



Date: December 2002

To: UAHC Youth Division Staff and UAHC Congregational Leadership

From: Rabbi Eve Rudin Weiner, Director, NFTY and the UAHC Kutz Camp

Re: 1995 UAHC Resolution on Open Youth Group Membership

Enclosed and attached please find a copy of the UAHC Resolution on Open Youth Group Membership that was passed a few years ago at the 1995 UAHC Biennial.

A few years later, we are still all concerned about the high rate of dropout from congregational life following Bar & Bat Mitzvah and maintaining Jewish continuity in our congregations and in Jewish life as a whole. Creating opportunities for young people to be and remain affiliated is therefore remains not only important, but also essential.

In passing the resolution, the UAHC urges member congregations to do the following:

- a. Enroll all religious school students as members of their junior or senior youth groups; and,
- b. Establish provisions to allow Jewish youth to participate as members of their youth groups whether or not their parents are congregation members.

Universal youth program enrollment, done automatically by the congregation, insures that all young people will know about the youth programming options available to them. While there are no guarantees that young people will choose to take advantage of these Jewish options, no young people will ever take advantage of the options if they do not know what they are. Automatic enrollment also says to the young people, as well as to their families and the congregation, that Jewish affiliation beyond the Bar & Bat Mitzvah is a priority of the congregation - so much of one that the congregation is committed to making it a possibility for ever young person who comes through the doors of the synagogue. Establishing provisions for a non-temple member to become a member of one's Temple Youth Group of course allows an entrance of a young person into what we hope will be Reform Judaism and Reform Jewish community for a lifetime.