

The People of the Book:

*An Evaluation of the
PJ Library Program*



Jay Sherwin, Ellen Irie, Naomi Orensten, Sheila Wilcox & Evan A. Gattozzi

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Introduction

Brief Overview of PJ Library

PJ Library, an initiative of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation (HGF), distributes free, age-appropriate, high quality Jewish children's literature and music to families raising Jewish children. The primary purpose of this program is to encourage parents to share Jewish stories, traditions and values with their children, promote family conversations, and inspire families to engage in meaningful Jewish social, educational and communal experiences. The ultimate goal of PJ Library is to enhance Jewish identity, increase engagement in Jewish life and community and, over time, build a more vibrant North American Jewish community.

The target audience of PJ Library is purposefully broad; ultimately, the program aims to reach all North American families raising Jewish children through eight years old who would like to begin or further their Jewish journey. Within this broad population, there is a focus on marginally-engaged families—those for whom this program serves as an entry point to Jewish life.

A NORTH AMERICAN PARTNERSHIP: HOW PJ LIBRARY WORKS

- **PJ Library programs are partnerships between PJ Library North America (PJNA) and local community partners.** Community partners bring PJ Library to their local or regional area. Partners include but are not limited to Jewish Federations, Jewish Community Centers and synagogues.
- **PJNA Role:** PJNA supports 50% of the cost of each family's PJ Library subscription. Additionally, PJNA provides staffing subsidies, professional development and other supports and resources to each community partner.
- **Community Partner Role:** Community partners fund 50% of each family's PJ Library subscription and operate the program on a local or regional level. While the model varies across sites, most community partners conduct outreach, recruit subscribers and offer supplemental programs and activities for subscriber families.

In the past eight years, PJ Library has scaled rapidly and it continues to grow.

PJ Library launched in Western Massachusetts in December 2005 with 200 children. The program has rapidly expanded to serve families in communities across North America. Today, more than 140,000 children, ages 6 months through 8 years, receive PJ Library books each month. The program reaches families in more than 250 communities in the United States and Canada.

Since 2010, the number of PJ Library community partners has grown by 124% and total subscriptions have grown by 85%.

Exhibit 1
Community Growth over Time

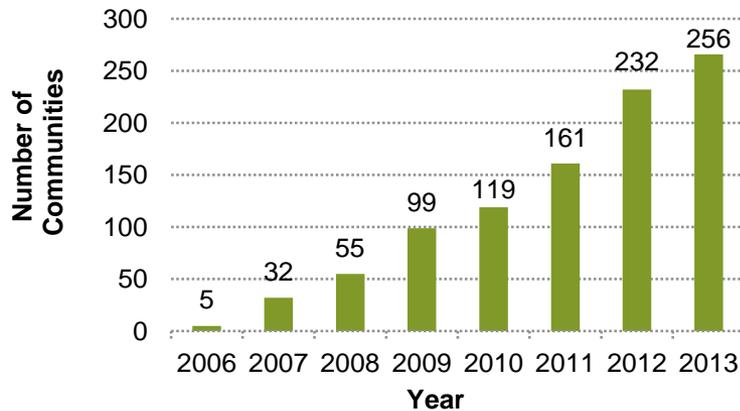
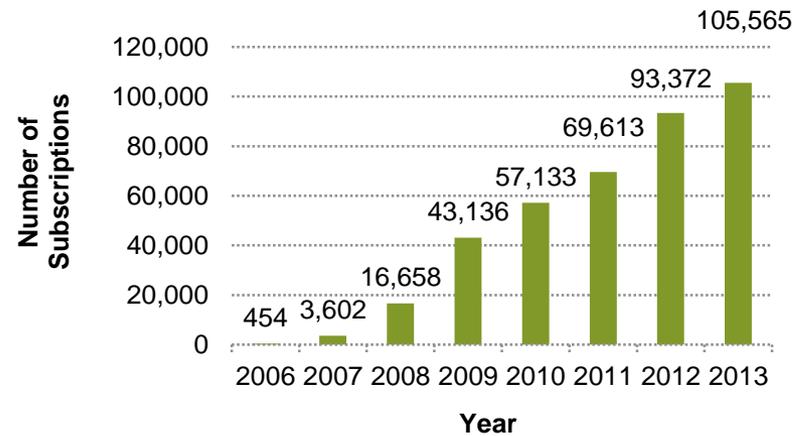


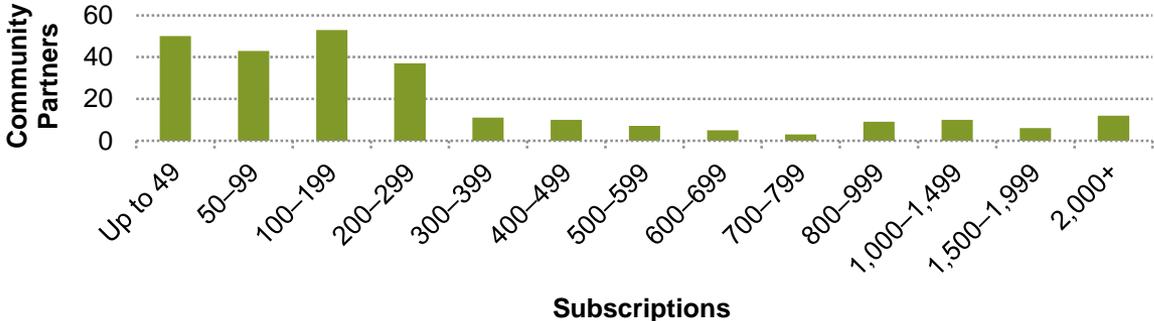
Exhibit 2
Subscription Growth over Time



PJ Library in 2013

- With 256 community partners, PJ Library operates in 43 U.S. states, two other U.S. jurisdictions (DC, U.S. Virgin Islands) and six Canadian provinces.
- Almost half of the 256 community partners are Jewish Federations and nearly 40% are synagogues. Jewish Community Centers (JCCs) and other organizations (e.g., Jewish Family and Children’s Services, Bureaus of Jewish Education) comprise 8% each.
- Of these organizational partners, approximately 80 operate in the New York metro area and approximately 180 are based in other communities, as of spring 2013. New communities are constantly joining PJ Library.
- PJ Library subscription totals are largest in states/provinces with the largest total Jewish populations* and smallest in states/provinces with the lowest Jewish populations.
- Over 90% of PJ Library subscriber families live in 20 U.S. states and Canadian provinces. Over 56% of PJ Library subscriptions are in five U.S. states (NY, CA, NJ, FL and IL).

Exhibit 3
Active Subscriptions by Community Partner, April 2013
 n=256



* Cohen, S. M., Ukeles, J. B., & Miller, R. (2012). Jewish Community Study of New York: 2011 Comprehensive Report. UJA-Federation of New York.

Evaluation Overview

In late 2012, PJ Library North America and key stakeholders participated in a theory of change development process, which clarified the purpose, key strategies, target constituencies and intended outcomes of the PJ Library program. That process informed and shaped the design of this evaluation, which assesses the progress that PJ Library is making toward the intended outcomes articulated in its theory of change. This is the largest study of North American families raising Jewish children that the evaluators and PJ Library staff are aware of to date.

This report presents findings on the impact of PJ Library on subscriber families and community partners. The report also includes insights from key informants (including representative quotes selected by Informing Change) and offers recommendations and questions for PJ Library's leadership to consider.

This evaluation builds on a previous assessment conducted in 2010. It assesses the overall impact of PJ Library but does not assess or compare programs in individual communities or sites.* Because many factors have influenced the outcomes data in this report, the evaluation assesses PJ Library's contribution to those results but does not determine the degree to which results are due solely to the efforts of PJ Library. In general, results reflect only the upper ends of the response scale (e.g., "moderately" and "greatly") and do not include the percentage of respondents who selected options such as "somewhat" or "slightly."

* Also, this evaluation focuses on the PJ Library program model in North America and does not encompass the additional programs that have grown from PJ Library (e.g., PJ Goes to Camp, PJ Goes to School, Sifriyat Pijama).

** Please see the appendix for further information on data collection methods and evaluation strengths and limitations.

*** This response rate, impressive for surveys of this scale, promotes confidence in the validity and representativeness of the findings.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS**

Subscriber Family Survey

- **20,624 respondents**
- **35% response rate** from 99% of PJ Library communities***

Community Partner Survey

- **368 respondents**
- **60% response rate** from 84% of PJ Library communities

Key Informant Interviews

- **29 informants**, including philanthropic supporters, community partner executives, thought leaders and PJNA staff

Materials Review

- Subscription data from PJ Library

PJ Library North America Theory of Change

PURPOSE: The primary purpose of PJ Library is to provide high quality Jewish books that deepen and enrich the Jewish identities of families raising Jewish children, promote family conversations, and inspire families to engage in meaningful Jewish social, educational and communal experiences.

NEEDS ADDRESSED	STRATEGIES	TARGET CONSTITUENCIES	OUTCOMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many families raising Jewish children are not engaged in any form of Jewish life. Some are interested in Jewish engagement but are reluctant to pursue it. • Many families raising Jewish children are seeking in-home learning opportunities that deepen their Jewish identity. • Many families do not have regular access to high quality Jewish literature. • Many children of Jewish parents do not have opportunities to explore Jewish tradition or develop a Jewish identity. • The organized Jewish community is eager to better understand, reach and engage families raising Jewish children. 	<p>Jewish Family Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute free, age-appropriate Jewish children’s literature and music to families raising Jewish children • Provide resource materials that help families use the literature and music in their homes • Increase the accessibility of local Jewish community resources to families • Offer a continuum of programs and services that engage children and families <p>Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in local partnerships and other engagement platforms • Provide local partners with capacity building grants 	<p>Primary</p> <p>All North American families raising Jewish children from the age of six months to five, six, seven or eight years that would like to begin or further their Jewish journey. Within this broad population, there is a focus on marginally-engaged families.</p> <p>Secondary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current and potential PJ Library community partners and funders • The broader Jewish community, particularly those involved in community engagement efforts 	<p>Families Raising Jewish Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased demand for PJ Library • More children and families engaging in conversation and learning Jewish traditions, values and customs • Increased sense of Jewish identity among subscriber families • More subscriber families making choices inspired by PJ Library <p>PJ Library Community Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased capacity to support PJ Library subscriptions, to provide outreach to local families and to offer local programs • Increased awareness of, and connection to, families raising Jewish children in their communities • Increased sense of community among PJ Library program professionals <p>PJ Library of North America</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of community partners • Increased enrollment of subscriber families • Increased demand for Jewish children’s literature, thereby strengthening Jewish children’s publishing <p>North American Jewish Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access to PJ Library for all families raising Jewish children

ULTIMATE IMPACT: All parents raising Jewish children share the magic and joy of Jewish stories, traditions and values with their children, thereby enhancing Jewish identity, inspiring parents and children to engage in Jewish life and community, and building a more vibrant North American Jewish community.

PJ Library Subscriber Families

Section Overview

This section explores several questions about PJ Library subscriber families, including:

- Who are the families receiving PJ Library books?
- What do families think of PJ Library overall (including books and other PJ Library resources)?
- How have families been influenced by subscribing to PJ Library?

Over 20,000 respondents completed the family survey, representing nearly every PJ Library community.* To better understand PJ Library's influence on families, this section also draws on data from the community partner survey and key informant interviews.

PJ LIBRARY THEORY OF CHANGE: INTENDED OUTCOMES FOR SUBSCRIBER FAMILIES

- More children and families engaging in conversation and learning Jewish traditions, values and customs
- Increased sense of Jewish identity among subscriber families
- More subscriber families making choices inspired by PJ Library

* Results in this section are based on data gathered from survey respondents only, not all PJ Library subscriber families. While respondents are representative of all subscriber families, their responses may not reflect the views of all subscribers.

1. Who are the families?

The majority of subscriber families have been part of PJ Library for three years or less and receive one book per month at their home for one child who is five years old or younger.

Exhibit 4
Number of Subscriptions per Family*
(n=19,259)

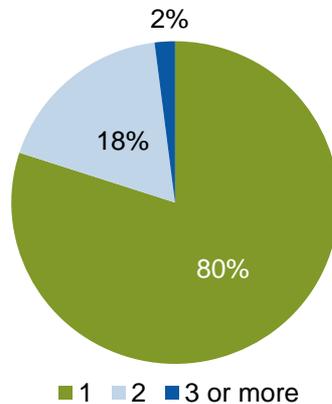
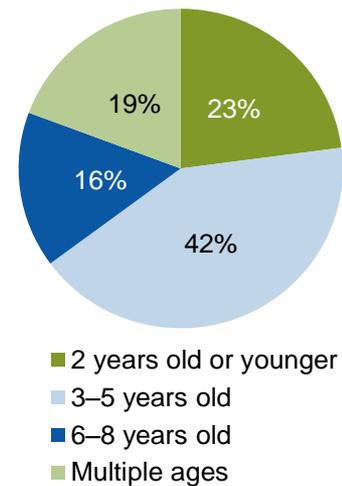


Exhibit 5
Age of Children Receiving Books
n=19,258

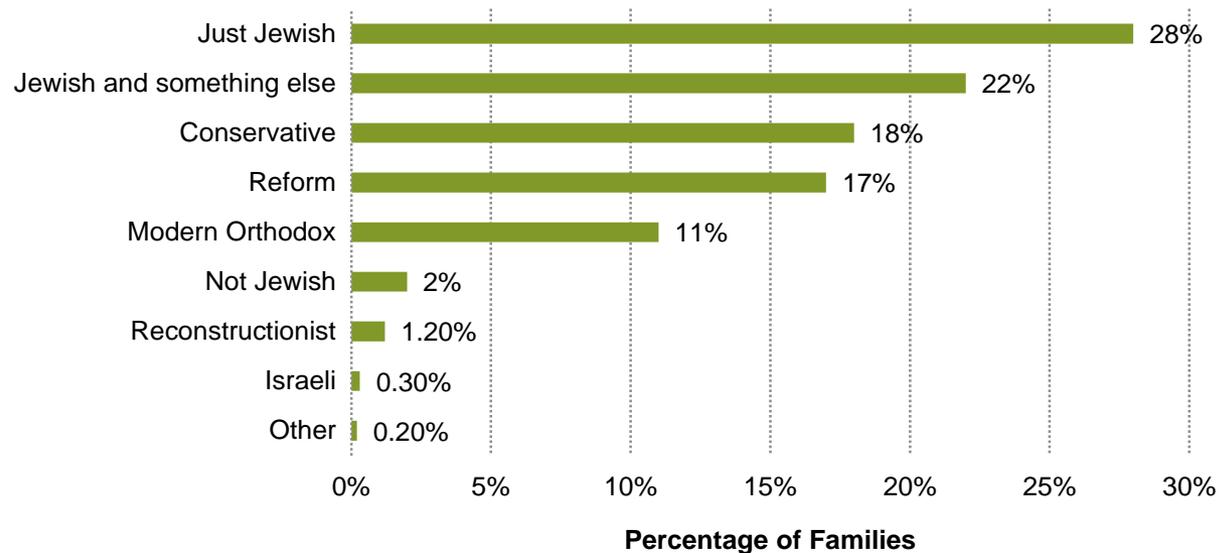


* In the 2010 PJ Library evaluation, 58% of respondents reported that one child in their family receives a book, 26% that two children receive a book and 6% that three or more receive a book.

PJ Library serves families from across the spectrum of Jewish identity.

- While 46% of subscriber families identify with one of the three major North American Jewish movements (Conservative, Reform or Orthodox), 28% describe themselves as “Just Jewish.”*
- One in five subscriber families identifies as interfaith (“Jewish and something else”), suggesting that PJ Library is reaching a significant number of families in this key target demographic.

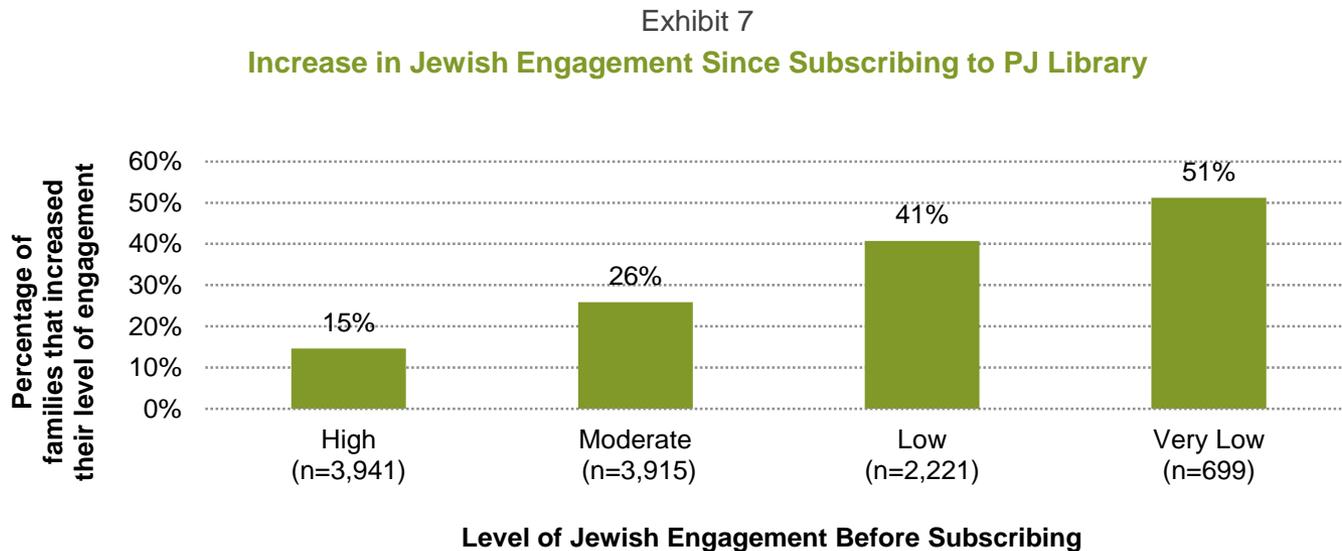
Exhibit 6
Family Identity
n=20,522



* Direct comparison to the 2010 evaluation is not possible due to key differences in how the questions were asked. In 2010, each respondent was asked about his/her own identity while the 2013 survey inquired about the *family's* identity. In the 2010 survey, there was not an option for “Jewish and something else.”

Families report higher levels of Jewish engagement after subscribing to PJ Library. This is particularly true for families whose previous engagement was low or very low.

- Of the families that describe their level of engagement in Jewish life as “very low” before subscribing to PJ Library, 51% currently report higher levels of engagement.* Of the families reporting “low” levels of engagement before subscribing, 41% now report higher levels. This suggests that PJ Library is positively influencing engagement levels for these families, but PJ Library may not be the only influence.
- Even for subscriber families with previously high levels of engagement, 15% report higher levels currently.



* Levels of engagement are measured using Cohen's Index of Jewish Engagement. More information on this index and the survey items it includes is provided in Appendix B.

2. How do families feel about the books and other PJ Library resources?

PJ Library books are highly valued in Jewish households across North America.*

- **89%** of adult survey respondents enjoy or very much enjoy the PJ Library books
- **93%** report their children enjoy or very much enjoy the PJ Library books
- **86%** report that the books are a very valuable resource for their family
- **89%** of families are very satisfied with PJ Library overall
- **92%** report it's their children's idea to read the books at least half the time
-  **20%** that it's almost always their children's idea
- **44%** report that they read a PJ Library book at least twice a week, on average

"Our boy tears into his PJ Library books like they are chocolate! He loves correlating what's in the books to what he learns at school."

–PJ Library Subscriber Family

"My kids LOVE getting their 'presents' in the mail! We read the books a lot right after we get them and then not as often, but we do read them. Especially around the holiday or event they highlight."

–PJ Library Subscriber Family

"My son loves the books and loves to take them to school and share with his friends."

–PJ Library Subscriber Family

* These results are similar to the 2010 evaluation, which found very high levels of satisfaction with PJ Library overall and the books specifically.

Families use the materials mailed to their home by PJ Library more than Web-based resources.

- About three-quarters of subscriber families use music CDs distributed by PJ Library and just over half of the users say they find the CDs very valuable.
- Less than half of subscriber families use the Web-based supports offered by PJ Library and its community partners, and respondent comments suggest that many families are not aware of these resources.

Exhibit 8

Families' Use of PJ Library Resources

Resource	Percentage of families who have used it (n=20,017–20,055)	Percentage of users who find it very valuable (n=3,533–19,205)
Books	98%	87%
Notes from PJ Library on the book flaps or back cover	79%	39%
CDs	73%	56%
Your community's PJ Library e-newsletters	41%	27%
PJ Library Web site*	28%	30%
Your community's PJ Library Facebook page	19%	27%

* For comparison, 45% of the respondents to the 2010 evaluation reported they had visited the PJ Library Web site.

3. How have families been influenced by subscribing to PJ Library?

THE PYRAMID OF BEHAVIORAL CHANGE

Social science research posits that change is a developmental process that occurs in stages over time. To produce behavioral change, programs and interventions must first create awareness and use it to change attitudes in the populations they serve.

Behavioral change is most likely to occur when an intervention encompasses many elements and addresses a variety of environmental and other influences.

The following pages analyze PJ Library's influence on subscriber families using this framework.

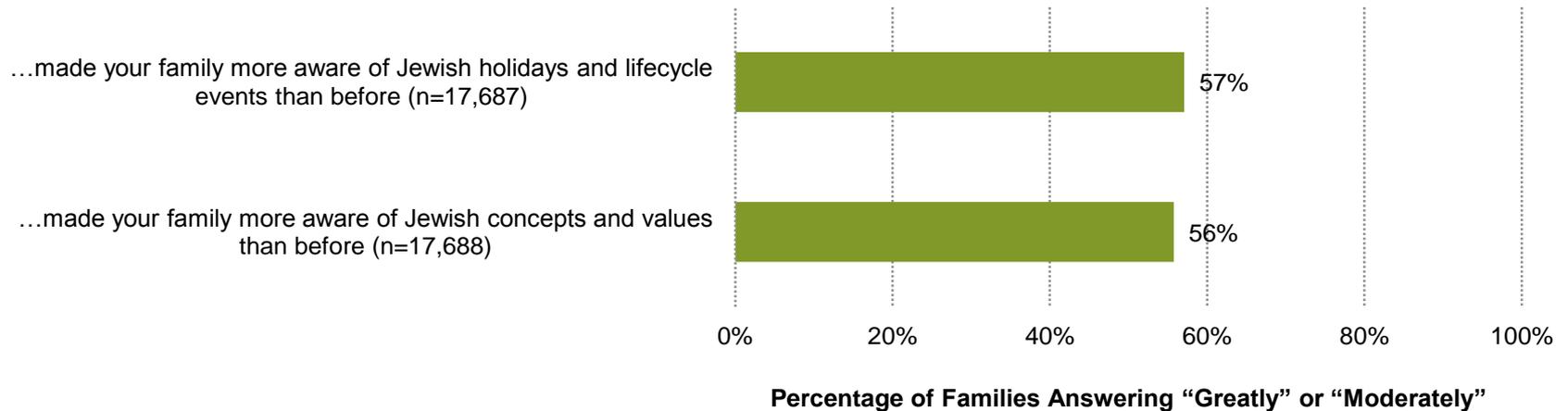


Awareness

A majority of subscriber families report that PJ Library has increased their awareness of Jewish traditions, practices and values.

Exhibit 9

To what extent has PJ Library...



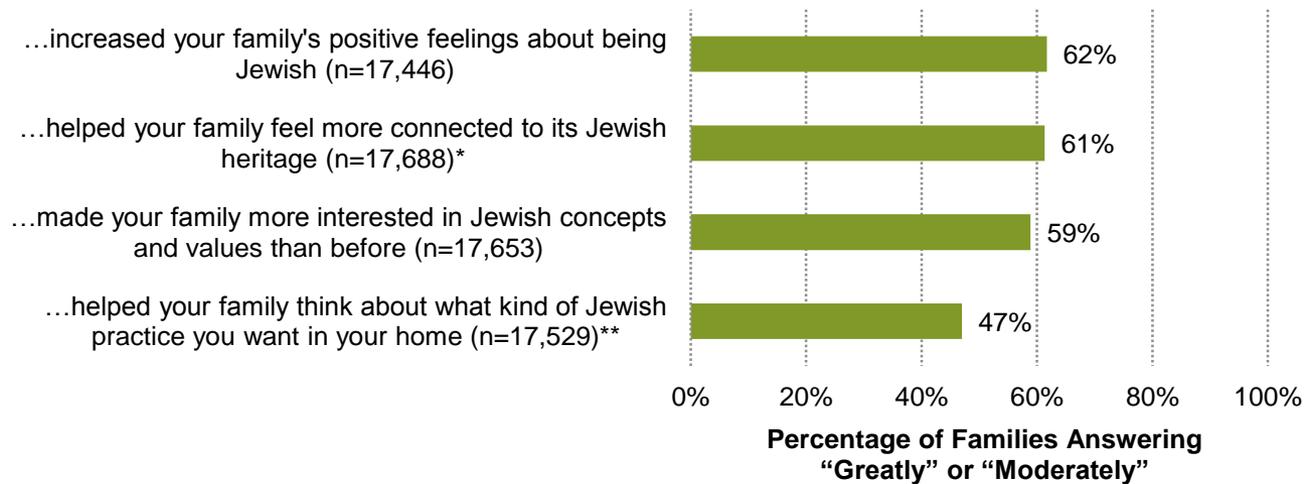
"We are more aware of various holidays, their meanings and related traditions. After reading the books, our daughter asks questions which stimulates conversation related to the Jewish topics at hand."

–PJ Library Subscriber Family

Attitudes

Families feel more positive about being Jewish because of their PJ Library experiences.

Exhibit 10
To what extent
has PJ Library...



"Our eldest is going to a Jewish day camp this summer because now he has a longing to learn more about Judaism and feels proud. Previously, he wanted to kidnap Santa Claus because he was so jealous of Christian kids at school. I give a lot of credit to PJ Library for his improved attitude.

—PJ Library Subscriber Family

* In the 2010 evaluation, 88% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that PJ Library helps connect their family with their Jewish heritage.

** In the 2010 evaluation, 65% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

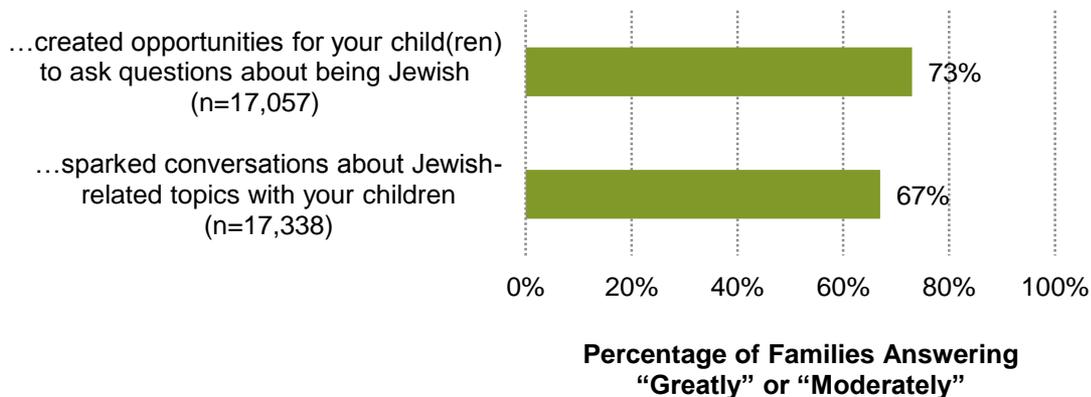
Behaviors/Practices – At Home

PJ Library serves as a springboard to family conversation about Jewish-related topics.

- A large majority of subscriber families (85%) report they discuss concepts or values from PJ Library books as a family.
- Approximately 75% of families report that they discuss Jewish-related concepts and values **more than they used to** because of the PJ Library books.*

Exhibit 11

To what extent has PJ Library...



"The books help to frame events and ideas on a suitable level for small children. They have helped introduce concepts to our son, and sparked larger conversations."

–PJ Library Subscriber Family

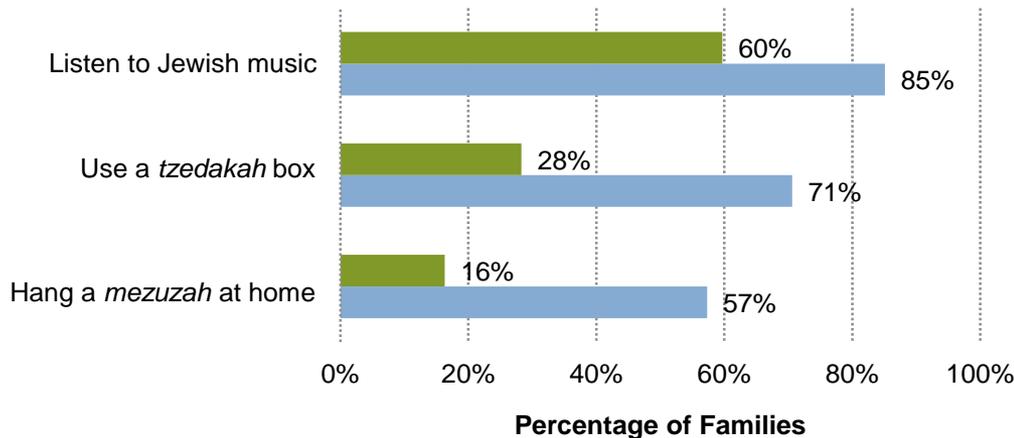
* In the 2010 evaluation, 80% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that PJ Library books created opportunities for their child(ren) to ask questions about being Jewish; 76% agreed or strongly agreed that the books spurred conversations with Jewish content between members of their household.

PJ Library books and other resources are helping families expand their Jewish practices at home.

- PJ Library's CDs (and perhaps other resources) are helping to bring more Jewish music into subscriber family homes.
- The PJ Library initiative to introduce families to *zedakah* boxes and encourage their use appears to have had a strong influence on families who were not previously using one.

Exhibit 12

PJ Library Influence on Jewish Practices at Home



- Began this practice since signing up for PJ Library (n=2,842–8,634)
- PJ Library has moderately to greatly influenced the decision (n=453–3,300)

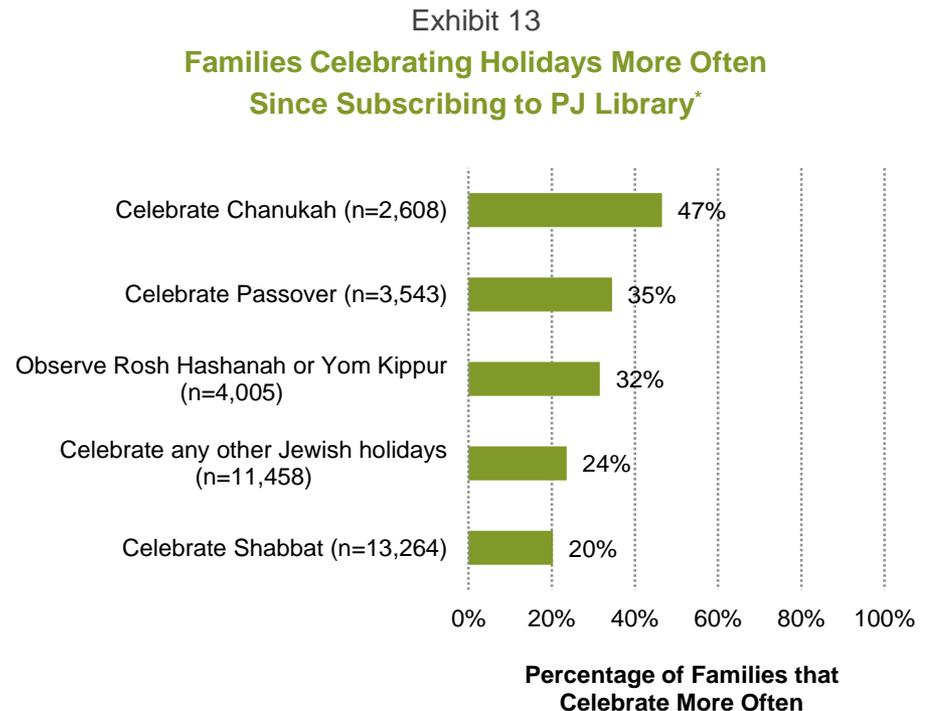
58% of families report that PJ Library moderately to greatly influenced their decision to build upon or add a Jewish tradition to their home life.

“Being an interfaith family, the books really help us add new traditions to our home life and help me learn more and more about Jewish holidays and practices.”

–PJ Library Subscriber Family

Some families report that they celebrate Jewish holidays more often since subscribing to PJ Library.

- About 80% of subscriber families report that they “always” celebrated Chanukah, Passover or Rosh Hashanah before signing up for PJ Library, and 30% of families “always” celebrated Shabbat and other holidays.
- Families that previously celebrated these holidays less regularly report that they celebrate more often since subscribing to PJ Library. This finding is particularly strong for the families that “never” celebrated the holidays before subscribing.



* Excludes families that “always” celebrated holidays before subscribing.

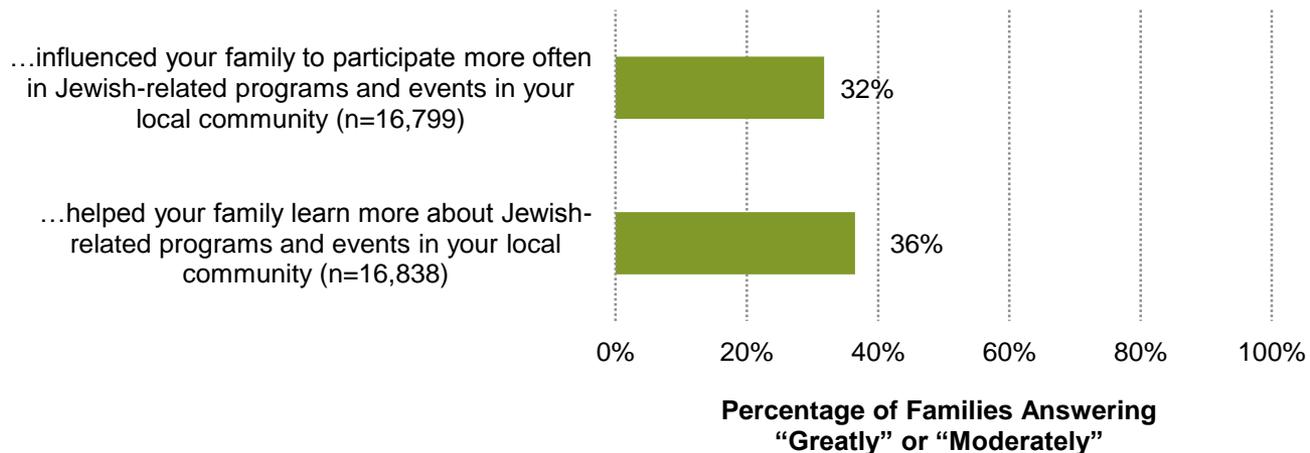
Behaviors/Practices – In the Community

Eight out of ten subscriber families attend local programs and events for families with young Jewish children, and more than 30% credit PJ Library with influencing that choice.

- Over 80% of families report they have attended programs in their local community for families with young Jewish children. Most families (84%) agree or strongly agree that it is easy to learn about those programs.
- In the 2010 evaluation, 21% of respondents indicated that they had attended local programs they learned about through PJ Library.

Exhibit 14

To what extent has PJ Library...

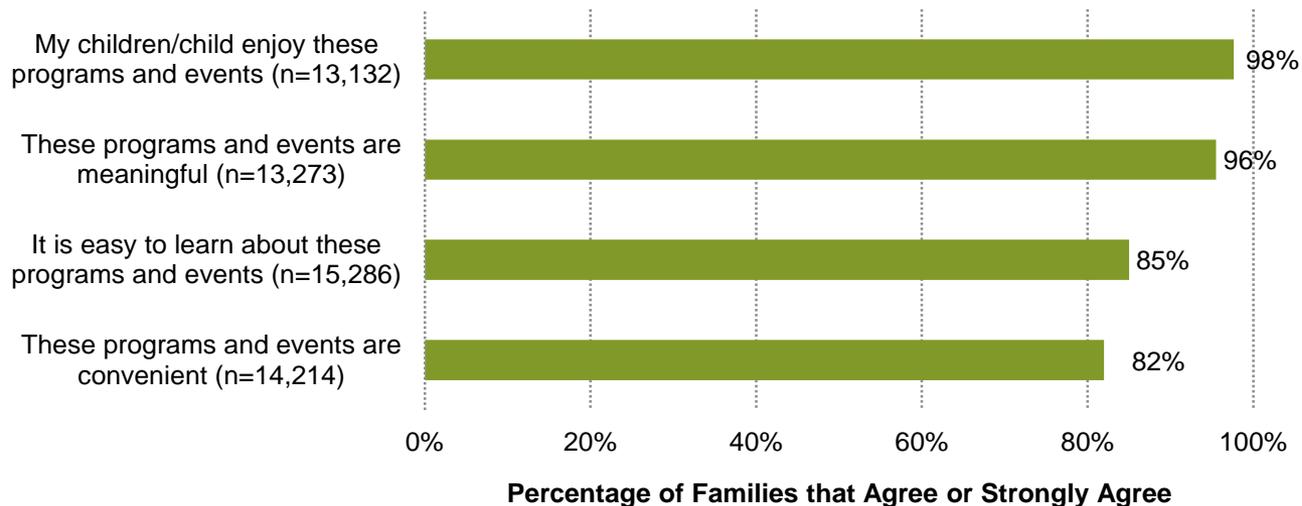


Subscriber families attending local programs and events describe them as enjoyable and meaningful.

- Of the families reporting that they have attended programs in their local community for families with young Jewish children, most agree that program quality has improved and program quantity has increased.
- About one-third (35%) of families also report attending *PJ Library-specific* programs and events, and 45% of those families describe the programs as very valuable.
- Nearly all community partner staff report growing attendance at their programs and credit the increase to their PJ Library partnerships.

Exhibit 15

Family Rating of Local Jewish Community Programs



PJ Library has had some influence over family decisions to seek out Jewish educational programs for their children.

- Many factors contribute to a family’s decision to send their children to Jewish educational or cultural programs, including the ages of their children and availability of programs.
- Among subscriber families that have enrolled their children in Jewish educational programs, between 36% and 39% report that their involvement with PJ Library “moderately” to “greatly” influenced their decision.

Exhibit 16
Started since Subscribing to
PJ Library
n=6,508–9,587

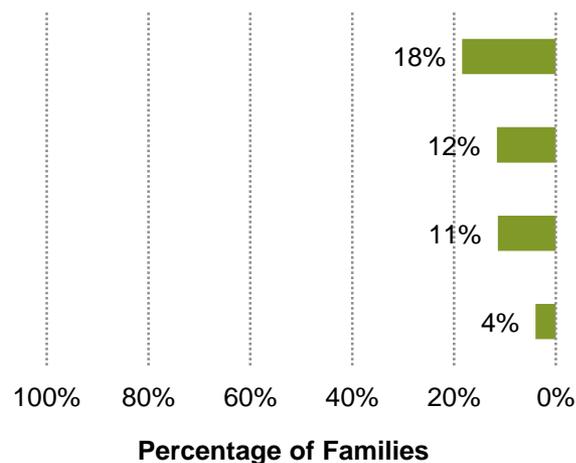
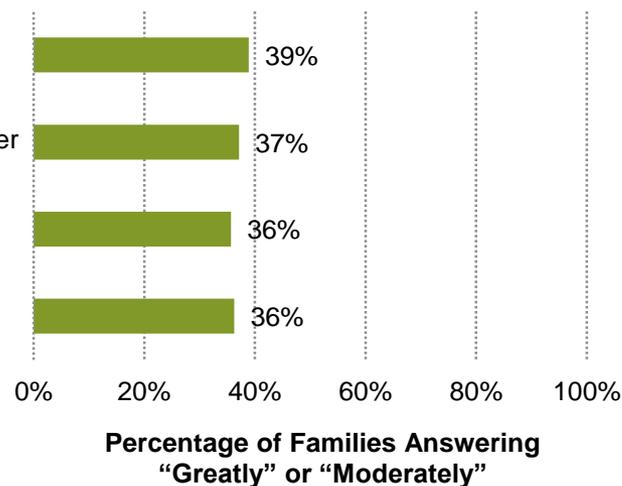


Exhibit 17
PJ Library’s Influence on Decision
n=375–1,160

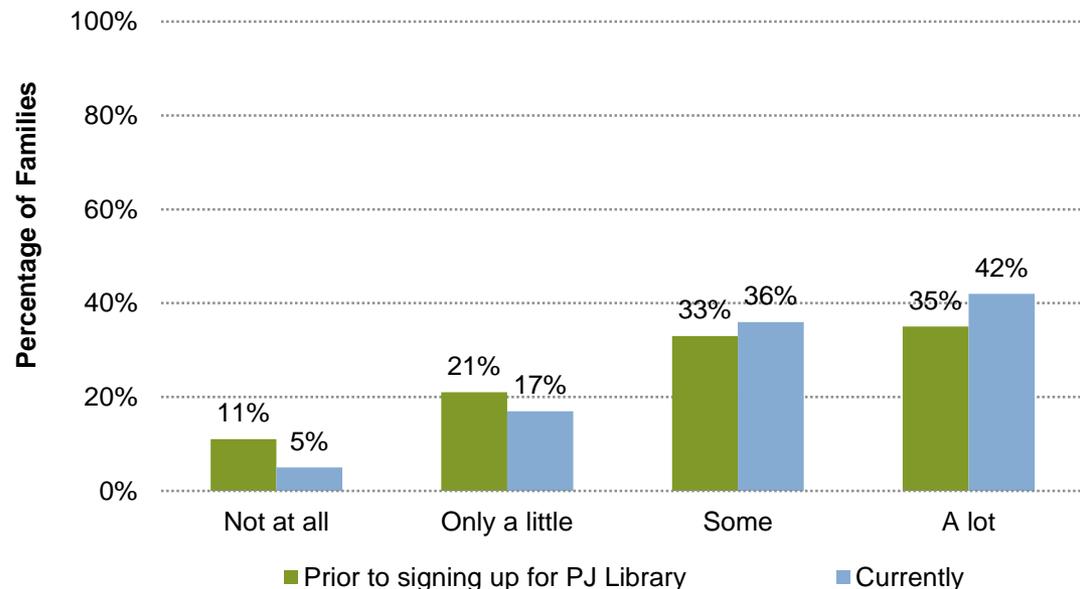


Many PJ Library families feel more connected to their local Jewish communities than they did before subscribing.

- When asked how much they felt part of their community, the percentage of families who answered “a lot” or “some” increased after subscribing, while the percentage who answered “only a little” or “not at all” decreased.
- Overall, 38% of families say that PJ Library has “moderately” to “greatly” helped their family feel more connected to the local Jewish community.
- In the community partner survey, 89% of program staff report their observation that “some” to “all” subscriber families are more connected to other local Jewish families since subscribing.

Exhibit 18

To what extent does/did your family feel like you are a part of your local Jewish community
(n=18,839)



Findings reveal interesting variations on the level of PJ Library's influence on different subscriber families.

While these findings represent general trends across survey respondents, there are some interesting differences worth noting:

- Families that did not belong to or participate in a synagogue prior to subscribing to PJ Library rate PJ Library's influence on their family higher than other families. Families that have joined a synagogue since subscribing report higher levels of influence by PJ Library than those who have not yet joined one.
- Interfaith families tend to report higher levels of PJ Library influence while Orthodox families report lower levels.
- Families with lower levels of prior Jewish engagement rate PJ Library's influence higher on their family's awareness/knowledge, attitudes/interests and home behaviors than families with moderate to very high levels of prior engagement. The two groups do not differ in their ratings of PJ Library's influence on their involvement in their local Jewish community.
- There are not any significant differences in how respondents rate PJ Library's influence on their family based on the number or ages of children receiving books, the number of books a family receives each month, or the number of years they have subscribed to PJ Library.*

Findings suggest that the first year of a subscription to PJ Library helps families expand their Jewish knowledge, incorporate new Jewish practices into their homes and consider greater involvement in their local Jewish community. This is particularly true for families with lower prior levels of Jewish engagement.

* These findings are based on comparing the responses of various subgroups with overall ratings of PJ Library's influence. This evaluation does not assess changes in families' attitudes over time.

PJ Library families and other informants offered ideas and suggestions for improving the books and program overall.

Survey responses and key informant interviews generated a number of useful ideas for increasing PJ Library's impact and value to families. Among the most commonly mentioned:

- Choose more books that represent the diversity of today's secular and Jewish society (e.g., interfaith families, various races and ethnicities) and that go beyond Jewish holidays to expose children and their families to the fuller richness of Judaism and Jewish expression.
- Include books from other traditions or high quality secular literature that can be explored through a Jewish lens.
- Avoid sending families books they have already received for older children.
- Consider offering e-books or expanding to the pre-teen market.
- Provide more information about PJ Library resources beyond the books. Some families commented that they did not realize that other resources were available until they saw them listed in the survey.
- Continue gathering feedback from families on book quality. Many families expressed interest in sharing their immediate reactions after reading the books.

PJ Library Community Partners

Section Overview

This section explores a series of questions about the PJ Library community partners. These questions, and the findings reported in this section, assess progress toward the intended outcomes for community partners articulated in PJ Library's theory of change. Key questions include:

- Who are the community partners and what attracts them to PJ Library?
- How are community partners identifying and engaging families in their communities, and how has PJ Library influenced those efforts?
- What do community partners think about the suite of supports provided by PJ Library North America?
- How committed are community partners to PJ Library and what factors affect this commitment?

Results in this section are based on survey responses submitted by executives and program professionals at community partner organizations. A total of 368 respondents submitted surveys, representing 84% of PJ Library partner communities. Findings are also drawn from interviews with a wide range of community partner leaders and philanthropic supporters.

PJ LIBRARY THEORY OF CHANGE: INTENDED OUTCOMES FOR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Increased capacity to support PJ Library subscriptions, to provide outreach to local families and to offer local programs
- Increased awareness of, and connection to, families raising Jewish children in their communities
- Increased sense of community among PJ Library program professionals

Community partner organizations have varying structures and approaches to program implementation.

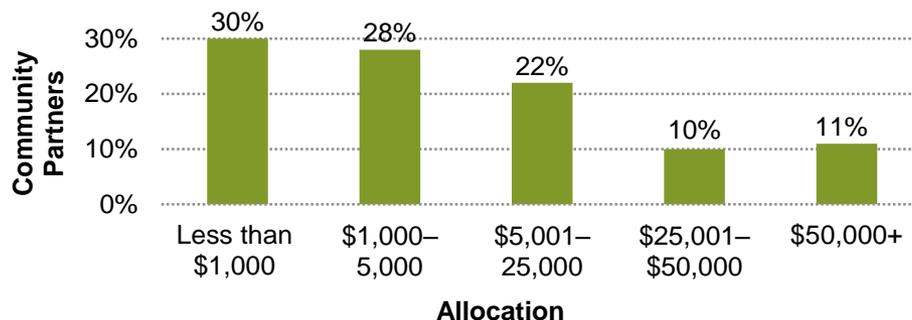
PJ Library program structure: Most respondents (52%) report that PJ Library is embedded within an existing department of their organization (e.g., community outreach, early childhood education, family engagement). In about one-third of respondent communities, PJ Library is operated as an independent program.

Community partner investment in PJ Library-related programs: Excluding subscription costs, community partner expenditures on PJ Library vary widely.

Exhibit 19

Community Partner Annual Allocation to PJ Library, Excluding Subscription Costs

n=101



COMMUNITY PARTNERS DIFFER IN MANY WAYS

- Organizational structure (e.g., Federation, JCC, synagogue)
- PJ Library program size (e.g., number of subscribers served, financial commitment, PJ Library dedicated staff)
- Nature of local funding (e.g., campaign, single donor, endowment)
- Implementer (e.g., community partner, local intermediary agency, partnership, regional)
- Integration of PJ Library into other community partner and community efforts
- Years operating PJ Library
- Local Jewish demographics
- Organizational priorities of community partner
- Quality and quantity of PJ Library programming and staffing

Other Key Variations across Community Partners

Range of ages served: Over 65% of community partners offer subscriptions through age 8; 11% serve children up to age 7, 19% up to age 6, and 6% up to age 5.

PJ Library staff: Local PJ Library community partner staff do not fit into consistent staffing categories. One-third of respondents identifying as program professionals report that they are also involved in major decision-making around PJ Library implementation. Additionally, some respondents indicated that they serve as volunteers, not paid staff.

Community partner time commitment to PJ Library: The total staff time dedicated to PJ Library at each community partner organization varies widely. Over 61% of respondents report that their organization spends less than 10 hours/week on PJ Library and 30% report 11–35 hours/week on PJ Library. About 8% report that their organization spends 36 hours or more a week on PJ Library. As a result, communities have widely different capacities and this affects their potential impact.

Relationship to other family engagement programs: In some communities, PJ Library is one component of a larger family outreach and engagement strategy; in other communities, PJ Library drives or defines that strategy.

The key elements of PJ Library resonate with community partners.

Informants most frequently described the following elements of PJ Library as most compelling:

- The simplicity of bringing Jewish books into a home
- The beauty of giving a gift without asking anything in return
- The accessibility of a program that removes real or perceived barriers to involvement by “meeting families where they are”
- The highly leveraged matching support from PJNA
- The program’s ability to bring new individuals “through the doors” of the community partner organization

“The economics of PJ Library are irresistible.”

–Community Partner Staff Member

“I thought it was cool that the Federation would provide something to people without asking them for money.”

–Community Partner Staff Member

“PJ Library is an exciting new approach to engaging young families. The idea of sending free Jewish children’s books to families with young children very much appealed to us.”

–Community Partner Staff Member

Community partners are highly satisfied with the PJ Library program.

98% of community partner respondents are either “somewhat satisfied” or “very satisfied” with PJ Library. Notably, 80% are “very satisfied” and not one community partner respondent reported dissatisfaction with PJ Library.

“The supports made joining the program a no-brainer.”

–Community Partner Staff Member

“PJ Library is great, it is such a gift, a sweet and beautiful gift. There’s something about touching these little spirits, letting them know they’re a part of something bigger just by virtue of being a Jew.”

–Community Partner Staff Member

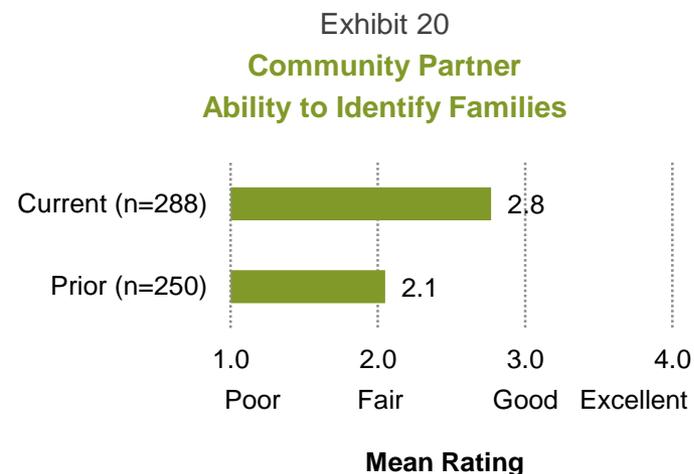
“One of our biggest challenges is trying to figure out easy, non-threatening ways to get young families involved in the community and just saying, ‘Do you want to come to this program?’ doesn’t always work. [With PJ Library,] we can say, ‘You’re part of the community just by the fact that you’re getting these books.’”

–Community Partner Staff Member

Community partners are increasing their commitment to serving families with young children, and a large majority of them see PJ Library as a catalyst.

89% of community partners report that they are more focused on outreach to families raising young Jewish children since launching PJ Library. Of these, 84% cite PJ Library's influence as either moderate or great.

- Community partners report statistically significant improvements in their ability to identify families raising young children, families who were previously not in their database, and “hard-to-reach” families since launching their PJ Library programs.
- Prior to offering PJ Library, 36% of community partners rated their efforts to maintain an accurate database of families with young children as good or excellent while 71% currently rate their efforts as good or excellent. While 33% of community partners rated their efforts as poor prior to PJ Library, only 8% do so currently.
- Over 79% of community partners describe their current efforts to make subscriber families aware of Jewish programs or events as good or excellent. At the same time, respondents suggested that there is more work to be done; only 26% of community partners are reaching all the families they would like to reach.



“PJ has shone the spotlight on family engagement. It took us from an amorphous unstructured desire for family engagement to something so compelling that if we didn't do it, it was missing a golden opportunity that was just laid at our doorstep.”

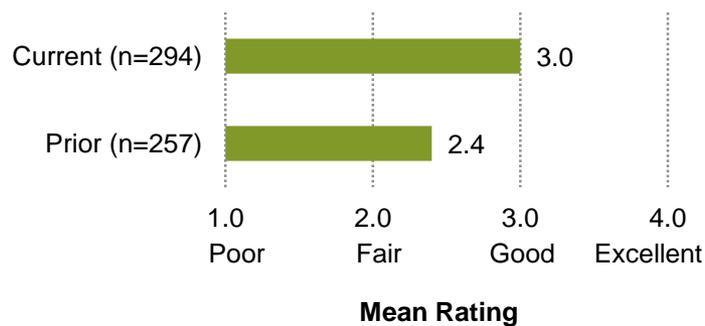
–Community Partner Staff Member

Community partners want to offer more family engagement programs, and PJ Library increases both their commitment and capacity to do so.

- About 84% of community partners report that they are committed or very committed to offering *more* family engagement programs; 87% are committed or very committed to improving the *quality* of family engagement programs.
- Since joining PJ Library, community partners report statistically significant improvements in their ability to engage families raising young children, provide high quality programs, and link families to Jewish events and organizations.
- Additionally, PJ Library has motivated community partners to prioritize family and community engagement within their organizations and their local Jewish community. Over 89% report that their organization is more focused on family outreach and engagement since joining PJ Library.

Exhibit 21

Community Partner Ability to Engage Families



"Because of its reach, PJ has expanded the conversation. Communities have opened up. PJ has made communities more aware of and interested in engaging families with young children."

–Community Partner Staff Member

"One of the goals of our strategic plan is to broaden and deepen engagement in Jewish life and we've really focused on the broadening piece of it. And frankly, PJ provided us with a great experiment."

– Community Partner Staff Member

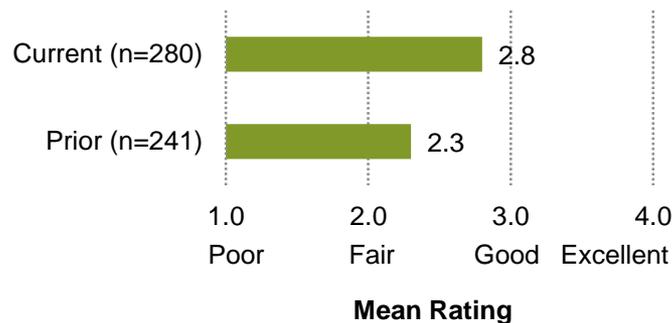
PJ Library has potential to be a platform for community-wide Jewish coordination and engagement.

74% of community partners report more planning of collaborative family engagement programming with other Jewish community organizations since launching PJ Library.

- Some community partners intentionally designed their PJ Library program as a vehicle for community collaboration. For other community partners, PJ Library has evolved into that role.
- On measures of communication and information sharing with other Jewish organizations, community partners report statistically significant improvements since launching PJ Library.

Exhibit 22

Community Partner Communication & Coordination with Other Jewish Organizations in their Community



"PJ strengthened our capacity as convener and organizer in the community. Even before the first book was delivered, we had multiple meetings with organizations in the community, we reached out to all the synagogues, all the day schools and early childhood programs and we said we want this to work for everybody."

—Community Partner Staff Member

Program professionals feel well supported by their organizations and by PJ Library North America.

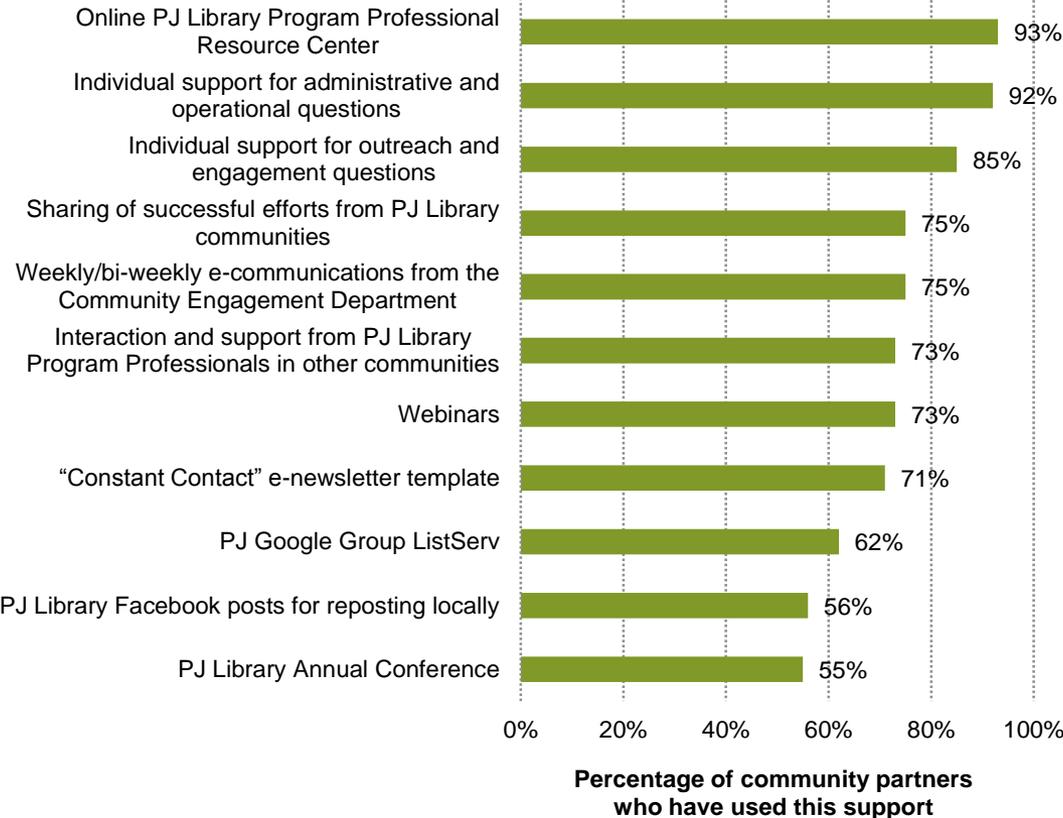
93% of community partner program professionals report feeling “moderately” to “extremely well” supported by their organizations and by PJ Library North America in their efforts to engage families raising Jewish children.

- On average, program professionals are using 8 of the 11 support tools offered by PJ Library North America.
- On average, communities that reported improved program quality used more supports from PJ Library and found more value in those supports.

Exhibit 23

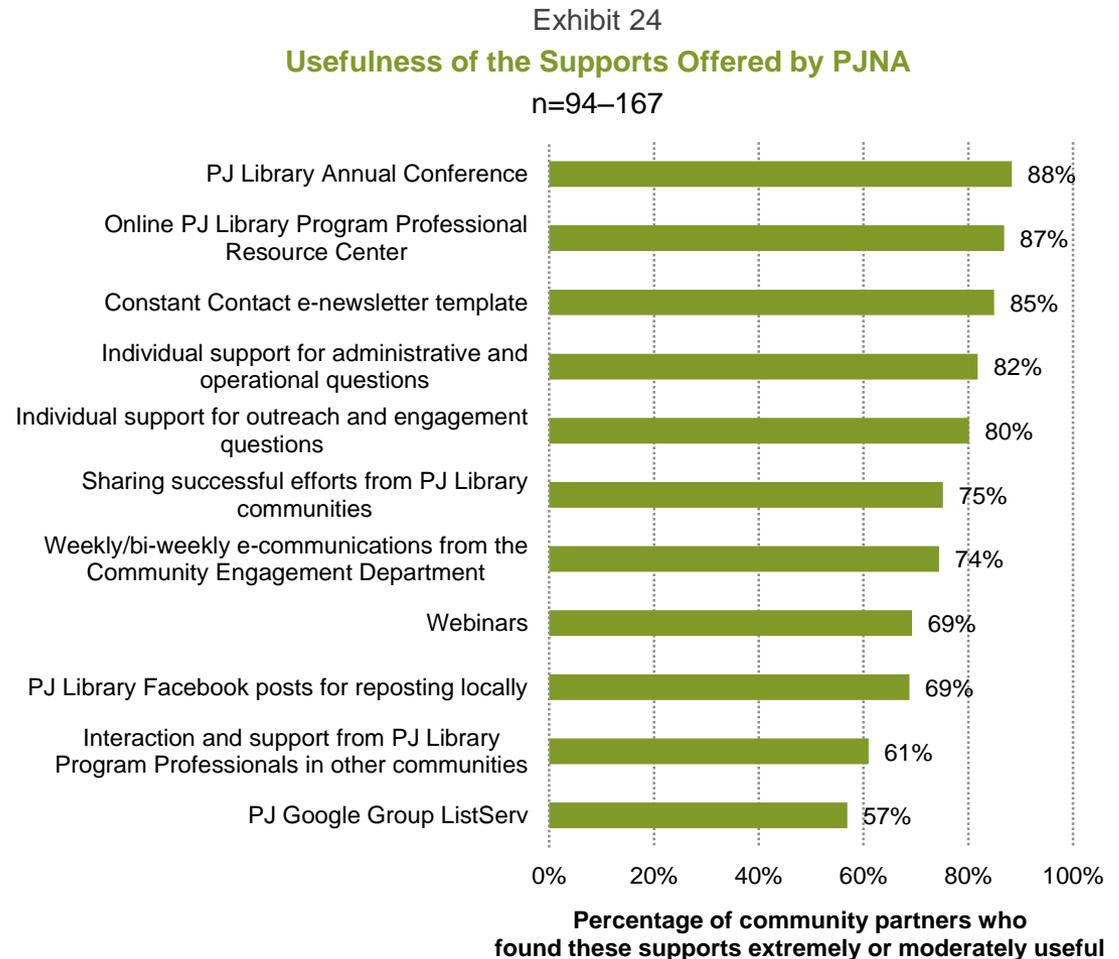
Supports Offered by PJ Library North America

n=171–180



Community partners report that the tools provided by PJ Library North America are valuable.

- A majority of community partners found each of the 11 support tools useful and five of the tools were considered useful by over 80% of respondents.
- Community partners report that personalized supports are the most valuable.
- The annual conference is the most highly valued support tool, but it is not utilized across all communities. Some respondents report that they would like, but are not able, to attend.
- Community partners that received support for outreach and engagement from PJ Library North America were most likely to report positive change in program quality.



Community partners face similar challenges and would welcome additional support from PJ Library North America.

In interviews, community partners consistently cited three key challenges affecting their capacity to reach and engage families raising young children:

- Community partner organizational structures and cultures are not yet conducive to welcoming new or younger families.
- Community partner staff have little experience or training in community organizing or innovative outreach strategies.
- Program staff sometimes struggle to design attractive, meaningful, engaging family programs.

In response to these challenges, community partner leaders encouraged PJNA to provide additional supports and services. Among the most frequently mentioned:

1. Support for PJ Library Program Professionals

- Offer more regional events and networking opportunities
- Customize supports for different types of community partners
- Improve the PJ Library North America Web site for better search-ability and navigation
- Help staff overcome barriers to collaboration and “turf” challenges

2. Programmatic Supports

- Offer advice on program design, such as how to create events outside of conventional institutions
- Offer advice on connecting PJ Library to wrap-around and pipeline programs in Jewish communities (e.g., Shalom Baby)

3. Operational Supports

- Provide marketing advice and trainings (e.g., social media training, press releases) that support outreach and ongoing communication with subscriber families
- Provide front-loaded supports for community partners when they launch PJ Library, including mass marketing and advertising
- Produce development toolkits (e.g., templates for proposals, donor relations materials)

“We could easily triple the number of families with more sophisticated marketing and additional resources from PJ Library North America.”

–Community Partner Staff Member

The vast majority of community partners plan to continue their PJ Library relationships, but many cited the challenge of sustainable funding.

91% of community partner respondents are committed or very committed to maintaining their funding for PJ Library in the short term, and 81% are committed or very committed in the long term. Additionally, 82% are committed or very committed to expanding the program to reach more local families.

Of the 90+ responses to the open-ended question, “What factors might affect your organization’s decision to continue as a PJ Library partner?” 70% explicitly mentioned funding sustainability. Many community partners report their dependence on a single or small group of annual donors. Some urge PJ Library North America to provide ongoing funding support to community partners, including staff subsidies.

“All of our funding comes from a family foundation. They are consistently supportive of PJ (and other programs), but if something should happen to that funding we do not have a backup.”

–Community Partner Staff Member

“Currently, besides the support of HGF, we are the sole local funder. We need to ensure that other funding streams are developed. As the program grows, and the funding need grows, that might create a gap in funding.”

–Community Partner Staff Member

The Future of PJ Library

Section Overview

Building from PJ Library’s theory of change, this section explores questions about PJ Library North America (PJNA) and its relationship with community partners, philanthropic supporters and other key stakeholders.

As noted earlier, PJ Library has experienced dramatic and sustained growth over its eight-year lifespan. Nonetheless, for the leadership of PJ Library to ensure the program’s continued growth and vitality, it must consider the interests and concerns of key stakeholders, including leaders of community partner organizations and philanthropic supporters at the community and North American levels.

This section draws on data from 24 hours of interviews with 5 PJNA staff members, 9 philanthropic supporters, 10 community partner executives and 5 thought leaders. It explores questions about PJ Library’s future, including:

- What do philanthropic supporters find most compelling about PJ Library?
- Do philanthropic supporters find PJNA responsive and attentive?
- Are major donors and partners committed to the future of PJ Library? What factors might affect this commitment?
- What are the key challenges and opportunities that informants identify with regard to the PJ Library model?

PJ LIBRARY THEORY OF CHANGE

Intended Outcomes for PJ Library North America*

- Increased number of community partners
- Increased enrollment of subscriber families

Intended Outcomes for the North American Jewish Community

- Increased access to PJ Library for all families raising Jewish children

* This evaluation does not measure progress toward the third intended outcome for PJNA articulated in the theory of change: “Increased demand for Jewish children’s literature, thereby strengthening Jewish children’s publishing.”

PJ Library appeals to local philanthropic supporters for many of the same reasons cited by other community leaders.

“PJ brings in new families, from many Jewish backgrounds that never would have considered walking in the door of a Jewish organization. It’s ground breaking, a comfortable entry into Jewish life and values.”

–Philanthropic Supporter

“The universality of PJ Library is one of its great strengths and most compelling features. You’re going into a community and the goal is to have total coverage. It’s to just say, basically, ‘Are you Jewish? Are you here? We want you to be a part of this.’”

–Philanthropic Supporter

Philanthropic supporters state that they are impressed and attracted by what PJNA offers: matched funding, staff resources and support, and Harold Grinspoon’s personal investment.

“I like the idea when people come to you with what I’ll call skin in the game, where they’re not just saying ‘We want your money’, they’re saying ‘We’re going to take your money, we’re going to combine it with our money, and we’re going to do something big with it.’”

–Philanthropic Supporter

Most philanthropic supporters find PJNA attentive and responsive to their needs and concerns.

"I kind of feel like if it ain't broke, don't fix it. I am sure they would be responsive if I had input. I'm happy to write the check."

–Philanthropic Supporter

"They are so responsive. If I have a question, a concern, an issue, it is addressed quickly and efficiently."

–Philanthropic Supporter

A few informants suggest that PJ Library, on both the local and North American levels, could be more communicative with philanthropic supporters, though some note that responsiveness has improved as the organization has matured. Those with concerns are more likely to suggest that PJNA could be more responsive than those who are pleased with the model and implementation.

"We haven't really had any discussions since we started funding, so I can't say that they [community partner and PJNA] are responsive. I think that more communication would make a great deal of sense. I would like to see more feedback about what is happening with our grant."

–Philanthropic Supporter

Most philanthropic supporters plan to maintain their investment in PJ Library.

- A majority of informants expressed their continuing commitment to supporting PJ Library in the future. Some noted that they had recently renewed their grants or increased their gifts.
- Most philanthropic supporters prefer that their support be directed exclusively to their local community.
- For all informants, the supports provided by PJNA, including subsidizing half the cost of PJ Library subscriptions, are a key incentive for their continued support.
- Some philanthropic supporters have strong opinions about the structure of the program or concerns about the model, which may affect their future commitment to PJ Library. Their comments are discussed in further detail on the next three pages.

"We will continue supporting PJ Library though we are focused on making a much larger investment around the 'beyond the books' programming."

–Philanthropic Supporter

Informants cite occasional differences between the goals and strategies of PJNA, its community partners and its philanthropic supporters.

Issues raised by informants revolve around six major themes.

Moving beyond the books: Even as PJ Library offers more programs (including *PJ Goes to School* and *PJ Goes to Camp*) and deepens its commitment to community outreach, some community partner staff members and philanthropic supporters express concern about PJNA's "focus on books" and the limitations of that strategy. While community partners recognize their own responsibility for outreach and programming at the local level, some urge PJNA to expand its support for those efforts.

"The Grinspoon Foundation is about the books. But sending out books isn't sufficient. It's critical, it's necessary and it's important, but it's not sufficient. We [the Jewish community, including funders and communities themselves] need to do more to get parents engaged with their communities."

—Philanthropic Supporter

Is PJ Library for everyone? Community partner staff members and philanthropic supporters express different opinions on whether PJ Library should be offered to all families raising Jewish children. Some embrace the vision of reaching everyone, while others suggest that Jewish communal resources should be targeted to marginally engaged families where potential impact is greater.

Should it be "free"? While there is widespread praise for PJ Library as a gift, some community partners would ask families, after some time in the program, to contribute to PJ Library and "pay it forward."

Measurable return on investment: Some community partners see PJ Library as a strategy to build their membership or donor base or strengthen their local Jewish community; they want their investment in PJ Library to produce measurable benefits for their own organizations and communities. These partners would like to develop affiliation or financial support goals for subscribers, while PJNA has no such expectations for subscriber families.

Quality control across a decentralized model: Informants note that there is a wide range of capacities across the 256 community partners. Given the scale of the partner network, it is difficult for PJNA to ensure basic quality standards or promote best practices in areas beyond the books. PJ Library is highly dependent on the talents and qualifications of community partner staff and the effective management of local programs, but those vary widely.

“With different funding streams, different types of philanthropists and federations and JCCs, PJ is not a cookie cutter model. In this difficult model, the lack of consistency ultimately hurts the product. And PJ is dependent on the local community to get the ultimate bang out of it.”

–Philanthropic Supporter

The role of HGF and its founder: There is universal admiration for Harold Grinspoon’s passion, energy and generosity. However, many informants express concern about the sustainability of a program so closely associated with one individual. Some argue that, for the program to survive and thrive in the long term, it needs a broader vision, a broader donor base and broader leadership.

“HGF is going to have to let the baby grow into a teenager and an adult, and that probably will mean significant changes. But that is the only way the program is going to continue.”

–Philanthropic Supporter

Informants also note that PJ Library operates in a complex external environment and confronts issues much larger than the program itself.

Thought leaders and philanthropic supporters point to a variety of external issues that will affect the future of PJ Library, including these two:

A shifting North American Jewish landscape makes it increasingly difficult to identify and reach less connected families. Informants are concerned about the capacity of Jewish establishment organizations to evolve and meet the needs of a changing community.

“PJ is a fantastic program with great potential, but it’s working in a very dysfunctional landscape. The nonprofit world, and especially the Jewish community, is going through radical changes, so how you ride these changes with an organization like PJ is the question. It’s going to take some real thought and creativity to figure it out.”

–Philanthropic Supporter

There is a vacuum of funders championing Jewish family engagement. In the absence of other major initiatives, some informants regard PJ Library as the best vehicle for building a North American Jewish family engagement strategy but recognize that PJ Library may not want to assume that role.

“I want a place to have colleagues, both nationally and locally, to talk about young family engagement. The books are great, but they’re not the only answer. There’s a lot more to be done.”

–Philanthropic Supporter

Philanthropic supporters suggest what success for PJ Library might look like in five to ten years.

1. Continued Growth of Subscriber Families

“Success would be having PJ Library anywhere where someone who wants the books has easy access to them.”

2. More Family Engagement

“I think my community is at a saturation point with the books. I would like to see PJ offer more programming for families and help organizations like JCCs connect to the community.”

“In five years I'd like to see more collaboration and cooperation around family engagement. Where there isn't a lot going on locally, I'd like to help communities network with other communities, using best practices, to do more.”

3. Financial Sustainability

"I'd like to see a more stable funding base that moves away from reliance on a single local funder."

"I'd like to see the financial model less dependent on philanthropy. I'd like philanthropy to grow the program, but I do not think philanthropic dollars should maintain or sustain the program."

4. Independence

"In five years, I'd like to see PJ Library more transparent about its goals and objectives. I'd like to see more programs goals, objectives, metrics for families and communities and results. And I'd like to see the program much more independent from the Foundation."

Recommendations & Questions for Consideration from Informing Change

Recommendations

Based on the findings reported in this evaluation, and informed by comments and insights from key stakeholders, Informing Change offers these recommendations for the leadership of PJNA to consider:

- **Learn more about subscribers to better meet their needs:** On many measures, PJ Library subscribers are diverse, but PJ Library’s primary initiative—the monthly delivery of books to families—does not adequately recognize or account for these differences. A simple intake form for subscribers, sent within a few months of enrollment, might help the program to better understand their needs and interests and might encourage the program to offer different resources to different families. In addition, asking subscribers about their goals for the PJ Library experience and their interest in community engagement could help community partners to design and offer programs that attract and serve more families.
- **Offer more resources for in-home use:** To grow “beyond the books,” PJ Library should continue to offer other resources for families to use at home. The highly successful *tzedekah* box initiative is a model. These tangible gifts and tools pique the interest of parents and children alike and pave a path for potential future engagement in the home and beyond.
- **Continue to offer marketing support to community partners:** Many community partners praised the mass marketing campaign that PJNA supported when they launched their local program; this effort is crucial to helping partners identify and recruit families. Building on this effective initial intervention, PJ Library should expand and improve its efforts to provide marketing advice and support to community partners on an ongoing basis.

-
- **Offer community partners more training in new media:** Program professionals have the challenging task of identifying those who they are not serving, and many community partner organizations and program staff feel ill-equipped to do this well. Ongoing trainings in new media could build staff confidence and capacity to identify new families.
 - **Continue to share best practices and offer trainings in outreach and engagement:** PJNA should continue to facilitate program networking and cross-community learning. PJ Library should explore ways to support programs with similar identities, such as Federation-based programs, programs in the same region, or programs serving geographically dispersed Jewish communities.
 - **Sponsor more regional and virtual events:** The PJ Library annual conference is the most highly valued support tool, but many community partners lack the time or resources to attend. As an alternative, many community partners would like to see a regional network of PJ Library communities that could facilitate more intentional relationship building and program improvement. PJ Library should also explore options for virtual conferences or Web-based events.

Questions for Consideration

While the offered recommendations are largely tactical, Informing Change recognizes that PJ Library faces a larger set of strategic issues. As the program matures and continues planning for a sustainable future, we offer the following questions for PJNA to consider:

- **Clarifying the relationship between HGF and PJ Library:** Many PJ Library stakeholders claim that they do not know where PJ Library ends and HGF begins, and some express concern about HGF's control of the program. **How can PJ Library honor HGF's commitment and investment while attracting the new leaders and donors whose support is necessary for the program to endure?**
- **Aligning PJNA goals with those of community partners and philanthropic supporters:** PJ Library was designed as a "national model implemented locally," operating in partnership with community-based organizations, rather than as an independently operated national clearinghouse. That partnership model has worked well, yet community partners and PJNA sometimes articulate different goals. **How can PJNA better align its vision for PJ Library with the strategic priorities of current and potential community partners?**
- **Shaping PJ Library's future role in Jewish family engagement:** Even if PJ Library was originally designed to serve primarily as a book distribution program, it has assumed a visible and prominent role in the much broader effort to engage families raising Jewish children and help them create community. While PJ Library has increasingly focused on outreach and engagement, many people still perceive it as a book program. **Is PJ Library willing to accept its role as the most important Jewish family engagement effort in North America? If so, how should it act on that vision and communicate it to families, partners and donors?**

Appendices

Evaluation Design

The evaluation uses a mixed-method approach to address the three evaluation questions, including qualitative and quantitative aspects.

The three **evaluation questions** are:

1. How and to what extent are PJ Library subscriber families increasing their Jewish identity, Jewish practice, and engagement in meaningful Jewish social, educational and communal experiences?
2. How and to what extent is PJ Library building community partner capacity to engage and serve local families raising Jewish children?
3. To what extent is PJ Library increasing its accessibility to families and communities across North America?

The major **data collection approaches** are:

- Twenty-nine interviews with funders, PJ Library staff, thought leaders and community partner leadership staff
- Surveys of PJ Library subscriber families and community partner staff (including both program professionals and executives)
- Review of supporting materials (e.g., related studies/evaluation, annual reports, donor reports, Web sites) and secondary data from PJ Library

Quantitative data are analyzed using SPSS while qualitative data are analyzed using Nvivo. Results reflect common trends across multiple respondents.

Cohen's Index of Jewish Engagement

In his 2011 Jewish Community Study of New York, Steven M. Cohen developed an index to assess respondents' engagement in Jewish activities at home and in their community. Informing Change applied the same index to this evaluation with some slight wording modification.

The Index of Jewish Engagement used in this study scores respondents with one point for responding as follows:

- “Very Important” to: How important is/was it to your family to be part of a Jewish community?
- “A lot” to: To what extent does/did your family feel like you are a part of your local Jewish community?
- “Regularly” to: About how often does/did your family talk about Jewish-related topics with friends who are Jewish?
- “Mostly” or “All or almost all” to: Among your family's closest friends, how many are Jewish?
- “Usually” or “Always” to: How often does your family celebrate Shabbat in some way?
- “Usually” or “Always” to: How often does your family celebrate Passover in some way?
- “Usually” or “Always” to: How often does your family celebrate Chanukah in some way?
- “Yes” to: Again, thinking about your family at two points in time, does/did anyone in your family belong to or attend any

program or event at a Jewish Community Center, including just going to socialize?

- “Yes” to: Again, thinking about your family at two points in time, does/did anyone in your family belong to or participate in the activities of a synagogue or temple?
- “Yes” to: Again, thinking about your family at two points in time, does/did anyone in your family belong to or participate in the activities of any other Jewish program or organization?
- “Yes” to: Again, thinking about your family at two points in time, does/did anyone in your family volunteer for any type of Jewish program or organization?
- “Yes” to: Again, thinking about your family at two points in time, does/did anyone in your family donate money to any Jewish charity, cause, program or organization?

Then, Informing Change totaled and categorized their score using Cohen's classifications:

- Very Low (0–1)
- Low (2–3)
- Moderate (4–6)
- High (7–9)
- Very High (10–12)

Evaluation Limitations & Strengths

LIMITATIONS

- The primary data sources used in this evaluation are self-reported (e.g., surveys and interviews), which may present some bias.
- During data collection, Informing Change learned that the family subscriber survey contact list included some grandparents and organizations rather than just families who receive the books in their home. The survey was designed expecting respondents to be families, so some questions may not have applied to these other types of respondents. Similarly, for the community partner survey, some contacts indicated that they were volunteers rather than paid staff and did not feel some questions applied to them.
- Unless otherwise stated, changes in family attitudes and behaviors since subscribing to PJ Library and changes in community partners since they started offering PJ Library may be due to a variety of reasons, including or not including their PJ Library experiences. Often, PJ Library likely had some influence, but unless we directly asked about the PJ Library influence, the results show only possible contribution, not attribution.

STRENGTHS

- The evaluation uses multiple methods to evaluate the PJ Library program, which enabled Informing Change to triangulate findings to reach conclusions supported by multiple data sources. This gives us greater confidence in the findings and resulting implications.
- Where it added to the results, Informing Change used complex analyses such as *t* tests, ANOVAs, regressions and correlations. Informing Change omitted the statistical notation for these results to avoid confusion, but they can be provided as needed.
- The various data collection methods included appropriate representations across the diverse PJ Library communities. While Informing Change did not break down results by community, we do feel confident that this is a fairly accurate representation of trends across communities (although individual communities may differ from what is presented here).

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