



## MJB's Evaluation of Better Together

JDC-Israel's Better Together (BT) is a complex community initiative to improve child and youth well-being in poor and disadvantaged Israeli neighborhoods through broad neighborhood change.

In 2012, the Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute began a 3-year evaluation of Better Together. The study findings from the first phase are already serving as a basis for ongoing efforts to improve the Initiative and expand its dissemination.

Below we present selected findings from the first phase in 2012. In 2014, the study will follow up on the progress of the communities.

### Evaluation Design

The evaluation has two primary goals:

- To assess the implementation so as to provide feedback for ongoing improvement
- To assess the Initiative's contributions so as to support decisions about broader national dissemination

MJB is using a variety of methods to collect information for the evaluation, including surveys of parents and youth, interviews with key stakeholders and neighborhood professionals, national census data, and developing with Ashalim an administrative information system.

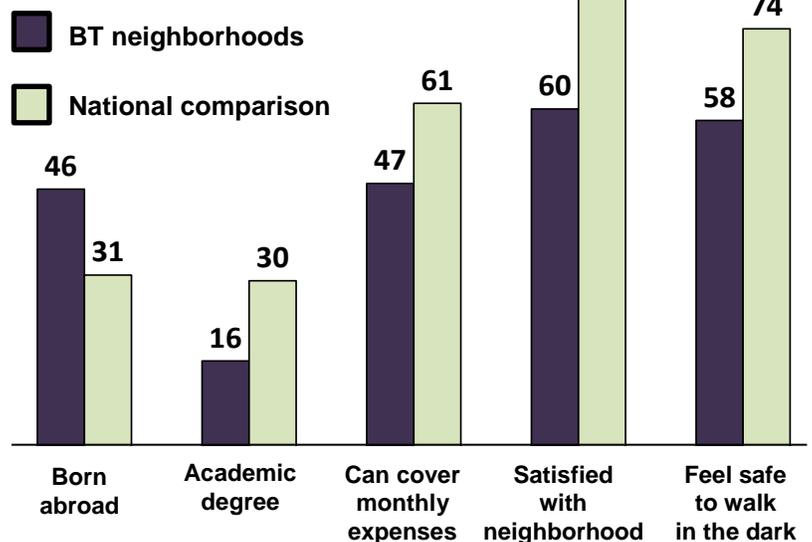
The evaluation examines change in three areas: inputs, strategies for change, and outcomes.

### Selected Findings from 2012

- *Better Together is operating in disadvantaged neighborhoods.*

Figure 1 at right shows that Better Together's neighborhoods consistently rank below the average for Israeli neighborhoods on a number of key demographic indicators.

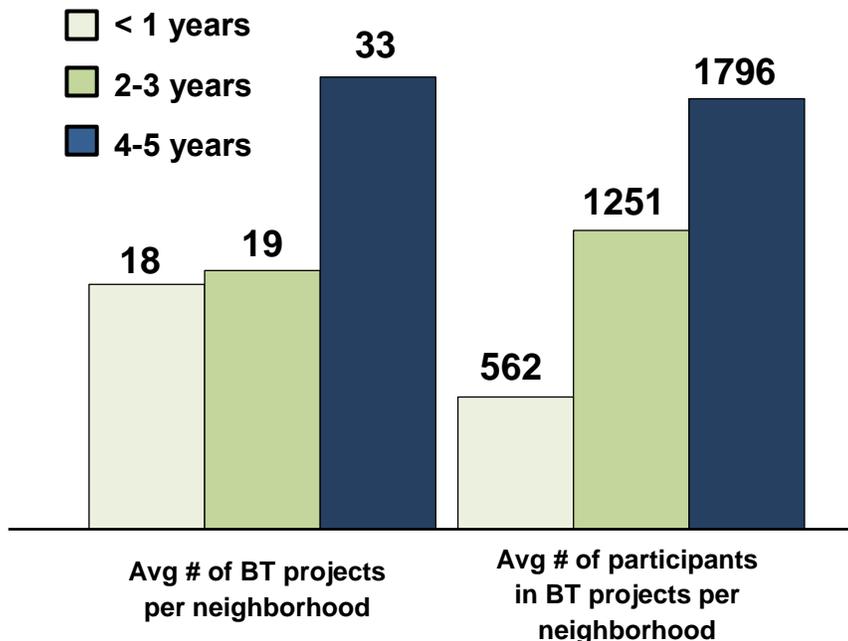
**Figure 1: Characteristics/attitudes of residents in BT neighborhoods vs. those in average Israeli neighborhoods, % of residents in neighborhood**



- **Better Together is positively impacting the expansion of programs and services.**

As Better Together operates in a neighborhood, the number of projects and participants increases over time.

**Figure 2: Expansion of BT over time**



- **Greater involvement in Better Together programs is related to positive feelings about the neighborhood.**

People who participate in programs or are active in neighborhood issues feel more positively about their neighborhood and its safety than do people who do not participate.

**Figure 3: Influence of BT involvement, % of residents**

