

Who are our host families?*

Most...

1. Have been to



62% have been to Israel 3 times or more. 19 respondents have been 4 times or more. 3 families have never been.

2. Identify as Conservative

= 58%. The others spread across many other denominations.

3. Live in Essex County

= 51%. 36% live in Morris County. 13% in Union County. 0% live in Somerset or Sussex.

4. Entail 2-Jewish parent household

2 respondents identify as interfaith. 6 include a household member who is Jewish by choice.

5. Want to stay in touch



80% “strongly agree” they will visit their Rishon on their next trip to Israel. 2 families will not. They will not necessarily make a trip JUST to see their Rishon, but 49% might!

***Well, the 45 who responded to our survey and hosted from 2012-2017.**

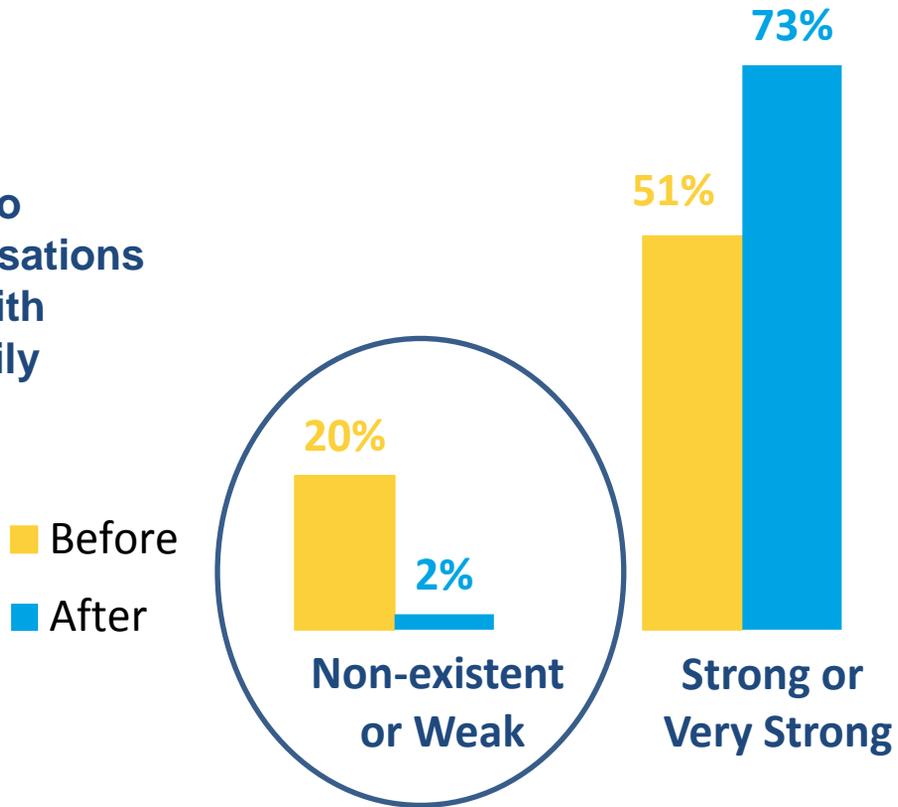
We can use our host families to grow the program.

We asked...	Host Families said...
Would you encourage others to be a host family?	44 out of 45 said YES!! (37 would strongly encourage others)
Do you want to be an ambassador/spokesperson for this program?	33 out of 45 said YES!! (18 really really want to be one)

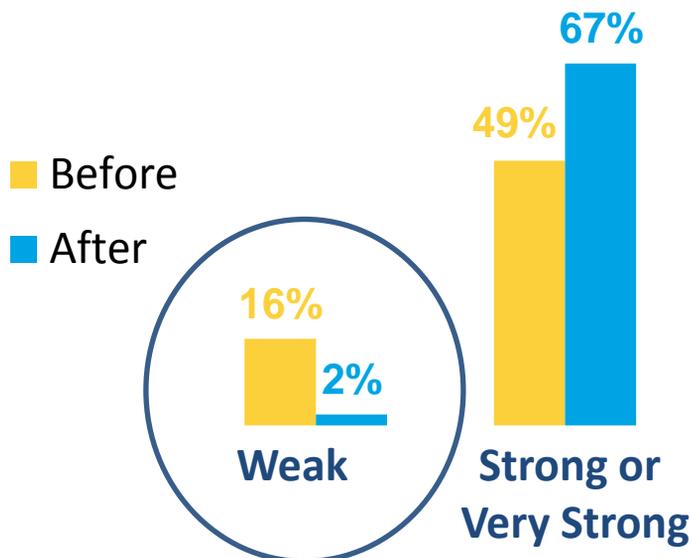
Biggest “conversions”

(moving people from “weak categories” to “strong categories”)

1. Likelihood to initiate conversations about Israel with friends or family



2. Knowledge about what is happening in Israel*

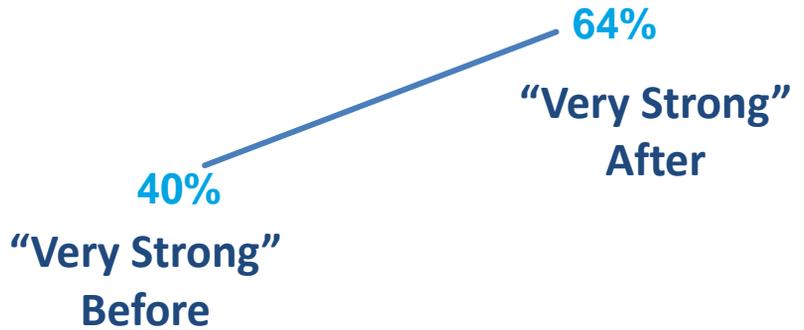


*18 people had positive movement in this category. However, there is still room for growth as the “Very Strong” category remains weak at 31%.

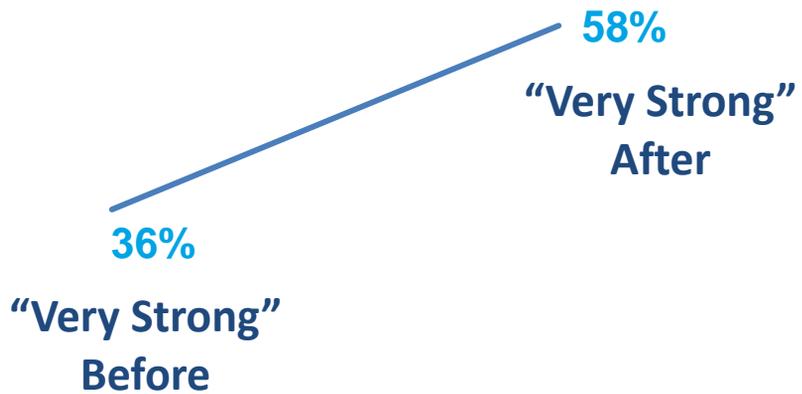
Strongest “good to great”

(moving people to “strong/very strong categories”)

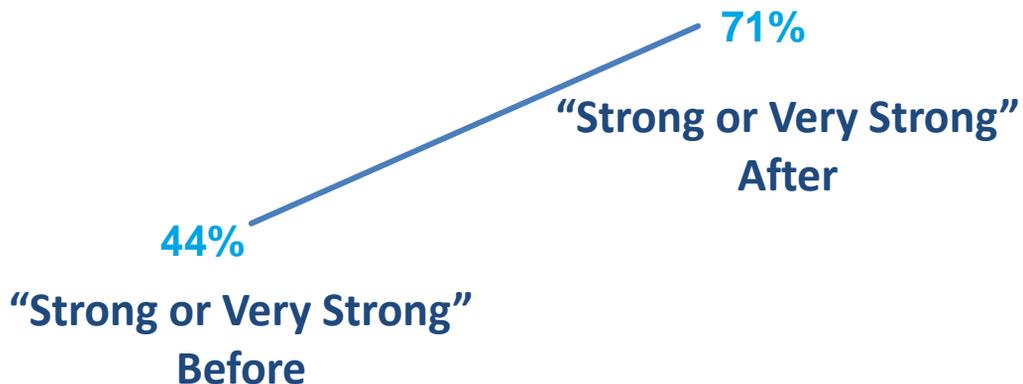
1. Level at which I consider myself a supporter of Israel



2. Interest in what is happening in Israel



3. Confidence in my ability to talk about Israel with friends or family*



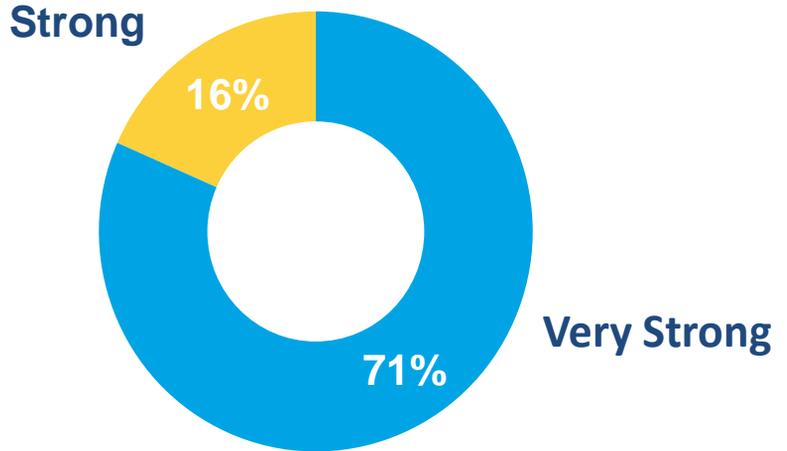
*19 people had positive movement in this category (the most out of any category). However, there is still room for growth as the “very strong” category remains weak at 33%.

We're already there.

(categories that were "Strong", even before hosting a Rishon)

Before hosting a Rishon

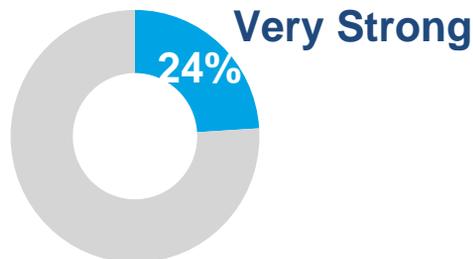
1. Feelings that Israel is an extremely important part of Jewish history, culture and identity



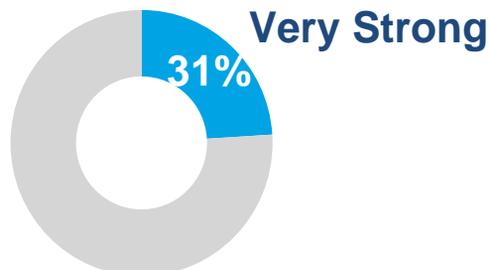
Not there yet.

(categories that are weak in "Very Strong", after hosting a Rishon)

1. Knowledge about Israel's achievements and challenges



2. Knowledge about what is happening in Israel



Host families are saying...

(top themes from “is there anything else?” open-ended question)

1. **We would do it again (and should be allowed to).**
2. **He/she became part of our family.**
3. **The experience personalized Israel for the host family.**
4. **We were able to visit our Rishon when we were in Israel (and it was a highlight of the trip).**
5. **Host families need more of an orientation (and many have offered to share advice based on their experience).**
6. **The Rishonim are too busy! Many felt sorry for them, or found this made it difficult for them to spend quality time together.**

Their exact words

(quotes that illustrate select themes presented on previous page)

On strengthening a relationship with Israel

- ❖ “I believe the Rishonim program is one of the best methods of making Israel a relevant and positive country in the minds of Americans. I believe more outreach should be done beyond the Jewish community to help educate the general public about Israel.”
- ❖ It broadened our world and was instrumental in building connection to Israel.”
- ❖ “Hosting a Rishon was a transformative experience for our family. We feel like we have a family in Israel now. And rather than simply writing off Israel as a repressive apartheid state, we now understand that there is lots to love about the country – even if we find its government loathsome.”
- ❖ “Having a Rishon was an amazing and life changing experience. It really solidified our family’s connection to Israel in a certain way. Our children were, and still are very connected to our Rishon. It brought us all new insight into what Israel means to us.”

On strengthening a relationship with Israelis

- ❖ “It was an amazing experience that expanded our family across the ocean.”
- ❖ “I visited my Rishon’s family on my last trip to Israel. They have hosted my children and husband on other trips. We have a strong connection 4 years later.”

On strengthening the program

- ❖ “...we felt there was not enough time to have the Rishon acclimate when they moved in with us...they were pulled in many different directions. Our Rishon was wonderful and did her best to balance everything.”
- ❖ “...I feel at the time that she worked too many hours and had too many responsibilities. It would have been nice to have some more time with her.”
- ❖ “One HUGE suggestion – the host families need support...I would have been better prepared if I had been given a better orientation and had someone to talk with when we hit some snags in the beginning.”

Parting Words

- ❖ “Everyone should try it.”
- ❖ “We miss her terribly.”
- ❖ “I want to do it again. Wonderful experience. I have an Israeli daughter for life.”