Research examined the relative importance of peer groups for young adolescents as compared with diverse adult socialization agents—family, school, and community. The factors involved were teenagers' activities, preferences, feelings, and thoughts as to how they spend their leisure time, their preferences for help providers, and their sense of attachment to their community. These comparisons were made with religious and non-religious youngsters, in both rural and urban communities, and in gender subgroups. Questionnaires were administered to teenagers at secondary schools in a northern peripheral region of Israel. Findings showed the primary importance of peer groups and family in leisure activities and support, and the secondary importance of school and community. No evidence was found of a sharp generation gap. Community could also be significant if its organizations accepted youth as a peer group, and not only individually, on an equal and cooperating basis.
THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The process of the separating from childhood dependencies and parents, and moving on to a wider social milieu with extra-familial relationships is generally considered a crucial developmental stage which the adolescent must pass through in order to achieve maturity (Roberts, 1985; Coleman, 1992). Western research has found that youth spend much less time with the family, which may reflect individualistic rather than collectivistic values with greater value placed on individualism rather than family (Larson & Verma, 1999). This distancing of youth is also from teachers and other significant adults and from official institutions (such as school and organized leisure institutions). The increasing importance of the peer group makes it an effective socialization agent, which may encourage idle activity that is negatively correlated with adolescents' school achievement and positively with higher rates of delinquency and anti-social behavior (Coleman, 1989, 1992; Larson & Verna, 1999). Group Socialization theory asserts that it is not the home but the peer environment that has lasting effects on adolescents' psychological characteristics when they become adults. Self-categorization processes of assimilation and differentiation tend to make adolescents more similar to each other within peer groups and less similar to adults (Harris, 1995). The gap leads to intergenerational conflict. Adolescents threaten the authority of parents, educators, and traditional institutions. According to social control theory (Hirschi, 1969), the detachment of young persons from parents and community institutions of conventional society weaken social control over them. In its moderate mode the conflict is a "generation gap" and in its extreme mode it is a "generation war." On the other hand, from a positive point of view, a degree of separateness from parents and other adults is essential for establishing independence; generally it is normal and moderate (Chen & Farruggia, 2002; Coleman, 1989; Hendry et al., 1993).

Peer groups act as a source of behavioral standards, particularly where parental influence is weak. Acceptance by peers is perceived as important especially by young adolescents, with conformity to the group the price that has to be paid. It is sustained by peer pressure which transmits group norms and fosters loyalty to the group (Hendry et al., 1993).
Leisure and Free Time of Young Adolescents

Leisure is a central sphere of life, described by Roberts (1985) as intrinsically satisfying experiences that individuals derive from recreation during their free time. Free time and leisure activities are major facets of adolescents' lives. In developing and postindustrial societies, it is schoolwork that most clearly replaces household and paid labor in youths' time use. The amount of time spent on schoolwork is inversely related to the amount of time devoted to nearly every other activity, particularly leisure activities (Larson & Verma, 1999; Zeijl et al., 2001).

Adolescents' free time activities are not just a source of intrinsically satisfying fun experiences, but also an important part of their socialization process. They give adolescents the opportunity to experience their immediate social environment. Leisure activities also construct and manifest their own youth cultures. The freedom adolescents have for their leisure activities enables them to socialize outside the family, to establish independence from adults, to practice the skills required for entering conventional adult roles, to develop their future adult identities, to express their own interests, and to build their own cultures with their peer groups. These activities also reveal the possible conflict between adolescents' need for self-identity and skill development and the constraints of roles, expectations, cultural norms and values of adult socialization agents. As a result, leisure activities are an important and appropriate source for comparing the relative place and influence of peer groups as socialization agents with those of adult agents (Coleman, 1988; Hendry, 1989; Hendry et al., 1993; Larson & Verma, 1999; Lefstein, 1982; Medrich, 1982; Roberts, 1985; Zeijl et al., 2001).

But evidence from various Western countries shows a decline in the rate young people participate or show interest in traditional youth organizations. Although in general, young people respect boundaries to use of leisure time, research shows that they prefer alternative and independent ways, especially with peers, over activities that are organized for them by adults. The more peer-oriented adolescents show less interest in formal groups and achievement; they tend to spend more of their time "hanging out" and have less involved parents. Adolescents spend a lot of time in public areas with their peers. The street, bus shelters, and malls serve as meeting places for experimentation; they are locations for self-display, observation, and development of group solidarity—away from parental supervision (especially boys). Conversing is one of their main activities when hanging out.
By their attitudes to leisure, young adolescents can be divided into three types: a very small minority that is heavily committed to intensive organized after-school activities; a small group that does not participate in organized activities; and the majority who participate regularly but not intensively in organized activities (Hendry et al. 1993). A study of 11- and 12-year-old youngsters in Oakland demonstrated the small amount of time they spent in organized activities: TV 3-4 hours a day), “on their own” (or with friends, 2-3 hours a day), with parents (1.5 hours a day), job and chores in and out of the home (1 hour a day), functions supervised by adults (1-2 meetings a week) (Medrich, 1982). Youngsters (aged 10-15) are characterized by their high energy, striving for self-definition, and a need to prove personal competence in a variety of areas.

COMMUNITY AS A SOCIALIZATION AGENT AND ADOLESCENTS' ATTACHMENT

We maintain that community is not just a part of the general surroundings that provide teenagers with formal and informal social services, but one of their most important socialization agents. The institutions of community in modern society, especially schools, have assumed an important part of parents’ roles (Coleman, 1961; Hurrelman, 1989). Although in the past three decades “community” and “social capital” have emerged as two of the most salient concepts in the social sciences, they do not enjoy special interest in research on adolescents, just as adolescence is almost absent from general community research and discussion.

Despite changes and enlargement of community definition in the global era (e.g., internet communities, virtual communities), its basic definition—as a significant common place of living, and as a mediating social structure between individuals and the forces of the larger society—endures (Chekki, 1990; Delanty, 2003; Lyon, 1989). The classic definition of community has three main dimensions: a locality or territory; a social system and structure with economic, political, cultural, and social institutions, functions and interactions; social relations and symbols which provide feelings of solidarity, cohesion, trust, unity, security, identity and significance (Chekki, 1990; Clark, 1973; Hillery, 1955; Lyon, 1989; Turner & Dolch, 1996). But community can also be a source of feelings of alienation and social pressure which can harm the personal autonomy of individuals and minorities (Bender, 1978; Levin, 1980). Social capital is the central component in community building; it is a quality created between people, which consists of three
elements: social networks; trust among people, community institutions and community leaders; and norms of reciprocity which enhance solidarity and civic engagement. Generally social capital strengthens the individuals and the community as a whole, but it can also have negative consequences when it is channeled toward anti-social goals (Burt, 1997; Coleman, 1988; Lin, 1999). Putnam (2000) argues that social capital makes better communities for bringing up children, providing better schools, and reducing crime.

Hirsch (2005) conducted a study over a four-year period at six Boys & Girls Clubs all located in low income, predominantly minority, urban neighborhoods. Hirsch showed that the culture of the after-school center meets the needs of urban youth by drawing upon and replicating positive features of the youth's familial environment and peer group. These club environments are repeatedly referred to as a "second home" by participating youth and seem to thrive even though formal psycho-educational programs often fail to reach their full potential.

In adolescence the social world is widening, and young people see their community as representative of the whole society. Significant relationships with adults occur in structured community organizations: schools and sports club. Community leaders and other adults serve as moral, societal, and occupational role models. They also provide new role opportunities including volunteering that contributes to the "public good." (Cotterell, 1995).

An important aspect of community is the "sense of place" or "place attachment" it provides. Sense of place is defined by Datel and Dingemans (1984, p. 135) as "the complex bundle of meaning, symbols, and qualities that a person or group associates (consciously and unconsciously) with a particular locality or region." It is a social phenomenon (Canter, 1977; Eisenhauer et al., 2000). Social ties are related to a geographical unit (Lidskog, 1996); Israeli studies found that cultural and social factors are related to that sense of place (e.g., it was found that a rural population had a higher sense of place than did an urban population (Shamai, 1986; Shamai & Kellerman, 1985; Shamai & Kellerman, 1985; Shamai & Ilatov, 2005). Feelings for places vary and may be negative (Arnon, 2001; Piveteau, 1969; Relph, 1976; Shamai & Kellerman, 1985; Shamai, 1991). Some studies have suggested a ranking procedure for this phenomenon. Different scales have measured the intensity of sense of place, ranging from a dichotomous scale ("yes" or "no") (Gold, 1980) to a scale of 11 ranks, from negative through "placelessness" to positive feelings of place (Shamai & Arnon, 2005; Shamai & Ilatov, 2005).
Young adolescents begin to explore their own neighborhood as well as more distant areas. In a highly supportive socialization environment the child learns to be effective in that environment. Accordingly, it is most important to know how the community treats its adolescents (Thomas et al., 1974).

**Background Variables: Gender, Type of Residence, Religiosity**

Culture influences adolescents’ physical, cognitive, and socioemotional development and their behaviors. Adolescents in different cultures spend different amounts of time with their peers, and consequently peer influence tends to vary (Chen & Farruggia, 2002). Sociological theories of adolescence posit that there is no one youth culture but different youth cultures. Youth of different ages, gender, race, and place of residence, and mainly of different social classes, are exposed to different opportunities, contradictions, and inequalities, learn different skills and values and are exposed to different free-time activities (Larson & Verma, 1999; Roberts, 1985; Zeijl et al., 2000). Leisure patterns of adolescents reproduce conventional gender, class, and environment life-style differences and opportunities ( Cotterell, 1995; Roberts, 1985). The present research uses gender, type of residential community, and school religiosity as explanatory factors for the different adolescent characteristics.

Early adolescents tend to spend much of their free time with peer groups of their own gender. Boys are relatively more privileged than girls in their use of leisure. They have more freedom to stay out late and, as in the adult world, public areas are seen to be more suitable for them than for girls (Larson & Verma, 1999). Girls tend to socialize with peers and pursue casual leisure activities earlier than do boys, but generally they have less access to public areas, and tend to use their homes as the base for their free-time activities (Hendry et al., 1993).

Traditional societies allow their youth less freedom, supervise their free-time activities more, and prefer institutionalized frameworks like schools that promote knowledge and human capital development that benefit both the individual youngster and society at large (Larson & Verma, 1999). A study among adolescents aged 15-18 years from rural and urban areas found that boys and rural adolescents in general had smaller and less diverse networks and asked help from parents more frequently than did girls and urban adolescents. Another study examined the social world and the important people in the lives of 15-16-year old (9th grade) boys and girls from both town and country and
found that girls have stronger sociability and higher levels of maturity, while the town-dwellers had smaller networks (Bö, 1989).

Religiosity is a manifestation of conforming and of internalized traditional behaviors and attitudes. Female adolescents tend to be more conforming to cultural norms, especially religious than are males (Thomas et al., 1974). Usually a strong religious or ethical code is used as a rationale for avoiding conflict.

Until the 1970s a collectivistic ethos of “youth in service of society” dominated Israeli Jewish life. It was associated with the central place of familial, communal, and social authorities and values, and the conformist nature of Israeli adolescents. It was also characterized by a far-reaching and centralized adult-supervised informal education, which included political-ideological youth movements. Until recently, youth movements in Israel have been powerful as a socialization institution which cultivated an autonomous youth culture. They were perceived as a central social and political social agent, an educational, ideological, task-oriented framework that served the purpose of conveying national goals. This trend gradually eroded, and a new individualistic Western ethos of “youth in the service of youth” emerged, with heterogeneous youth subcultures. Youth movements in Israel represent a special model of organization which operates between a formal organized institution for adolescents and one that is informal and self-directed. Today they serve as a supervised framework for leisure and recreation (Rapoport et al., 1995). In a typical Israeli youth movement today, young adolescents meet with their peers of the same age in groups under the guidance of two adolescents, usually two years older than they, in their own place in the community. A young person supervises the activities of all the groups, and a regional committee of adults manages all activities which include social games and sports, discussion of issues, field activities, and camps during vacations (Shulman, 1992). A survey by the Brookdale Institute (1994) showed that 25% of 6th-11th graders were members of a youth movement or a youth club, and that the rate decreased with age. The exception is religious Zionist youth who maintain the previous trend and the institution still serves as a national and political religious youth movement (Ichilov, 1992; Lamm, 1999; Rapoport, 1989; Rapoport et al., 1995; Shapira et al., 1980).

Lamm (1999) claims that an ideological and actual polarization exists, a deep disagreement and lack of dialogue between Jewish secular adolescents and religious Zionist adolescents. The leisure patterns of these two groups are quite different: The religious families and communities supervise their adolescents more strictly and prefer them to
spend their free time at home or in activities organized by adults (Elboim, 1987). Sivan (1984) found that students at religious schools preferred to spend their free time in activities that provided general knowledge, while students at secular schools preferred pleasure activities. A survey of 100 boys and girls in grades 9 to 12 at a religious and a secular school in Israel revealed that in both groups leisure time was first for pleasure activities and then as an expression of the adolescents’ need for autonomy and for meeting socially with peers. But more religious than secular students saw leisure time as an opportunity to contribute to society by helping others; they spent more time in youth movements. On the other hand, more secular than religious students defined leisure time as an opportunity to meet youngsters of the other gender and spent more time hanging around in pubs and discos, and using mass media (Yogeve, 2005).

The Golan Region Youth

This study was conducted in the Golan Heights region. There is one town, Katzrin, with about 7,000 people, which is run as a local municipality. About 20% of its citizens are religious with about 25% new immigrants from the former Soviet Union. Thirty-two rural settlements, with a total population of about 25% new immigrants from the former Soviet Union. Thirty-two rural settlements, with a total population of about 14,000, belong to the “Golan Regional Council.” These are small communities with 30 to 200 households each. Two-thirds of them are non-religious settlements and the rest are religious. Most of the children study in the Golan area at religious or non-religious schools. At elementary religious schools boys and girls are in separate classes, and religious high schools are separate for boys and girls. Most of the settlements cultivate a rich cultural life on their own and through community centers. Katzrin has its own community center, while the Golan settlements attend three regional community centers (in the north and south, which cater mainly to a secular audience, with one in the center catering to the religious groups). The community centers offer many activities for children and adults. Youth are of particular interest for the community centers, and they are offered sports, music, and other courses. Youth groups hold their meetings there, and special activities such as summer camps and trips are held under the supervision of a guide, usually someone a few years older than the teenagers. The community center operates after school hours; participation is voluntary and usually payment is required.
The sample included 526 Jewish residents from the Golan Heights region, who was born in Israel. Both girls and boys in grades 7 to 9 (M = 13.9 years, SD = 0.9) studied at religious or secular schools and lived in various rural settlements of the Golan Region or in the town of Katzrin. Our main consideration was to assemble a sample that was homogeneous in many aspects (age, living area, regional organizations, and leisure opportunities) in order to compare teenagers’ cultural subgroups by community type, religiosity of school, and gender (see Table 1).

A questionnaire consisting mainly of closed questions, was administered in class at the schools. Questions were of Likert or yes/no type and included four kinds of variables representing the impact of socialization agents. Data reflected the youths’ subjective assessment of how they “usually” behaved.

The Background variables represent subgroups of the adolescents, which may explain the differences among the impacts of socialization agents: 1) Gender (G); 2) Religiosity of school (RS), which reflects ado-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religiosity of school</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Community type</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rural settlement</td>
<td>Urban settlement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>89 (48%)</td>
<td>10 (48%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>97 (52%)</td>
<td>11 (52%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>186 90%</td>
<td>21 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secular</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>91 (47%)</td>
<td>57 (45%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>102 (53%)</td>
<td>69 (55%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>193 60.5%</td>
<td>126 39.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>180 (47%)</td>
<td>67 (46%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>199 (53%)</td>
<td>80 (54%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>379 72%</td>
<td>147 28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages: % in parentheses were calculated in each cell
% in bold were calculated in row
% in underlined bold were calculated in their column
lescents’ religious or non-religious way of life; 3) Community type (CT), with Katzrin representing a small urban community or the small rural communities of the region.

Impact of socialization agents. This was measured by respondents’ preferences regarding leisure activities after school (1–5), satisfaction with the leisure opportunities (1–10), those from whom they preferred to seek advice or help (0/1), and a sense of attachment to community of residence (−5−+5).

Free-time variables included an obligatory instrumental “work” factor (homework) and free-choice non-instrumental leisure activities (seeing friends, participating in community center activities, and volunteering for the community) each with different companions (family, peers, community).

Data were analyzed concerning each socialization agent:
• Family. Spending time with family members, satisfaction with the possibilities for leisure time offered by the family, seeking help from family members.
• Peer group. Seeing friends; asking for their help.
• School. Doing homework in free time, going to school in the afternoon free time to take part in recreation and social activities, and satisfaction with these activities, seeking help from a teacher.
• Community. Taking part in community activities or courses, satisfaction with these activities, involvement in volunteering for public benefit (e.g., medical services, fire brigade), sense of attachment to community.
• Youth movement. Participation in youth activities, asking help from youth movement leaders.

Each question was analyzed by GLM Univariate statistical procedure (using SPSS) to determine average differences between teenagers’ subgroups according to community type, religiosity of school, and gender, and their interactions. In binary questions (coded 0 = no, 1 = yes) the mean denotes the proportion of positive answers.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the relative influence of socialization agents—family, school, community, and peers—on young adolescents?
2. Can community be considered a socialization agent of young adolescents, and if so, what role does it play in their lives?
3. What is the place of peer groups in the lives of young adolescents compared with adult socialization agents?
4. What is the influence of gender, religiosity, and community types in adolescents' attitudes toward their social agents?

FINDINGS

Impact of Socialization Agents on Teenagers Leisure Activities

The following describe what the teenagers did with their free time after school, their satisfaction with these activities, and the connection of these activities with socialization agents.

Amount of teenagers' free time for leisure activities after school. With regard to the statement: “Studies leave me a lot of time for leisure activities,” teenagers generally expressed a perception of having a moderate amount of free time ($M = 3.02, SD = 1.22$, on a 5-point scale: $1 = \text{never} \text{ to } 5 = \text{always}$). Overall $F$ test by GLM Univariate analysis was found significant ($F_{7,492} = 2.6, p = 0.012$), but only the two main factors of community type and religiosity of school explained part of the differences between adolescents. Those from rural communities felt they had more free time (average = 3.10) than did adolescents from the small urban community (2.79), and adolescents from non-religious schools said they had more free time (3.07) than did those from religious schools (2.93). No significant differences were found between boys and girls or interaction groups.

Preferred free-time activities. The young adolescents were asked how often they participated in six activities in their free time after school ($1 = \text{never} \text{ to } 5 = \text{always}$). Tables 2A and 2B show the results of Univariate analysis of the six activities, explained by the students' background variables—type of community, religiosity of school, and gender—and their interactions. It also shows the average answers given by all the adolescents (total average) and by the various subgroups.

Total average intensity reveals the impact of the various socialization agents on the young adolescents’ free-time activities in the following descending order: peer groups, family, school, and community. The activities can be divided into three pairs, according to their total average intensity: (1) The first pair occupied half or more of their free time; they spent most of their free time in a non-institutional and non-formal way, with their peers (average = 3.33), with family (3.02). (2) On average the youngsters devoted less than half of their free time to the second pair of activities: doing homework (2.30), which represents the impact of school as a socialization agent, and going to a youth movement function (2.09), which can be seen as an area between peer group and community influence. (3) The last pair, and the least popular activ-
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2A. Analysis of variance of free-time activities by community type, religiosity of school and gender and their interactions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Free time activity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Going about with friends</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>with family</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Homework</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Youth movement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commutry center courses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volunteering</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In bold: significant test (p<0.05) CT-Community type (rural/urban), R-Religiosity of school (religious/non-religious), G- Gender
Table 2B. Averages of free time activities by groups of community type, religiosity of school and gender and their interactions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Free time activity</th>
<th>Main socialization agent</th>
<th>Total average</th>
<th>Main effects</th>
<th>Interactions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CT</td>
<td>RS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>rural municipal religious non-rel. boy girl</td>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going about with friends</td>
<td>peer group</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with family</td>
<td>family</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>3.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>homework</td>
<td>school</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>2.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>youth movement</td>
<td>Community + peer group</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>1.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community center courses</td>
<td>community</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>1.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>volunteering</td>
<td>community</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>1.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Only averages with significant differences between them are displayed. The highest average is underlined.

CT - Community type (rural/urban), R - Religiosity of school (religious/non-religious), G - Gender
ities, on which teenagers spent a very small part of their free time was community center courses (1.66) and volunteering activities (1.54). This suggests that formal activities organized by adults had only a slight impact on the teenagers’ free-time activities.

According to Univariate overall tests, all activities were significantly explained by community type, school religiosity, and gender. Religiosity of school had the most impact on five of the six free-time activities (except spending time with family). Community type was the second strongest factor. Only gender explained participation in youth movement and community center activities, and was a source of the difference in interaction with community type and school religiosity. Interaction among all the explaining variables (CT*RS*G) was not found to be significant.

By examining the means of the free-time activities we can determine which subgroup of the three explanatory variables was significantly higher or lower as to preferences for each activity. The general rank order of the activities, and the socialization agents they represent, were identical for all subgroups, as indicated above, but the average differences between them were not in one direction. The impact of peers, schools, and community center courses was significantly higher for the activities of non-religious students than for religious students spending time with peers (average 3.50 vs. 3.07), doing homework (2.46 vs. 2.06), and participating in community center courses (1.84 vs. 1.38). On the other hand, the role of community in free-time activity was higher for religious students than for non-religious students (2.24 vs. 1.93), as it was with their contribution to community by volunteer work (1.72 vs. 1.43), especially religious girls (1.85). Teenagers who lived in Katzrin spent more time with their families (3.22 vs. 2.94), especially boys (3.41 vs. 2.91). Also, the impact of school was higher for homework as a free-time activity (2.6) vs. 2.18). Rural teenagers in contrast, scored higher in community’s youth movement activity (2.23 vs. 1.73). Adolescent girls participated more than boys in the more structured peer-group free-time activity of youth movement, arranged by community (2.24 vs. 1.93). Adolescent boys scored higher than girls in structured activities of community center courses (1.78 vs. 1.55), especially urban boys (2.29) and boys from non-religious schools (2.14).

Satisfaction with leisure-time opportunities. The Golan teenagers were also asked about their satisfaction with the leisure-time opportunities arranged by four central adult socialization agents. Their answers were scored on a scale of 1 (not satisfied at all) to 10 (very much satisfied). (See Table 3.)

The mean total score in Table 3 indicates that family was the most satisfying provider of leisure opportunities (average = 7.34); those ar-
Table 3. Analysis of variance and averages of teenagers' satisfaction with leisure-time opportunities, by community, school, and gender and their interactions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction with leisure-time opportunities</th>
<th>Main socialization agent</th>
<th>GLM Univariate analysis *</th>
<th>Total Averages</th>
<th>Averages **</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Overall F test</td>
<td>p of effects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>df</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Given by family</td>
<td>family</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>7, 479</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth activities in residential community</td>
<td>settlement community</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>7, 474</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community center activities</td>
<td>community</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>7, 454</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon activities in school</td>
<td>school</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>7, 459</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* In bold: significant test (p<0.05)
** Only averages with significant differences between them are displayed.
The highest average is underlined.
CT-Community type (rural/urban), R- Religiosity of school (religious/non-religious), G- Gender
ranged by the settlement community were the second most satisfying, but far behind were family (4.68); community center (3.52), and school (3.24).

Although the general Univariate model was significant on all four satisfaction questions, few significant differences were found between the satisfaction rates of the respondents' subgroups. The main source of difference was type of community and its interactions with religiosity and gender. Young adolescents from rural communities were significantly more satisfied with the opportunities arranged by their community of residence than were their more urban counterparts (average 5.03 vs. 3.70), especially girls from rural communities (5.42). Religious teenagers from the rural community were the most satisfied with leisure opportunities given by their families (7.81). Boys from the urban Katzrin community were most satisfied with activities the community center offered (4.26), while rural boys were the least satisfied with these opportunities (2.92).

**Teenagers' Sense of Place Attachment**

To evaluate the place of the community as a socialization agent in the lives of the young adolescents, we examined their sense of attachment and belonging to their community by asking: "What kind of connection do you feel to your home settlement?" We used a response scale from -5 to +5, where -5 denoted very negative connection, 0 denoted no sense of connection (indifference), and +5 denoted very positive connection. The results are shown in Table 4.

Of the young adolescents, 85.5% expressed a positive sense of connection, (50% a very positive sense), 6.6% expressed no sense of connection, and 7.6% expressed a negative sense. The mean total in Table 4 (2.94) shows a moderately positive sense of attachment to the community of residence. Table 4 also indicates that sense of attachment to community of residence was significantly explained by the overall model. It was explained by type of community, and proved higher among teenagers from rural rather than urban community (3.26 vs. 2.05); it was also explained by the interaction between type of community and school religiosity: rural religious teenagers scored the highest (3.65) and urban religious teenagers the lowest (1.84).

**DISCUSSION**

The results of this study confirm basic arguments and findings concerning the socialization of young adults and the role that socialization
Table 4. Analysis of variance and averages of teenagers' place attachment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place attachment</th>
<th>GLM Univariate analysis *</th>
<th>Averages **</th>
<th>p of effects</th>
<th>Total average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overall F test</td>
<td>Main</td>
<td>Interactions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>df</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence community</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>7.492</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* In bold: significant test (p<0.05)

** Only averages with significant differences between them are displayed. The highest average is underlined.

CT-Community type (rural/urban), R- Religiosity of school (religious/non-religious), G- Gender
agents play in this process. The main findings can be summarized as follows:

- No evidence of a generation gap between adolescents’ peer groups and adults, and definitely not their parents, appeared.
- The most important socialization agents for young adolescents were peer group and family, whereas school and community were secondary.
- These findings lead to the conclusion that peers are a very important socialization agent of young adolescents. But they did not seem to have a contradictory or exclusive influence on the lives of young adolescents in comparison with other adult socialization agents. They did not seem to have an exclusive “youth-centered” orientation or an opposition orientation to adults.
- Teenagers expressed complex attitudes toward school. They distinguished between school as a formal institution and their teachers as its significant members. They evinced a negative attitude toward the school institution.
- Community is a network of diverse connected institutions, people, and interactions. Young adolescents in this study showed diverse and non-uniform use of these community opportunities, and revealed different attitudes toward them. Community center, as a community institution, was less favored by the teenagers. The “youth movement” in the community of residence (supervised by the community center) proved the most preferred community organization for youth leisure activities. The less institutionalized recreation activities and events arranged directly by the community of residence (e.g., festivals and trips) were shown to provide moderate satisfaction.
- The variables that had an influence on the issues dealt with in this study were religiosity and type of community: teenagers of the urban community were generally more “home centered,” spending more time with family (especially boys) and doing homework. Teenagers of the rural communities were generally more community oriented as they scored higher in participating in youth movement activities; they (especially girls) also scored higher on satisfaction with the events in their residential community and in their sense of attachment to it (especially religious teenagers).
- A religious or non-religious way of life, as indicated by religiosity of school, also made a difference: religiosity was associated with higher values in communal activities. Religious teenagers also sought help from their school teachers and youth movement guides, and expressed a greater sense of attachment to their community of resi-
dence. Non-religious teenagers divided their free time among different socialization agents; they had a slightly greater tendency for peer-group activity, and at the same they (especially boys) spent more of their free time doing homework and in community center activities and courses. The rural religious teenagers were the most satisfied with the free-time opportunities provided by family and had the strongest sense of attachment to their community.

These findings point up the fact that the “generation gap” theory is not supported as a characteristic of adolescence (in accordance with Chen & Farruggia, 2002; Coleman, 1989; Cotterell, 1995; Hendry et al., 1993; Josselson, 1994; Kerwesky & Lefstein, 1872; Larson & Verma, 1999; Roberts, 1985; Serafino & Armstrong, 1980). No drastic rift in the connection between teenagers and adults and to society was perceived, but rather a change in the connection as a result of the increasing importance of peer groups, which become a central social agent in adolescence. Instead of emphasis being placed on the process of rejection of adults, it should be placed on the addition of the peers. Peer groups seem to be very important in helping teenagers in the transiational phase of examining and developing their own adult identity—not rejecting adult socialization agents but operating with them. This is generally true of “normal” adolescents, who move closer to their peer groups and separate from adult socialization agents and social authorities.

Most “ordinary” teenagers maintain a balance between family and peer groups. In this study it was demonstrated in the finding that young adolescents spending most of their free time with peers, while spending a little less time with their family. It is important to note that the amount of time young persons spend with parents is determined not only by themselves, but sometimes mainly by parents, who may be very busy (Chen & Farruggia, 2002). However, the young adolescents in this study declared that they were quite satisfied with the leisure-time opportunities provided by their families.

The situation is different with regard to other adult socialization agents such as school and community. Young adolescents preferred them less. In our opinion this finding does not represent a major reflection on these socialization agents, but an objection to the perceived patronizing attitudes of agents. Young adolescents need to feel that they are being treated as adults, that their voice is heard, and that they are given the freedom to manage their own lives. This does not mean that they do not need mentoring by adults, but that it be done with respect. The findings show that young adolescents were least
satisfied with afternoon activities offered by school, but a substantial number of them (40%) chose their teachers and educators as significant providers of help. This indicates that they did not oppose school as such, but thought of it as an institutional social agent and their teachers as personal social agents. It also shows that the young adolescents did not have an overall negative attitude toward adult socialization agents: their attitudes were specific, and varied with the circumstances of their interactions. In times of need and difficulties, teenagers understand their need of adult figures and are more ready to depend on them. This differs from their need with regard to their free-time choices. The same trend was illustrated in relation to community as a social agent.

In this study these patterns and attitudes toward the various social agents proved to be similar for the different adolescent subgroups, in keeping with findings of other studies. The basic differences appeared between religious and non-religious adolescents, and between those who lived in small rural communities and those in larger urban communities. Gender differences were less evident.

Community is not just a “place” for adolescents’ social life, but is a part of that social life which shapes and is shaped by them. In childhood, community is meditated by family and school, while in adolescence the young persons themselves directly explore their community and its institutions and people.

Research has found that structured leisure activities the community offers its adolescents are associated with developmental benefits, widened school and adult career achievements, and involvement in civic activities. These findings suggest that youth in all societies would benefit if the time given to this type of activity were greater (Larson & Verma, 1999).

The present study found that although young adolescents wanted to spend less of their free time in institutionalized activities arranged by community, they distinguished among the activities, favoring in this descending order: youth movement, community center courses for youth, volunteer activity. Further, most of the teenagers felt a moderately positive sense of attachment to their community of residence.

Another important attribute of community for its teenagers is connected to the very significant and central social agent of peer groups. One of the most widespread ways adolescents spend time is hanging around in the streets of their community, together with supporting and empowering peer groups—as revealed in this study and others in different communities and countries. Community provides the representative scene of social life, but also a kind of “home” for the peer groups of adolescents. They need a place to meet and freely experience
their own culture without adult supervision and intervention (on the basis of our and other researchers’ claim that they do not violate the basic social order and norms). As they do not normally have other choices they do this in such places as street corners, parks, and shopping centers. The Israeli youth movement can be a good example of this direction.

In youth movement club-houses, especially in the rural settlements, young adolescents have a place of their own, sometimes a separate room for each age group. They meet there with their peers for organized or semi-organized activities under the guidance of other, slightly older, adolescents of their community, or they go there by themselves whenever they want to and give the place their own touch. On the one hand they enjoy relative autonomy, and on the other, they are under supervision and play out roles chosen by themselves. That is why the youth movement was relatively more favored by young adolescents, especially those from rural settlements.

This community approach to organized activities for adolescents, which considers their need for both participation and autonomy, and the importance of their acting in peer groups, can be found as the central element of the Community Youth Development (CYD) movement (Hughes, 2001, 2002) and the policy of “Youth development approach of reconnecting youth and community” (Reconnecting youth & community, 1996) in the USA. CYD assumes the involvement of young people in their own development and in that of the community—partnership with adults, to make use of their talents and increase their investment in community life. It is based on an open approach whereby adults and community do not have control over, but do influence youth. This approach leads to youth engagement and to youth/adult partnerships in significant ways in community creation, maintenance, and change. Instead of treating youth as objects and as a collection of problems, it treats them as resources and future parents, neighbors, and workers. The focus is placed on young people’s strengths and talents, while connecting them to the larger community. Services are tailored to meet youths’ developmental needs in a community that enhances their connection and involvement (Hughes, 2001, 2002; Reconnecting youth & community, 1996).

In conclusion, this research detected no generation gap between teenagers and their peer groups and adult figures and authorities. Family still remained a leading social agent of young adults, a primary source of support to whom they could turn when in need. School and community proved much less important in terms of the amount of free time spent in them. But it is suggested that their importance for
adolescents could be increased if community institutions accepted them not only as individuals, but as a peer group and integrated them into the community by offering them a place, partnership, and support.

REFERENCES


