

Resilience in Action

Cultivating a Thriving Jewish Youth Community



Monday, March 3, 10:00am - 4:30pm

9:30 Registration Opens

Room: L2 Auditorium

10:00-11:30 Welcome + Keynote

Room: L2 Auditorium

Engaging Youth in the Age of Screens: Facing the Challenge TOGETHER*

Dr. Yoni Schwab, PhD, [The Shefa Center](#)

Room: L2 Auditorium

Jonathan Haidt's *Anxious Generation* has sparked a national conversation about the harmful impact cell phones and social media have on children and teens. It has become clear that educators and community leaders are crucial in guiding a more positive culture change for Jewish youth and their families. Yoni will share a perspective from the field about how we can find balance in our relationship with technology for the benefit of our teens and ourselves.

**This session offers 1 NYS Continuing Education Credit for social workers*

11:30-11:45 Break

11:45-12:45 Concurrent Sessions

Rooms: 7th Floor

Did I Hear That Correctly? Responding to Youth with Confidence

Presenters: Jeffrey Younger and Sara Diamant, [Shalom Task Force](#)

Room: 7th Floor West Beit

As educators, it's not uncommon to encounter student comments or questions that stop us in our tracks—remarks that don't require mandated reporting but leave us unsure of how to proceed. This session will equip educators with the tools and confidence to navigate these moments effectively, ensuring they respond thoughtfully and constructively.

In Their Own Words: Teens and Their Mental Health*

Presenters: Paige GoldMarche and Pamela Barkley, MSW, [Moving Traditions](#) with Frieda B., Ari M., and Alessandra R.

Room: 7th Floor Conference Center

Learn with Paige GoldMarche and Pamela Barkley as they speak with current participants and alumni of the Meyer-Gottesman Kol Koleinu Teen Feminist Fellowship through Moving Traditions. The youth will share how their generation of Jewish teens thinks and talks about mental health and therapy. They'll share how social media impacts their mental health and how parents and adult mentors play a role in their mindset. Our teens are handling the stress of high school, extracurriculars, and jobs, and feeling the weight of the world on their shoulders. We'll explore what they need from us to help them feel supported and how the language today's teens use differs from previous generations.

**This session offers 1 NYS Continuing Education Credit for social workers*

Joy Detectives: Cultivating Mindfulness and Resilience

Presenter: Yael Shy

Room: 7th Floor East Beit

Discover the transformative power of joy in supporting mental wellness for yourself and the youth you serve. In this interactive workshop, we'll explore what joy truly is (and is not) and its key obstacles, learning how to navigate through stress and chaos with a sense of purpose and play. Participants will become "Joy Detectives," engaging in a sensory-based mindfulness journey designed to uncover and amplify joy in everyday life. Together, we will practice simple yet profound techniques to spark curiosity, activate all five senses, and foster deeper emotional resilience. You'll leave this session with practical, adaptable tools to share with youth, helping them connect to moments of joy and well-being, even in challenging times. Join us to empower yourself and others with the skills to thrive and bring new energy to your community!

12:45-1:30 Lunch

Room: L2 Auditorium

Optional Lunch Conversation: [BeWell](#) presents National Research Data: Strength, Stress, and Support: A Portrait of American Jewish Teen Well-being

Presenter: Tricia Stern LCSW, MPH, The Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies

1:30-2:30 Concurrent Sessions

Rooms: 7th Floor

The ABC's – Autonomy, Belonging, and Competence

Presenter: Jill Goldstein Smith, [Foundation for Jewish Camp](#)

Room: 7th Floor West Beit

Research, including the recent study from [BeWell](#), highlights autonomy, belonging, and competence as three psychological needs that must be met for a community to be experienced as a caring community. In this

session, you will be able to explore and share how your community/program incorporates opportunities for Autonomy, Belonging, and Competence, and the ways an intentional combination can affect joy and mental health outcomes.

But What Do I Say? De-escalation Through Empathy and Rapport*

Presenter: Gabriela Lupatkin, LCSW, [Bamidbar](#)

Room: Room 7th Floor East Beit

Empathy and rapport are frequently connected to important outcomes in personal growth environments; however, they are rarely topics or skills that are explicitly taught. How can we use verbal and nonverbal communication strategies to align with our program participants? What is empathy? How do we respond empathetically when an individual shares a struggle or success? How can applying empathy help us build rapport, and why is this important? How can this information help us through tough conversations and aid us in helping our participants de-escalate when things get hard? This session will give professionals the knowledge, skills, and confidence to communicate empathetically with teens, young adults, parents, and colleagues.

**This session offers 1 NYS Continuing Education Credit for social workers*

The Power of Play – Creativity as a Tool for Youth Development

Presenter: Brooke Desir

Room: 7th Floor Library

Even in the tween and teen years, play is a vital part of youth development, offering a space for exploration, problem-solving, and self-expression. In this interactive workshop, we will explore the importance of play and creativity as essential tools for supporting emotional well-being, confidence, and independence in youth aged 9-17. This session includes a hands-on experience where participants will explore how to design and set up a playful and creative space tailored for tweens and teens. From flexible workstations to thoughtfully curated materials, participants will learn/examine how materials influence engagement and play. Whether designing for a classroom, camp, or community hub, this session will provide tangible ideas and inspiration to support self-expression, problem-solving, and meaningful peer interactions.

2:30-2:45 Break

2:45-3:45 Concurrent Sessions

Rooms: 7th Floor

Finding Hope: Jewish Text Study as a Means to Building Resilience in Teens

Presenter: Rabba Yaffa Epstein, [The Jewish Education Project](#)

Room: 7th Floor Library

This session will combine experience and analysis. First, we'll do a deep dive into some classic Jewish texts on the topic of hope and resilience. We will then spend some time analyzing the experience of text study, and seeing how it can help teens build their own resilience and see Jewish learning as one of the tools in their toolbox.

The Fundamental of Supporting Jewish LGBTQ Youth*

Presenter: Dr. Jeremy Novich, [JQY](#)

Room: 7th Floor West Beit

LGBTQ Jewish youth today, especially those from historically non-accepting Jewish communities, often experience pressures from their environments, leading to increased emotional distress and higher rates of mental health challenges. Join Dr. Jeremy Novich, Clinical Director of JQY, to learn the fundamentals of prioritizing mental wellness for these youth so they can survive and thrive! Come with your questions—big or small.

**This session offers 1 NYS Continuing Education Credit for social workers*

Promoting Growth Through Embracing Struggle*

Presenters: Drew Fidler, LCSW-C, [BBYO Center for Adolescent Wellness](#), and Dr. Betsy Stone

Room: 7th Floor East Beit

Challenges are an essential part of healthy development. In a world of mental health crises and trauma, how can educators and youth-serving professionals leverage moments of stress and challenge to help kids build their struggle muscle and long-term resilience? Together, we will explore what constitutes good mental health and how we can use moments of difficulty to build independence, increase spirituality, and deepen relationships.

**This session offers 1 NYS Continuing Education Credit for social workers*

3:45 - 4:00 Break + Snack

Room: L2 Auditorium

4:00 - 4:30 Closing Plenary

Room: L2 Auditorium

"I Am"

Presenter: Ben Romano, [MMJCCM](#)

Room: L2 Auditorium

Explore the viral TikTok Video *"I Am"* by Emhahee as a tool for taking your learnings home and building resilience among your communities' youth.

Want to connect? Scan for
[Participant Photo and Contact List](#)

