



Community Study

by Annette van de Kamp-Wright | Oct 19, 2016 | Featured, Local News

10.21.16 Issue

Alan Potash, CEO, Jewish Federation of Omaha

Several months ago, I introduced a new initiative for our community: the community study. A committee of community members met to help develop the survey questionnaire and to ensure the interests of the synagogues, as well as the Federation and its agencies are represented. This November, we will move forward with this project, and we are counting on you to become a part of it.

There has not been a comprehensive study of Jewish Omaha done since the 1970s. It is time to gather important information about us. For that purpose, professional callers will contact thousands of households. This will enable us to identify which programs and services are most needed in our community. It is your chance to have a voice, and your answers will shape the future of our vibrant Jewish community.

We will be using the research firm of Ira M. Sheskin, PhD., who has worked on many similar studies for Jewish Federations throughout the U.S.

A local Jewish community study is a research, community-building and policy-oriented project. It is designed to understand the demographic, social and Jewish characteristics and needs of the Jewish population.

More specifically, a community study provides a solid foundation for communal planning and policymaking. A community study also typically includes data on non-Jews sharing households with Jews.

When professional surveyors call your home, the caller I.D. on your landline will say "Count Me Omaha," so you know what to expect. All telephone numbers are randomly selected and answers will be treated anonymously. Interviewers will not know your name or address and there will be no solicitation of funds.

These types of community studies tend to ask questions in three main areas.

First, social and demographic characteristics such as age, geography, gender, presence of children, educational level and income.

Second, Jewish connections like organizational membership, attitudes towards the Jewish community, donations to Jewish causes and travel to Israel.

Finally, the study will point out our social and human service needs; for example, our community's needs for counseling, employment training, transportation and financial assistance.

If you would like to learn more about how community studies are conducted, check out this main resource, the Berman Jewish Data Bank, at www.jewishdatabank.org. Questions? Please contact us at communitystudy@jewishomaha.org.