In 2015 Atlanta was approached by the Jim Joseph Foundation to participate in the Jewish Teen Education & Engagement Funder Collaborative, an unprecedented collaboration of national and local funders working together to develop, nurture, and scale new approaches to teen education and engagement. Ten communities across the country are embarking on innovative, multi-faceted teen initiatives to empower teens to design their own experiences and enhance the skills of youth professionals to reverse the increasing trend of teens opting out of Jewish life in their high school years.

The Atlanta organizations collaborating with Jim Joseph Foundation in this initiative are the Jewish Federation of Atlanta, the Marcus Jewish Community Center of Atlanta, and the Atlanta Rabbinical Association.

The Atlanta Jewish Teen Initiative (AJTI) strives to engage Atlanta’s Jewish teens not already involved in Jewish life through our teen programming, JumpSpark. JumpSpark programs high-quality, educational intensives that provide Jewish teens skill and interest-based learning and social opportunities using innovative resources in the Atlanta community and beyond while guiding them to uncover meaning in Jewish wisdom, texts and values in accessible and relevant ways.

Every JumpSpark program will bring together a small cohort of teens who, through the utilization of the unique features and people of the Atlanta, will learn, work, and give back together during school breaks. JumpSpark participants will increase knowledge, develop skills, clarify values, build their Jewish identity, and develop their capacity to contribute to both the Jewish community and the world at large. As a part of our mission, AJTI will also aim to create paths of connection to Israel.

The second focus of AJTI programming is JumpSpark Professional, an initiative to convene Jewish Education professionals in Atlanta and offer networking and professional development opportunities.
WHAT WE DO

JumpSpark programs will include all of the following:

Jewish Learning, Identity & Israel Engagement

- **Connection** of teens’ areas of interest to Jewish wisdom, text and values, which illuminate the relevance of Judaism in their everyday lives.

- **Jewish identity** building programs that meet teens where they are on their personal and Jewish journeys.

- **Engagement opportunities** that aim to foster a meaningful connection to, and feeling of responsibility for, Israel and its people.

Community Building

- **Team building** activities
- **Mentor connection** in their areas of interest
- **Social action** and volunteering components

Skill Building

- **Skill building** related to the area of interest (e.g. cooking skills, public speaking, leadership development, advocacy).

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