2015)



Key Implication

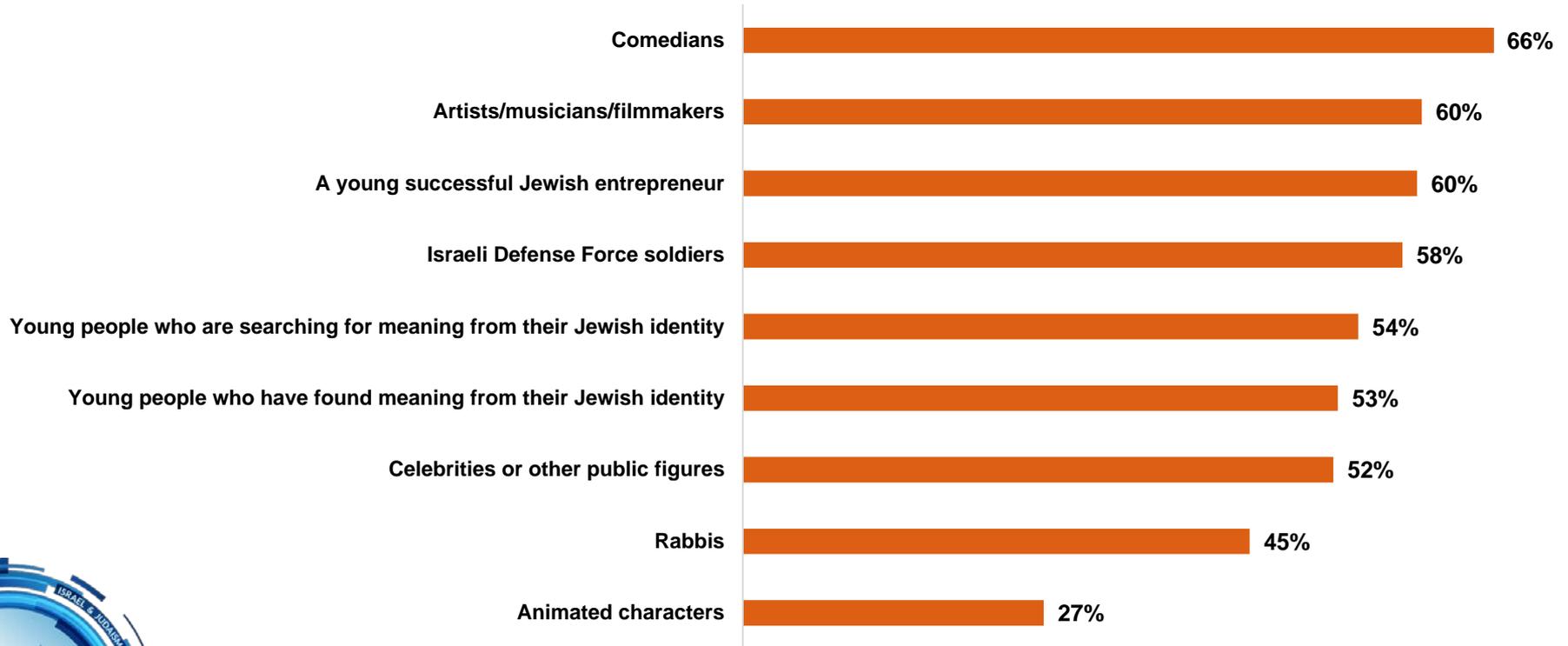


Key Insight

Judging from the interest in comedians, artists, musicians, and filmmakers, respondents want to be entertained and learn at the same time. Additionally, people perceived as successful such as entrepreneurs received high marks.

Tactics for Engagement – Voices to Hear From

Interest in highest in having comedians, artists, musicians, filmmakers, and entrepreneurs deliver the message.



Q. How interested would you be in learning about Judaism from the following types of people? - Summary of Top 2 Box Base: All under-engaged

Source: under-engaged Jewish Youth Survey (Finch Brands 2015)



Key Implication

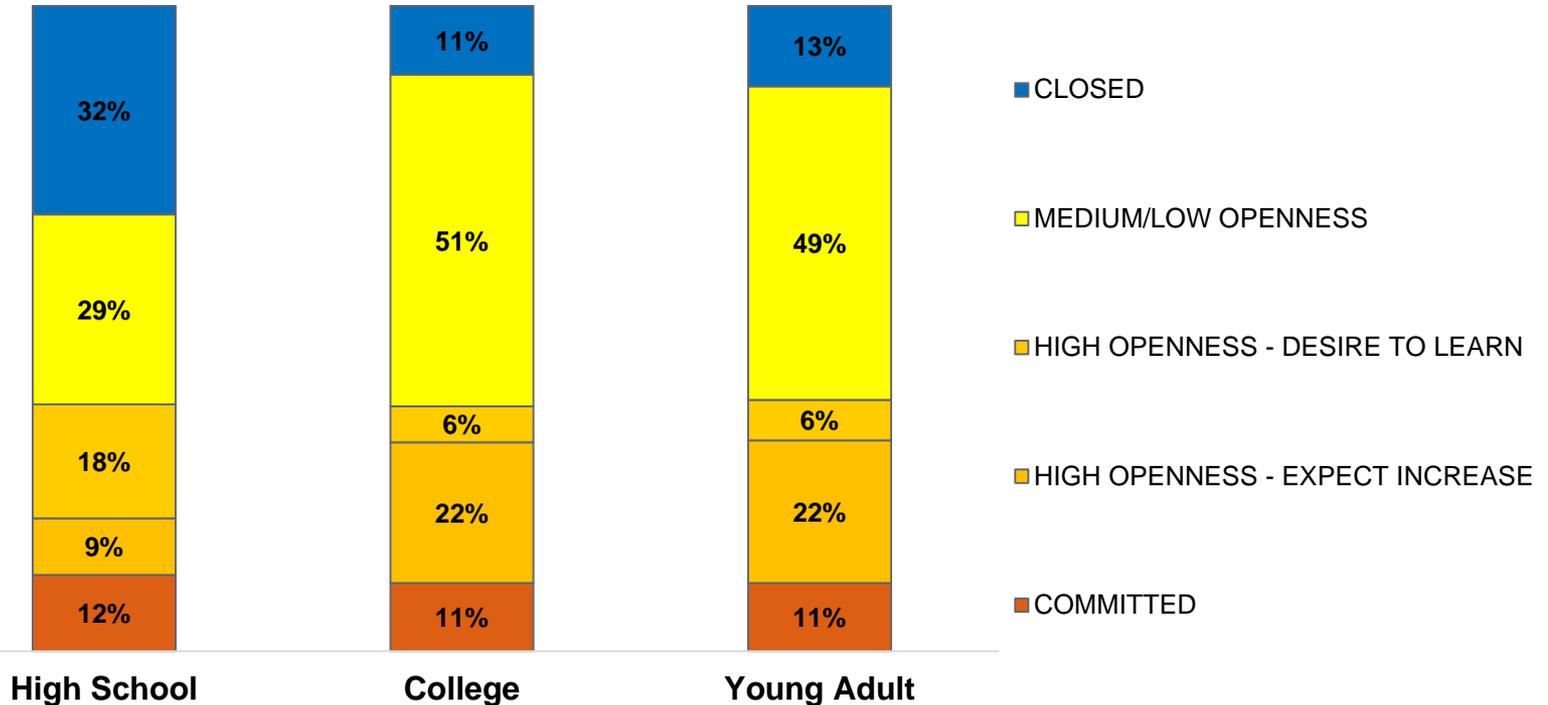


TARGETING

Role of Judaism in Their Life – By Age

Young Adult and College aged under-engaged Jews appear to be somewhat more open to increasing the role of Judaism in their life.

Role of Judaism in Their Life



Q. Which of the statements below comes closest to describing what Judaism means to you? Base: All under-engaged

Source: under-engaged Jewish Youth Survey (Finch Brands 2015)



Target Prioritization by Age

Consistent with increasing levels of independence and self-determination, focus groups indicated that older Millennials appear to be somewhat better targets since they are making their own big life decisions.

	Highly Dependent		Highly Independent
	High School Students	College Students	Young Adults
			
Ages	15-18	19-22	23-26
Life Stage	Finding my fit	Forming my identity	Starting my story
Receptivity	Good	Better	Best

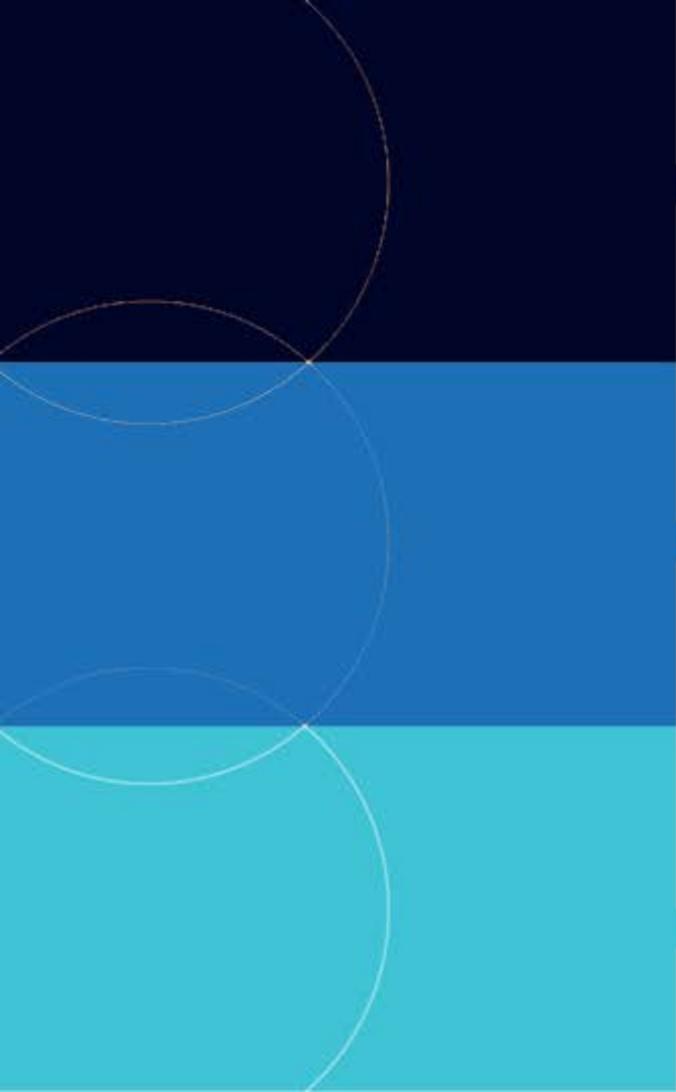


KEY IMPLICATIONS

Key Implications

- *We're fighting the battle of lost momentum from the prior generation.*
 - *The door is still open for most young Jews to engage with their Jewish identity on a deeper level.*
 - *There is existing, widespread strength in how under-engaged Jews view culture & tradition from the POV of family.*
 - *Paths to success trump the pursuit of meaning.*
 - *Direct efforts to drive religiosity will fail at scale. Jewish Values are a more promising pathway to engagement.*
 - *Views toward Israel are broadly positive and don't need repair like we might have expected (especially in college).*
 - *The solution must be both offline (for personal connection) and online (for convenience & personalization).*
- Those who deliver the message must be engaging, inspiring, and relatable.*





Overview & Methodology

Key Findings

Recommendations & Actions

Core High Level Recommendations

THE TARGET

- **Target the program to reach all 3 segments in reverse order (1. Young Adults, 2. College, 3. HS)**

THE MESSAGE

- **Lead with cultural connections early rather than religion or even spirituality.**
 - A real connection and existing strength exists here (culture, family, tradition) vs. polarized perceptions toward religion.
- **Emphasize how being Jewish is completely compatible with life in 2016.**
 - We must rebrand by focusing on the modern story rather than getting hung up in the past.
- **Self-improvement and guidance toward positive life outcomes should be central to content.**
 - Under-engaged Jewish youth don't see this link to Judaism today so a bridge must be built.

THE MEDIUM

- **Create the necessary partnership and alliances to unite and amplify the effect of existing efforts.**
 - Great work exists but this is a bigger issue than any one organization can tackle alone.
- **Combine offline/online approaches to make efforts approachable, accessible, and personal.**
 - While they are critically important, focusing only on digital efforts is not enough. Face to face contact is incredibly important.

Deliver content from the voices of successful Jews who are visible ambassadors for Judaism.

The right mix will include both successful young role models they can relate to and recognized giants in their fields.



THANK YOU

