

JFED Ambassador Meeting
Jan. 13, 2014

NOTE: The notes capture the themes of the discussion rather than representing all the comments shared.

1. How long have you lived here?

- Born/raised in Edmonton – 6
- 2 – 10 years – 3
- 20 – 30 years – 3
- 40 – 50 years – 3

2. How do you find Jewish life generally?

- A lot going on
- Warm, vibrant, active for those who choose to participate
- If not “connected” it is hard to find out what is going on
- Needs better integration of institutions/organizations
- Marginalized members find it difficult to connect (disabilities, LGBT, poverty)
- More education/yiddishkeit will lead to more engagement
- Too many programs aimed at same target group

3. Aspirations for the community. Barriers/challenges to reaching those aspirations.

- More cooperation amongst groups, less competition
 - More opportunities to connect Jews to their Jewishness
 - JCC was an important place for those arriving to Edmonton – a place to connect
 - A neutral place to gather; a place used by Jews of all walks of life (secular, religious, cultural); a central gathering place can strengthen community, identity and sense of belonging
 - provide quality (“the best”) programming
 - must base future on how families are configured today (both parents working); meet the Jews of the 21st century where they are; maybe our model for the 21st century need to change: don’t need bricks and mortar – can have a virtual community (example: University distance education today)
 - focus needs to be on youth and young families
 - if we don’t have a Jewish place, people/families will go to non-Jewish place for programs, connecting
 - JCC as an “information exchange” place – kids, teens, singles, seniors
 - There is value in a campus concept
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- **Barriers:** need to increase sharing of information; location; leadership; what’s affordable and sustainable

4. Value of having a central facility and what should it offer.

- A gathering and education place (study torah)
- Entertainment, theater groups, dance
- Easily accessible
- Values all ages coming together
- Provide a community auditorium and meeting place
- Can't be all things to all people.