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Social Climate at Ramah: Relationships and Motivation

Introduction: The Broad Scope of Developmental Goals at Ramah

MANY AUTHORS HAVE DESCRIBED the broad nature of the goals and effects of Jewish summer camping. For example, Sales and Saxe (2004), discussing Jewish summer camping in general, describe camp as a "socializing agent." Writing specifically about the Ramah Camping Movement, Seymour Fox (1989, 16) uses the terms "cognitive," "affective," and "interpersonal" to describe the scope of Ramah's vision and reach. The founding of Ramah was premised on a broad definition of Jewish engagement:

> Ramah was unique, and hopefully remains so, in its attention to the development of religious sensibility. While many of the activities that comprise the "religious life" of camp did not perhaps differ from that obtained in other camps, they were driven by two considerations not always evident in other settings—religious as a world view which is important to the development of individual personality at least in a measure equal to the functions it serves as an instrument of group solidarity; and the religious tradition of Judaism as a code of private and public behavior of extraordinary ethical sensitivity. (Ackerman 1999, 50)

Although one may disagree with Ackerman's comment about Ramah's continued *uniqueness* in this regard, few would argue with this conceptualization of

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the outcomes of the camp experience. Ramah is described, through a Jewish lens, as a developmental setting that impacts on campers' self-perception and behaviors in ways that include, but go beyond, ritual involvement.

Ramah's mission statement includes language that describes "a caring, encouraging approach to personal growth and individual religious experience which interact to form Jewish identity" and "a religious commitment to social justice and the ecological welfare of our world."[1] There is an indication that this holistic view of intertwined Jewish and general developmental outcomes is not just "from the top" but is also held by the campers themselves. For example, responding to a question about the mission of Ramah, a sixteen-year-old counselor-in-training wrote:[2]

> You would like me to write that Ramah is, to me, just about Judaism. However, it is really about understanding yourself, not only as a Jew but as a person. The purpose of Camp Ramah is to allow campers and staff to experience a close sense of community while developing skills and maturing as individuals.

Furthermore, staff members report their strong belief about their impact on the social and emotional lives of their campers (Kress, this volume). In fact, language such as this, without the religious references (though perhaps with "spiritual" language), also can be found in the discussion of the goals and outcomes within the secular camping movement. For example, the American Camp Association points to the ability of camp to help teach "powerful lessons in community, character-building, skill-development, and healthy living."[3]

Social Climate: A Key Element in Effective Developmental Settings

How do educational-developmental settings go about achieving such developmental outcomes? Although the answer to this question is quite broad, one important line of research focuses on "social climate," (e.g., Dalton, Elias, and Wandersman 2001) or the way in which participants in a setting experience the quality of relationships and interactions in the setting. Such perceptions are seen not only as descriptive of the setting but also as indicators of the norms and expectations experienced by participants in a setting, the "way things are here," so to speak. The activities of participants in the setting and the norms of a setting are seen as existing in dynamic interaction; behaviors create norms, and norms create behaviors.

Social climate is related to the actual norms and regularities of interactions in a setting, or what is often referred to as the "culture" of the organization. Seymour Sarason (1971, 12), a pioneer in this area, writes:

> In many situations it is likely that one can predict an individual's behavior far better on the basis of knowledge of the social structure and his position in it than one can on the basis of his personal dynamics.
>
> All that I am saying at this point is that when we say a setting is "organized," or that cultures differ from each other, we mean, among other things, that there is a distinct structure or pattern that, so to speak, governs roles and interrelationships within that setting. What is implied, in addition, is that structure antedates any one individual and will continue in the absence of the individual. It may well be that it is precisely because one cannot *see* structure in the same way that one sees an individual that we have trouble grasping and acting in terms of its existence.

A unique ecological system is created in every educational setting due to the dynamics in the relationships among the parents, staff members, administrators, students, and other members of the community. The climate of an educational setting is created through consistency in everyday interactions. Every setting has its own distinctive social climate. However, perceptions may not be consistent among all subgroups within a setting; that is, some participants may have a more or less favorable view than others (Dalton, Elias, and Wandersman 2001).

Social climate issues have been a focus of researchers examining the "developmental assets" of settings that promote positive growth and development (Benson 2003). These researchers stress the importance of interactions between the developing person and the educational-developmental settings in which he or she participates, describing factors that contribute to positive development that can be found not only within the individual (such as coping and conflict resolution skills) but also on the environmental level. These factors include (Eccles and Gootman 2002, 90–91):

- physical and psychological safety
- appropriate structure
- supportive relationships
- opportunities to belong
- positive social norms
- support for efficacy and mattering
- opportunities for skill building
- integration of family, school, and community efforts

These elements have been developed by Kress and Reimer (2009, 349–50) to apply to Jewish informal educational settings as five principles:

- Positive developmental-educational settings are marked by safety, personal respect, and clear boundaries.

• Positive developmental-educational settings are marked by warm, caring relationships among all members of the community.

• Youth, and particularly adolescents, benefit most from settings in which they have a substantial voice in helping to shape the setting and can fill meaningful roles that contribute to its functioning.

• Multiple entry points into ritual practice and the study of texts facilitate the ability of youth to engage with the tradition.

• Quality developmental-educational settings are marked by planful attention to the affective experiences of the participants and the deep integration of "learning" and "feeling."

Given the focus of Camp Ramah on positive developmental outcomes, it is important to examine the participants' perceptions of the social climate of camp. How do campers describe the developmental (Jewish and general) impact of Ramah? How do campers experience relationships with peers and staff? Where do they find support? In what way do they perceive their own self-growth at camp? What activities motivate them? How do these issues extend to Jewish growth in camp? To address these issues, the authors conducted a survey of 525 rising sixth- to eighth-grade campers[4] in two Ramah camps.

Ramah: Caring Relationships and Positive Development Are the Norm

The data in table 1 show that overall, respondents feel at home in camp and have many friends there. Further, they report strong relationships with staff members and feeling comfortable turning to them in times of difficulty. More than just keepers of order, staff members are seen by many campers as agents of growth and development. There are significant differences between subgroups, however, with regard to certain clusters of these variables. Girls voice stronger agreement than boys[5] to clusters of items having to do with:

• Camp as a place to experience friendship and exercise talents. (E.g., "As a result of attending this camp, I have discovered new abilities and gifts that I have," and "I have made some very good friends at this camp.")

• Seeking staff support and guidance. (E.g., "When I am having personal problems because of something going on at this camp, I find an adult and I ask for help.")

• Perceptions of staff intervention with regard to behavioral issues. (E.g., "There is at least one bunk counselor or other staff member at this camp who will approach me if he or she is concerned about my behavior.")

• The role of staff in fostering general positive development. (E.g., "My bunk counselors and other staff members push me to accomplish more than I had ever thought possible.")[6]

Table 1. Relationships and Development

STATEMENTS	PERCENT "AGREEING"[7]
I have made some very good friends at this camp.	96
This camp is a place where I am among friends.	91
Most bunk counselors and other staff members care whether I am a good person.	87
If I have some type of crisis during my time at this camp, I know that there is an adult here who will help me.	87
There is at least one bunk counselor or other staff member at this camp who will approach me if he or she is concerned about my behavior.	86
At this camp, there is at least one adult I can trust to act in my best interests if I confide in him or her about something that concerns me.	84
This camp feels like a place I can call "my own" (for example, a place where I can really be myself, a place where I am comfortable).	82
At this camp, I am encouraged to share (talk about or use) my talents and ideas.	77
When things go wrong, I tell at least one adult about it.	68
As a result of attending this camp, I have discovered new abilities and gifts that I have.	66
When I am having personal problems because of something going on at this camp, I find an adult and I ask for help.	63
When I am in trouble, I continue to ask one or more persons older than me for help until the problem is solved.	58
When I am having personal problems because of something that is not related to camp, I find an adult and I ask for help.	53
My bunk counselors and other staff members push me to accomplish more than I had ever thought possible.	51
My bunk counselors and other staff members are helping me to become a better thinker (e.g., helping me become a person who is able to figure out problems and puzzles).	50
My bunk counselors and other staff members are helping me to become a more creative person.	50
When I am making a decision about my future, I seek advice from an adult at this camp.	43
I feel lonely a lot of the time at camp.	12
At least one of my bunk counselors or other staff member has told me that he or she does not think I'll ever make anything of myself.	7

As the data in table 2 show, campers recognize the importance of Ramah staff in shaping their growth as Jews and many attribute connections to Israel and to the Conservative Movement to their attendance at camp. Of course, the future intentions — Jewish or otherwise — of a middle school student are not to be taken as indicators of future realities; there is no more than a very weak connection assumed between these intentions and actual adult behavioral manifestations. Rather, these data should be understood as current indicators of the connection seen by campers between their experiences and their sense of who they are and who they might become. Interestingly, although campers acknowledge the role of staff in motivating their growth, fewer agree that they seek advice from staff when making important life decisions, Jewish or otherwise. Moreover, campers are significantly less likely to seek advice from staff about Jewish matters than they are about general future decisions. Girls voice more agreement than boys for groups of items representing the perceived impact of the camp and staff on campers' Jewish growth (e.g., the item "My bunk counselors and other staff members are helping me become a more knowledgeable Jew").

Table 2. Perceived Jewish Impact

STATEMENTS	PERCENT "AGREEING"
At this camp, all of the people who teach *yahadut kittah/shi'ur* (Jewish Studies class) make sure that I understand what is being taught.	76
One of the reasons why I like being a camper at this camp is because I am among Jews here.	71
There is at least one adult at this camp who inspires me to learn more about Judaism.	71
My bunk counselors and other staff members are helping me become a more knowledgeable Jew.	70
Attending this camp has given me a fairly clear idea of how I want to lead a Jewish life as an adult.	62
As a result of attending this camp, I am more likely to support Israel publicly among youth my age.	62
Because I go to this camp, I feel more connected to the Conservative Movement within Judaism.	61
When I have to solve challenges in my daily life, I am able to apply teachings from Judaism that I have learned at camp.	40
I seek advice when making a decision about my future from a Jewish adult at this camp because I want a Jewish perspective.	28

Motivation, Challenge, and Interest in Camp Activities

Positive educational-developmental settings engage participants' interests and provide motivation and challenge. Table 3 relates to elements of such engagement. Overall, girls were more engaged than boys in camp activities. Looking at individual categories of activities, girls were more engaged than boys in all activities except sports (boys were more engaged) and *yahadut* and *ivrit* classes (no gender differences).

Finding structured "formal" educational experiences on the bottom of the list of activities to which campers look forward will come as no surprise to most readers, though the extent of this lack of enthusiasm may be alarming. However, a large number of campers do seem to find their yahadut classes interesting and challenging. So, although it may be a stretch to expect middle-

Table 3. Elements of Engagement

STATEMENTS		PERCENT "AGREEING"
I look forward to when it is time for me to engage in . . .		
	ḥugim	91
	pe'ulot erev	77
	pe'ulot tzerif	75
	sports	75
	swimming	73
	Shabbat	69
	camp-wide activities (for example, zimriyyah, plays)	67
	yom meyuḥad	57
	rikkud, shirah	45
	Yahadut (Jewish studies kittah/shi'ur)	33
	Ivrit (Hebrew kittah/shi'ur)	27
What's going on both challenges me and really interests me in my . . .		
	ḥugim	70
	sports	61
	swimming	53
	camp-wide activities (for example, zimkudiyyah, plays)	53
	Shabbat	51
	pe'ulot erev	50
	pe'ulot tzerif	46
	Yahadut (Jewish studies kittah/shi'ur)	45
	yom meyuḥad	39
	rikkud, shirah	38
	Ivrit (Hebrew kittah/shi'ur)	35

school students to "look forward" to classes, and although there is certainly room for improvement in perceived interest and challenge for yahadut, Ramah educators can be heartened by data suggesting that it is possible to interest and challenge campers, even in the face of their questionable levels of motivation. Yahadut classes, which are more topical and oriented toward discussion and activity, fare better overall than do Hebrew language classes. Interestingly, both lists are topped by *ḥugim,* which are "elective" activities in which campers pursue their interests in sports, arts, and so on. That these activities would be the most engaging is not surprising and is consistent with the literature on positive educational-developmental settings suggesting the importance of participants' abilities to shape their own settings.

As shown in table 4, although campers may see *tefillot* as an opportunity to learn, to use Kress and Reimer's language (2009, 350), they do not experience them as opportunities for "deep integration of 'learning' and 'feeling.'" Although respondents do report finding it significantly more important to participate actively in tefillot at camp than they report looking forward to attending services in their home synagogues, only around one-third of the respondents claim to find tefillot to be emotionally stirring or say they are challenged and interested in tefillot at camp. Notably, the degree of "challenge and interest" in tefillot at camp does not significantly differ from that reported for the home synagogues. Finally, campers seem to be split in the degree to which they see staff members as role models for prayer, with 45 percent viewing them positively in this regard.

Table 4. Perceptions of Tefillah at Ramah

STATEMENTS	PERCENT "AGREEING"
The services at this camp are run in a way that allows me to learn how to pray.	55
Watching the adults at this camp pray makes me think that praying is very important.	45
Actively participating in tefillot (religious services) at this camp is important to me.	44
Tefillot (religious services) at this camp stir my emotions in a positive way.	38
When I am not at camp, I look forward to attending religious services at my home synagogue.	33
What's going on both challenges me and really interests me in the religious services at camp.	32
What's going on both challenges me and really interests me in the religious services at my home synagogue.	28

The Importance of Camper Choice and Empowerment

The current data show that Ramah campers, by and large, are motivated by, interested in, and challenged by many camp activities. Consequently, these activities hold enormous developmental potential. In fact, campers report the impact of Ramah on who they are Jewishly and generally. The exception to this appears to be in the more "formal" offerings of camp—classes and tefillot. While such findings are predictable, it is possible to glean some recommendations from the data. In particular, the most motivating, interesting, and challenging aspects of camp are the ḥugim. Ḥugim are electives but not optional; everyone is involved with a ḥug, but campers choose their preferences for an activity on which they will focus throughout an extended period, if not the entire summer. One lesson here relates to choice and motivation. As discussed by noted developmental psychologist David Elkind:[8]

> Camp activities are created to meet the needs, interests, and abilities of the children. In addition, children have choices as to the activities in which they will participate. Some may prefer swimming to hiking while others may prefer spending much of their time participating in crafts. Because children have a choice and can choose the activity they prefer, it gives them the opportunity to express themselves and is a form of play. And because the camp respects their personal tastes and aptitudes, they admire and respect their counselors (for the most part) and as a result learn a great deal about themselves and others.

Elkind's comments link choice with personal aptitudes and opportunities for skill development. Educators often struggle to make educational experiences "meaningful" to the learners. Connecting experiences with the interests and skills valued by participants and allowing participants to improve their skills and build their sense of self with regard to these competencies is the essence of making education meaningful. Might we think of the application of these themes to classes and tefillah? Ramah staff can, for example, consider how to integrate student interests and growth areas into the accepted structure of prayer. Might those interested in music, for example, be involved in playing their instruments as part of the service or composing/playing new tunes based on the siddur? Might this, or activities like it, become a project on which campers can work over the course of the summer and then present to his or her peers? Might older campers be involved in facilitating such "innovative" tefillot for younger campers? The importance of choice is consistent with the literature reviewed earlier that described meaningful youth input into the workings of an organization as a key element of creating positive developmental settings, and that can challenge Ramah leadership and staff to consider how youth can become more empowered in shaping the activities in which they participate;

perhaps—particularly in the older *edot*—playing a role on the committees that plan activities.

Relationships among Campers: An Opportunity for Camp Improvement

In general, camp is seen as a safe and welcoming place where friendships thrive. However, it is important to keep in mind that not all participants in an educational setting experience that setting in the same way. A sizable minority of respondents report the presence of cliques at camp (table 5), and more than a quarter of respondents agree that they have been, in some way, bullied at camp. The fact that a smaller percentage sees bullying as a serious problem may indicate either a limited amount of bullying (the bullying has not reached "serious" levels) or, more disturbingly, the sense among a small number of campers that some bullying is part of the norm (i.e., it is not a "problem"). Not surprisingly, those who report having been bullied are disproportionately represented among those who believe that bullying is a serious problem at camp. Those agreeing that they have been bullied over the summer are more likely to be boys, and those who are in their first year at camp express more agreement that they have been bullied than those in their second or third years (treated as a combined group).[9]

Table 5. Challenges in Interpersonal Relationships

STATEMENTS	PERCENT "AGREEING"
In general, bunk counselors stop campers from verbally or physically bullying other campers.	78
At this camp, if some other kids are going to do something harmful, I tell someone who can help.	64
I remain silent if my camp friends are going to do something harmful.	60
If a camper is being bullied or mistreated at this camp, another camper will usually stand up for him or her.	59
When I am worried about a friend, I feel comfortable talking to a counselor or another adult about my worry.	57
When I do something kind for another camper, a bunk counselor or other staff member usually praises me for doing so.	54
There are many groups of friends (cliques) here that exclude other campers.	38
During this summer, another camper has bullied me.	26
Bullying is a serious problem at this camp.	16
When another camper is being made fun of in a humiliating way, I join in the laughter.	8

Though this survey did not aim to define bullying or to obtain an incidence level (i.e., for those who did agree that they were bullied over the course of the summer, we have no idea about the frequency of this occurrence or the specific nature of the behaviors involved), clearly Ramah educators should continue to address this issue. Current approaches to bullying-prevention (e.g., Olweus 1993) take a systemic approach, with all community members taking responsibility not only for refraining from bullying but also for stopping such behavior when it occurs. The current data suggest that Ramah camps can intensify their attempts to foster a sense of *kol yisra'el arevim zeh bazeh* (the responsibility of all Jews for one another's well-being). Slightly fewer than two-thirds of respondents report that campers will stand up for a mistreated peer, and similar numbers report talking to staff when they have a concern about a peer. Although campers do not generally report joining in with bullying behavior, the majority report remaining silent when friends are doing something harmful. And whereas staff members are seen as making efforts to squelch bullying behaviors, they are less often seen shaping behavior using praise.

Overall, campers perceive Ramah to be a warm and welcoming place where they can feel "at home" among friends in a supportive and caring atmosphere. Although many in the camping world might take this as a given, the importance of the social and emotional elements of the experience should not be underplayed. Educational theorists and researchers have described caring relationships as fundamental building blocks for all learning (e.g., Noddings 1992), and at camp, where the intensity of relationships is magnified, the quality of interactions are paramount.

There are, however, areas in which camp staff can improve. Even within overwhelmingly positive trends, the data point to individuals who are socially isolated or even bullied. As noted, it is important to take a systemic, community-based approach to this complex issue in which responsibility for stopping the problem rests with each member of the community. The role of the "bystanders" to help stop bullying must be further developed, along with a sense of communal responsibility for the collective well-being of the entire community. Camp staff also must be more attentive to the existence of cliques, particularly as these might extend over the course of many years in settings such as summer camp. This issue is very challenging as camps value the creation of strong, lasting friendships, with "camp friends" taking an exalted role among campers' relationships. However, staff and campers must work to achieve "close-knit" without "exclusive."

Community-building does not happen automatically; it cannot be decreed, determined by posted rules, or achieved through a few ice-breakers.

It is a complex matter that requires constant monitoring and development on a variety of levels. The findings that we report suggest that staff must become more proactive in acknowledging positive behaviors and in fostering communication with campers around their interpersonal concerns for themselves or their peers. Such routines for communication are best not created in crisis situations. The bunk "sit-down" when there is an infraction of social rules should not be the primary venue for developing positive communication. Rather, positive communication should emerge from established habits and rituals of dialogue among members of the camp community. Campers should have input into the setting of behavioral expectations, and staff should process with their groups the extent to which progress was made on achieving these, focusing on situations that have challenged campers' efforts and the ways this was, or could be, addressed.

Not all members of the camp community, or any community, enter into social interactions on equal footing. New campers, not familiar with written or unwritten camp traditions, can be assigned buddies to help "show them the ropes." Older campers can team with younger campers as mentors. Further, relationship building requires skills in "emotional intelligence" (Goleman 1995), and campers will come to camp exhibiting differences in their competencies in these areas. Some campers have difficulty, for example, reading the social cues needed to join a group or enter into a game. Some may have difficulties with self-control or express themselves in idiosyncratic ways. As part of the current project, data were collected addressing campers' perception of their emotional intelligence. Though these are not reported here, there are indicators pointing toward the overlap of perceived problems with bullying and poorer self-rated social and emotional skills. A systemic approach would neither blame these campers for social difficulties at camp, nor put the onus for changing the situation on them. However, camp staff must be prepared to both promote the social and emotional growth of all of their campers and identify and address those exhibiting particular deficits and work with all campers on how to live together in a caring community with others regardless of their social and emotional skills.

Conclusions: Intentionality in Developmental Programs

Bialeschki, Schmid, and Tilley (2006)[10] conducted a multi-site-intervention research project related to camp improvement and, reflecting on their findings, acknowledge that "none of these thoughts are revolutionary in and of themselves." This is the case with the present study. What is new is the glimpse of the campers that was gleaned from observing the *intensity* with which they agreed or disagreed with items. Ramah is well known for the strong relationships

that campers tend to form among themselves. The intensity of the campers' responses to the items that deal with relationships revealed that we cannot always assume that campers naturally have the skill set and competence to maintain healthy relationships with peers and adults. In fact, Ramah's emphasis on the group goes against the grain of American society—and perhaps, this is the point. Whereas American society emphasizes individualism and fluidity of group affiliation, Ramah stands for promoting a sustained group cohesion. The current research empirically validates what we had known up until now only through personal stories: those of us who remember our Ramah days with great fondness realize that Ramah served as the template for the relationships that we have formed since then. And if we understand the structure of Ramah's magic, then we are able to promote it intentionally at Ramah and in other Jewish educational settings.

The current research also provides educators with the analytical tools to figure out what to do when there is a sense of unease because relationships are not forming among the campers as expected. Responses to this sense of unease have included the way that Ramah deals aggressively with issues of "climate," both in peer-to-peer programming (bunk activities on self image, respect for others, making camp a welcoming place for all, etc.) and through intensive staff training (leadership training on a camp and national level, staff week programs devoted specifically to the problem of bullying, identifying specific procedures for staff and campers to safely report bullying so that it can be addressed early before too much harm is caused, etc.).

It is important to realize, though, that even the most basic recommendations can be very difficult to achieve. Bialeschki, Schmid, and Tilley's experience with a data-driven camp improvement process illustrates the challenges posed by even mundane findings. These authors suggest that ongoing commitment to change poses a particular challenge as good intentions must be translated into even the most minute aspects of the organization. Improving the social climate of a camp—or any other important area—requires constant monitoring. Among their recommendations are to:

• Focus on mission with intentional effort. Doing things that bear little relationship to your mission pulls energy away from improvements that could positively connect to your goals. Why do you do what you do in camp?

• Be deliberate in strengthening camp activities. Revise activity lesson plans to address skill development on a daily level. Are your campers fully challenged?

• Strengthen programming/scheduling to take advantage of every opportunity. For example, change arrival day procedures to foster community and emotional safety or alter the daily schedule to allow time for staff

and campers to "hang out" with the intention of building strong positive relationships.

• Review staff patterns. Schedule more staff to supervise free time with the intention of addressing safety and relationships goals.

• Emphasize camper planning. Implement new efforts around meaningful camper involvement in planning evening programs, cabin activities, and free-time activities. Offer campers opportunities to participate in camper councils and meetings with the directors and administrative staff.

• Build staff training to model the values core to your mission. Train staff in how to facilitate/process activities that encourage camper leadership and planning, how to listen in ways that promote emotional safety, and how to have meaningful conversations with children.

• Address facility concerns. Make improvements by painting buildings and bathrooms (with camper input) and paying attention to lighting concerns. In most cases, the dollar impact is minimal when compared to the effect (Bialeschki, Schmid, and Tilley, 2006).

The concept of "developmental intentionality" (Walker et al. 2005) has been introduced as a guiding framework for structuring positive youth developmental settings. Developmental intentionality refers to (a) attention to positive developmental outcomes in all aspects of the functioning of an organization — from the broad visioning to the specific implementation of programs; (b) a collaborative process in which youth are involved in shaping their own environments; and (c) a match between the needs and talents of youth and the offerings of the setting. Although intentionality can be planned in advance, there is a component that is reactive to realities as they emerge in the life of the setting and the experience of the participants. Walker et al. (2005, 403) liken this to improvisational jazz in which there might be a general framework for action but in which those involved are encouraged to follow their own instincts while still maintaining a sense of the overall structure of the piece. Intentionality in camp programming must be planful, the vision must be clear, and camp structures and procedures must be thoughtfully examined to consider their impact on positive youth development. Intentionality also must be fluid, with ongoing opportunities for all involved to reflect on progress and challenges and make corrections as the summer moves ahead.

Intentionality also implies focus; the intensity of improvement efforts makes it difficult to focus on too many initiatives or goals at once.[11] Meaningful, lasting change requires sustained attention on a narrow set of goals across many camp venues. For example, intentionality calls upon Ramah leadership to consider the nature of staff training and learning. Although there are many topics to cover during staff orientation and throughout the summer, a smorgasbord of

topics is not conducive to the type of impact one would want to have on staff. Just as we expect campers to engage in ongoing ḥugim to work on valued skills and would not expect much of an outcome from a one-shot exposure to, say, swimming class, staff members need a forum for ongoing self-reflection and support to address the complex social challenges brought by campers.

Intentionality also addresses the organizational-structural aspects of Ramah. How might campers play meaningful roles in committees for their edot, planning and implementing activities or tefillot? How might *kittot* be organized as electives to be selected, and what role do campers have in structuring these? How are bunk-staff, or even campers, involved in decision making on a camp-wide level with regard to issues that may impact on relationships within the camp? What particular needs do subgroups of campers have (for example, boys seem to be less motivated by camp activities and more subject to interpersonal difficulties compared to girls) and how can these best be met?

The answers to questions like these are complex and have broad ramifications for a camp. The current data suggest that, in general, Ramah brings a strong positive social climate that addresses the developmental needs of the campers. The structures and policies are in place to make this happen, the result of the wonderful efforts of generations of Ramah leadership. The challenge is to bring these strengths to help shine a light on those corners that still pose "climate" challenges.

Notes

[1] http://www.campramah.org/pdf/nrc_mission_statement.pdf.

[2] http://www.campramah.org/experiences/Ramah_Mission.html.

[3] http://www.acacamps.org/about/profile.php.

[4] More girls responded to this survey than did boys (59% and 41%, respectively). Approximately half of the respondents reported attending a Jewish day school in the past year, and 41% attended supplemental school. Close to half (49%) report participation in a Jewish youth group, and a slightly lower percent (45%) have visited Israel. Respondents have spent an average of three years at camp, with some, probably the children of staff members, reporting much longer attendance (up to fourteen years). Jewishly, half come from homes in which separate plates are used for meat and dairy. The largest percentage (47%) of respondents report that they attend services weekly.

[5] All reported inferential analyses are significant to at least $p < .05$ unless otherwise noted. Complete statistical information is available from the authors.

[6] It is important to note that here and in all analyses such as this, a statistical difference does not mean that any group is "low" or "high" on a particular scale, only that the differences in the responses between the groups are not due to chance.

[7] All respondents indicating "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" to a particular item are considered within the reported "Percent 'Agreeing.'"

[8] http://www.acacamps.org/campmag/0701elkind.php.

[9] Although there was a trend to report more bullying for the first years than for attendance at camp for four or more years, this did not achieve statistical significance.

[10] http://www.acacamps.org/campmag/0609kids.php.

[11] See Joseph Reimer (in this volume) for similar recommendations regarding issues of "vision" for Ramah leadership.

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