

WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES

# DAY SCHOOL

MAKE?

THE IMPACT OF DAY SCHOOL:  
A COMPARATIVE  
ANALYSIS OF JEWISH  
COLLEGE STUDENTS

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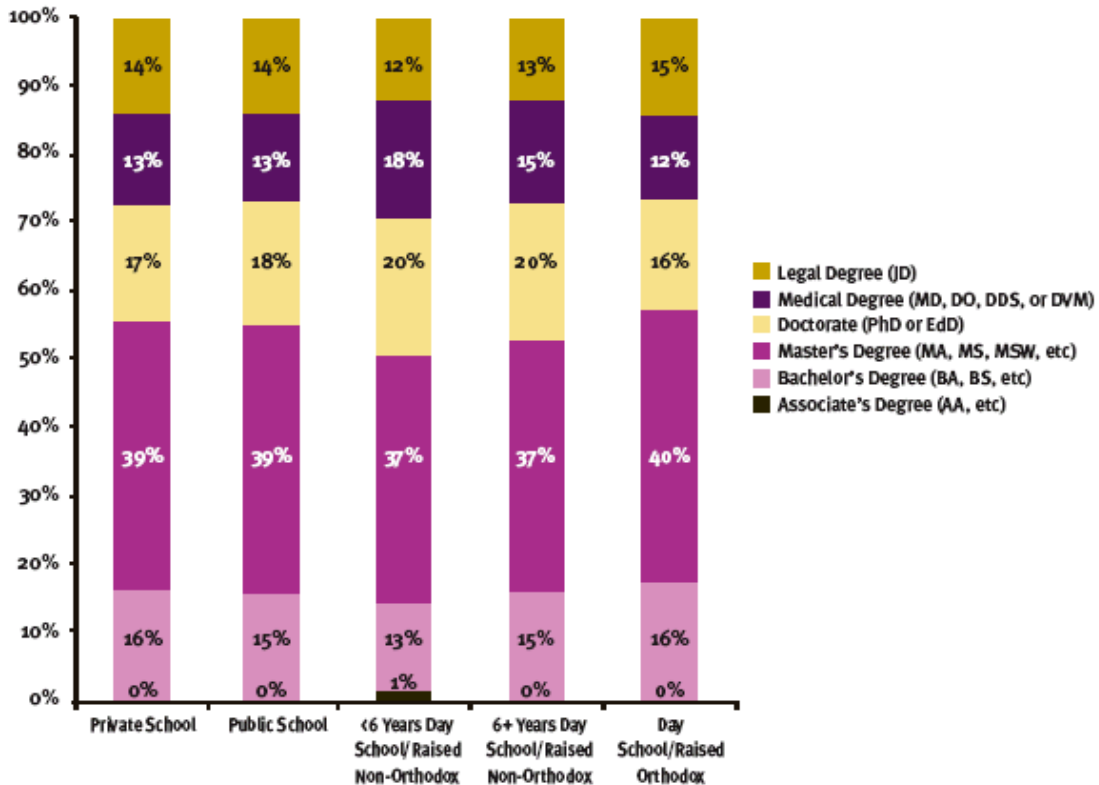
This report was the first national study specifically designed to consider the impact of day schooling in a variety of areas including Jewish identity and connections to Jewish communal life, as well as social and academic integration into college. The study also contextualizes the experiences of students from day schools through comparison with Jewish undergraduates from private and public school backgrounds. Conducted during the winter of 2006-07, this research drew over 3,300 Jewish respondents from college and university campuses in the top quartile of ranked schools in the United States.

Respondents represent a diversity of educational backgrounds. More than one-third attended a Jewish day school at some point during grades one through twelve. Over half graduated from a public high school, about a fifth graduated from a Jewish high school, and 15% from a non-Jewish independent school. The sample is relatively balanced for gender and features virtually equal representation from students in all four years of college.

## Academic Performance in College

The findings of this study on academic performance in college strongly suggest that students with a day school history are acquitting themselves well. Their overall confidence in their ability to master the tasks required for success in college courses as well as their GPAs indicate that they are doing as well as or better than their peers from either non-Jewish independent schools or public schools.

Figure 9: Highest Degree Sought



## Integration into College Life

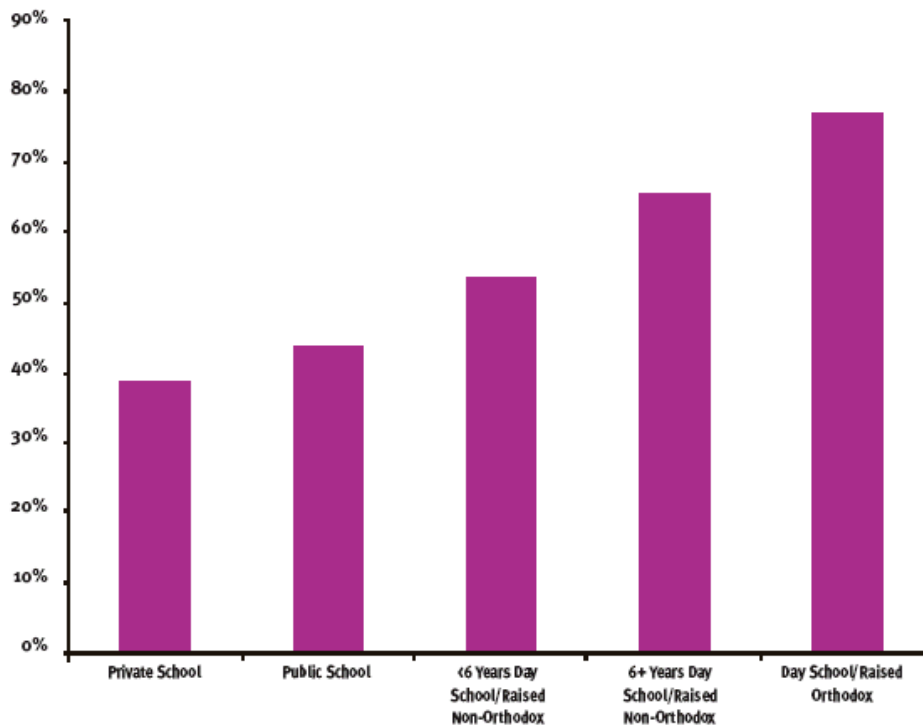
Figure 12: Involvement in Extra-Curricular Activities



Like other undergraduates, students who attended day schools participate in all aspects of undergraduate life and are well represented in the ranks of student leaders. At the same time, former day school students, especially those with extensive day school experience, have shown themselves to be significantly more resistant than their public school peers to social pressures to engage in risky situations and behaviors like the heavy use of alcohol.

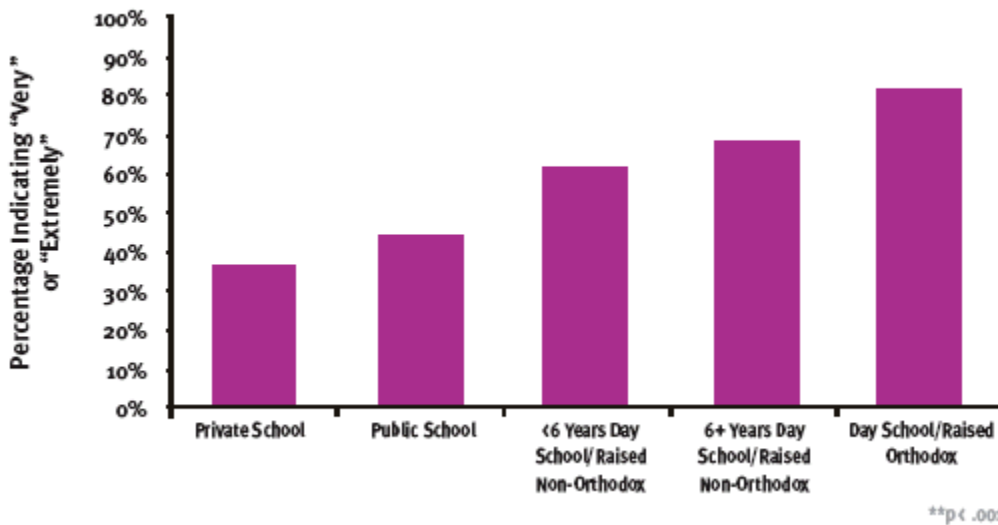
The most striking feature of the social networks of those who attended day schools is the density of their connections with Jewish peers. Those with extensive day school experience are also more likely to restrict their dating to Jewish peers.

Figure 15: Percentage Dating "All" or "Mostly" Jewish Peers\*\*



## Jewish Campus Involvement

Figure 16: Importance of Being Jewish While in College\*\*



Whether the criterion is involvement in formal Jewish learning, enrollment in Jewish studies courses, observance of holidays, programs on the Holocaust, Israel and Jewish culture or opportunities to do community

service sponsored by a Jewish organization, those who have attended day schools are more involved compared with those who did not attend. In terms of most aspects of Jewish campus life and ritual observance, former day attendees from Orthodox homes are far and away the most involved.

## Civic Responsibility

Day schools succeed at imparting an orientation of civic and social responsibility to their students. Former day school students express a stronger sense of responsibility towards addressing the needs of the larger society by influencing social values, helping those in need, volunteering their time to social change efforts, and finding careers that allow them to be of service to the larger community as compared with their public and private school peers. Students with day school experience, especially those from Orthodox backgrounds, also express a greater commitment to the Jewish community, as reflected in their intent to pursue Jewish communal careers.

Figure 21: Percentage Strongly Considering a Jewish Communal Career

