



This document reflects responses to the 2023 Camp Insights Survey. Respondents were asked to share areas of both strength and growth in their efforts related to **Alumni Engagement**. This document summarizes the responses camps reported – we hope these ideas help other camps as they determine how to best respond to these societal trends.

Alumni Engagement

Alumni engagement is an important area of focus for camps. In addition to serving as a primary source for fundraising, alumni can send their children to camp, serve as volunteers, be a source of ideas and connections to potential partners and vendors, and act as goodwill ambassadors to community stakeholders. For the first time, the JCamp 180 survey asked camps what they were considering or implementing around alumni engagement. Here is what camps shared:

- During COVID, alumni engagement – like other camp outreach – was limited to online connection. Donors – including many alumni – stepped up when camps needed them most, but camps somewhat deprioritized traditional alumni engagement as they dealt with so many urgent and existential challenges.
- As COVID recedes, camps are planning and implementing a range of in person and other alumni engagement activities. The few camps not meaningfully engaging in this work report that they want to be but indicate they are constrained by insufficient bandwidth and resources to devote to alumni engagement. Older camps generally have more alumni activities, while younger camps are just beginning to gear up.
- Many camps are strengthening their capacity and resourcing to engage alumni. This includes setting up or revitalizing Alumni Committees with representatives from different cohorts and bringing younger alumni onto the Board.
 - *“We have 3 board seats that we specifically look to fill with young alumni - typically late 20s, done with school and starting in their careers.”*
- Camps also are strengthening the available professional support, including explicitly assigning alumni outreach and programming responsibilities to dedicated staff.

- Camps also are focusing on specific target groups to better segment and serve their alumni cohorts. The most frequently referenced priority groups were:
 - Alumni who send their children to camp
 - Young alumni (most respondents defined this as ~22-35 year olds)

Interestingly, respondents did NOT identify older, wealthy alumni as a targeted segment for deeper engagement.

- The most frequently referenced alumni engagement approaches include:
 - Reunion weekends (especially anniversary celebrations)
 - Alumni visits during camp season
 - Alumni night
 - Camp-wide shabbat
 - *“We want to have more alumni visit camp - we already have 2 groups booked for the summer and plan to invite more.”*
 - Dedicated alumni time at camp out of the camp season
 - Weekends for alumni, especially young adults (e.g., 22-35 year olds)
 - Family camp
 - Adult camp
 - Alumni shabbat
 - Special alumni gatherings (i.e., Alumni canoe trips)
 - Alumni volunteer work
 - Activities which take place away from camp
 - Sports (e.g., football, golf), games (e.g., poker, trivia), pub nights
 - Social get-togethers
 - Other programming
- Some camps have had success in running concurrent activities in multiple cities
 - *“We plan to have an annual event in the city near camp with satellite events in other cities to bring alumni together so they continue to feel connected to camp.”*
- In addition to sporadic one-time activities, several camps are looking to operate more regular alumni events and activities during the year. Some of the camps are also looking at incorporating alumni activities with broader community events, such as visitors’ day.
- Camps continue to work on strengthening their systems of alumni engagement, including through improved communication and programming with alumni, dedicated alumni-engagement staff with appropriate bandwidth, and upgraded record keeping and data management.