

2014  
ST. LOUIS  
JEWISH  
COMMUNITY  
STUDY




Jewish Federation  
OF ST. LOUIS



STUDY CONDUCTED BY

**JPAR**  
JEWISH  
POLICY  
& ACTION  
RESEARCH

The **2014 St. Louis Jewish Community Study** is a snapshot of Jewish St. Louis. The study helps us understand our strengths, needs and potential by answering questions about the size of our community, the composition of our families and the ways we engage Jewishly. It will form the basis of many critical policy discussions over the coming months and years, and will help us make better decisions about the strategies we choose to keep our community vibrant.



The 2014 Jewish Community Study was made possible through the generous support of Harvey and Terry Hieken, with additional support from the Morton J. and Morton D. May Fund of the Greater St. Louis Community Foundation, the Lubin-Green Foundation (a supporting foundation of Jewish Federation of St. Louis), two anonymous donors and community donors like you. Les Sterman chaired a community advisory board to make sure that we canvassed our community agencies and organizations to find out the information that would be helpful to them. The Study serves as a valuable resource for Federation, our agencies, local synagogues and other Jewish organizations to prioritize services, to improve outreach efforts and to recalibrate organizationally.

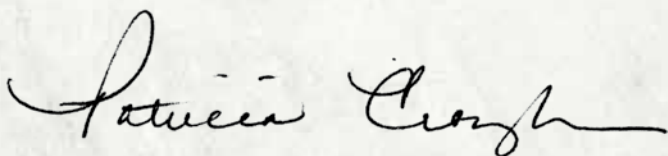
The study was prepared by a highly experienced, well-trained and independent professional team from JPAR – Jewish Policy & Action Research. JPAR has completed more than 25 studies in other local Jewish communities.

This executive summary includes highlights and key trends that our community leadership and researchers have identified. The complete data set and information will be analyzed in the years ahead as the Jewish Federation of St. Louis takes a data-driven approach, working in collaborative partnership with our agencies and synagogues, to build our community.

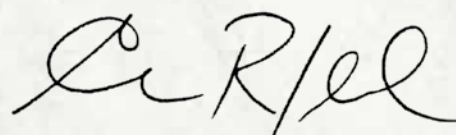
We are proud of the successful completion of the 2014 St. Louis Jewish Community Study. We are confident the information revealed through this study will help us strengthen Jewish life and enhance connections to Jews in St. Louis, in Israel and around the world.

We invite you to read these findings carefully and join us in shaping the future of St. Louis' Jewish community. The complete report, methodology and findings can be found at [JFedSTL.org/CountMeIn](http://JFedSTL.org/CountMeIn). Please share any thoughts or reactions to the report with us at [CommunityStudy@JFedSTL.org](mailto:CommunityStudy@JFedSTL.org).

Sincerely,



Patricia F. Croughan  
Board Chair  
Jewish Federation of St. Louis



Andrew Rehfeld  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Jewish Federation of St. Louis

There is a  
**GEOGRAPHIC  
DIVIDE**

between more  
and less engaged  
Jewish households.

The number of  
Jewish households

**HAS  
GROWN**

since 1995.

**YOUNG  
ADULTS**

are a large, diverse  
and concentrated  
segment of  
the community.

The St. Louis Jewish  
community is

**STABLE**

with few planning to  
leave the area.

Large numbers  
of people in  
Jewish households are

**NOT  
JEWISH**

or partly Jewish.

There are opportunities to

**SERVE AND  
ENGAGE**

many sectors of our community,  
including seniors living alone,  
intermarried households,  
young adults and  
young children.

There is significant

**ECONOMIC  
VULNERABILITY**

in Jewish St. Louis.



# ST. LOUIS JEWISH HOUSEHOLD AND POPULATION ESTIMATES

There are three different measures of the size of the St. Louis Jewish community.

- The **number of Jewish persons** is estimated to be 61,100, an increase of 14% from the estimate reported in 1995.
- There are an estimated 32,900 **Jewish households**, an increase of 34%.
- Because of the increase in intermarriage and family complexity, **the total number of people living in Jewish households** increased by 50%.

	1995 STUDY	2014 STUDY	CHANGE %
Jewish Households (Households with at Least One Jewish Adult)	24,600	32,900	+34%
Jewish Persons	53,400	61,100	+14%
Non-Jewish Persons	6,000	28,200	+370%
All People in Jewish Households	59,400	89,300	+50%

2014 study data is compared with 1995 study data, despite improvements in methodology that make comparisons somewhat tentative. The 1995 study is the only source for trend analysis. It is virtually certain that there has been a substantial increase in the number of non-Jews in Jewish households and highly likely that there has been an increase in the number of Jewish households. The apparent increase in the number of Jews is harder to assess.

## Other Findings:

- Of the 89,300 people in Jewish households, 11% consider themselves “partly Jewish” and 31% are not Jewish.
- In 1995, one out of 10 people in Jewish households were not Jewish; in 2014, it is one out of three.

## Why might the estimate of the number of Jews in 2014 be higher than expected?

### **Increases are not highly visible to leadership.**

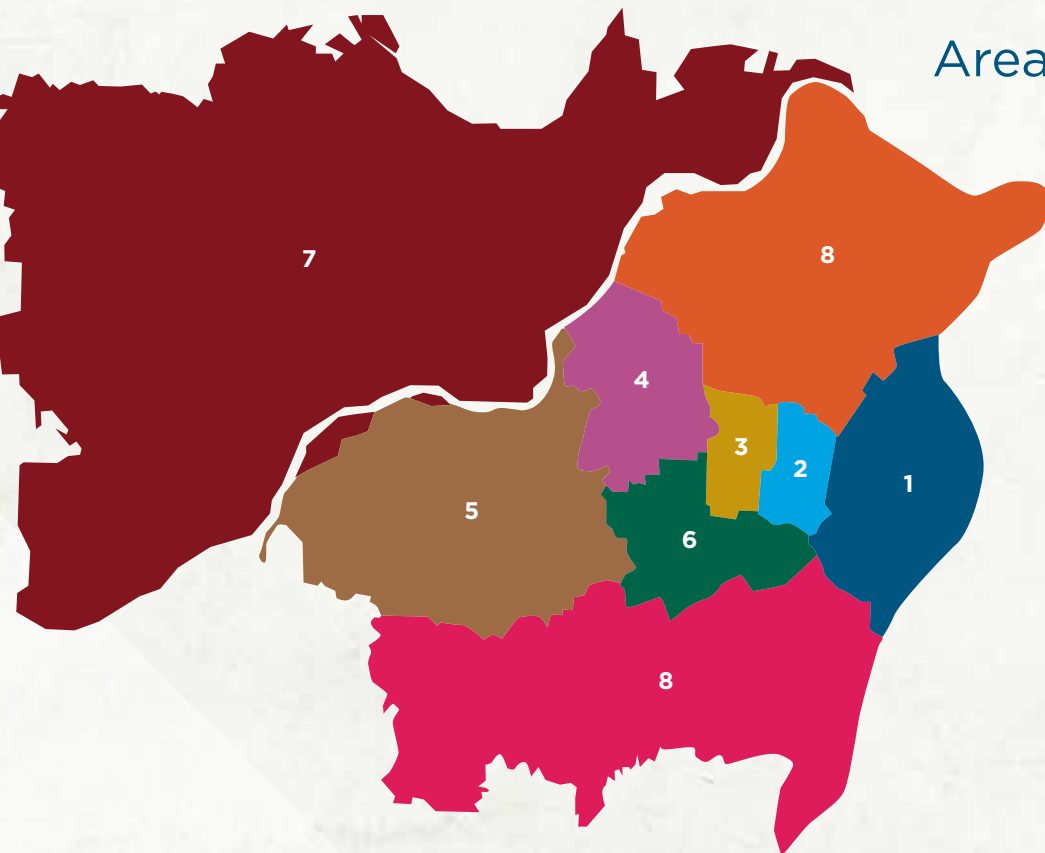
- Newcomers to St. Louis—11% of all Jewish households have moved to the area in the last 10 years and may not join Jewish organizations.
- Returnees to St. Louis—individuals have moved out, often post-college, but return.
- Intermarried households, unmarried households and households with a partly Jewish member are typically disconnected.

### **Symptoms of decline are highly visible to Jewish community leadership.**

- Declines in the number of institutional supporters, including donors, congregational members, etc.
- Anecdotal information about children of members and donors leaving St. Louis is widely circulated.
- Friends and organizational members may have moved.



# GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION



## Area Definitions

- 1. St. Louis City:** all zip codes in the City
- 2. University City/Clayton:** 63105, 63117, 63130, 63143 and 63144
- 3. Olivette/Ladue:** 63124 and 63132
- 4. Creve Coeur Area:** 63043, 63141 and 63146
- 5. Chesterfield:** 63005, 63011, 63017, 63021, 63038 and 63040
- 6. Des Peres/Kirkwood/Webster Groves:** 63119, 63122 and 63131
- 7. St. Charles County:** all zip codes in St. Charles County
- 8. Residual Areas:** North [St. Louis] County and South County Areas—various zip codes

Olivette/Ladue has the highest Jewish density of the geographic sub-areas. 28% of all households in Olivette/Ladue include at least one Jewish adult, compared to 21% in Creve Coeur and 14% in University City/Clayton.

Olivette/Ladue 28%

Creve Coeur 21%

University City/Clayton 14%

Chesterfield 8%

Des Peres 4%

St. Charles 3%

St. Louis City 2%

North County Residual 2%

South County Residual 1%



## There is a geographic divide between more and less engaged Jewish households:

- **60% of Jewish households are located in areas with relatively high Jewish residential density and higher rates of Jewish connection:**  
Creve Coeur, Chesterfield, University City/Clayton and Olivette/Ladue
- **40% of Jewish households are located in areas with low Jewish density, high intermarriage and low affiliation:**  
St. Charles County, St. Louis City, Des Peres/Kirkwood/Webster Groves, North County residual and South County residual

67% of the Jewish population lives in Creve Coeur, Chesterfield, University City/Clayton and Olivette/Ladue.

GEOGRAPHIC AREA: 2014	JEWISH PERSONS	
	NUMBER OF JEWISH PERSONS	PERCENT OF ALL JEWISH PERSONS
Creve Coeur Area (N=275 interviews)	13,400	22%
Chesterfield (N=196)	12,000	20%
University City/Clayton (N=183)	9,000	15%
Olivette/Ladue (N=123)	6,100	10%
St. Charles County (N=38)	5,800	9%
St. Louis City (N=75)	5,100	8%
Des Peres/Kirkwood/Webster (N=54)	2,700	4%
North County Residual (N=32)	4,400	7%
South County Residual (N=20)	1,900	3%
<b>Total Study Area</b>	<b>61,100</b>	<b>100%</b>

# DEMOGRAPHY

More than half of the people in Jewish households in University City/Clayton and St. Louis City are between 18 and 44.

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF ALL PEOPLE IN JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS BY AREA

AGE	St. Louis City	University City /Clayton	Olivette/Ladue	Creve Coeur	Chesterfield	All Areas
Children 0-17	12%	18%	21%	12%	22%	19%
Adults 18-44	56%	53%	15%	24%	31%	36%
Adults 45-64	27%	16%	36%	22%	34%	27%
Seniors 65+	6%	12%	28%	41%	13%	18%
TOTALS	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

In all tables, percentages may not add to 100% precisely due to rounding.

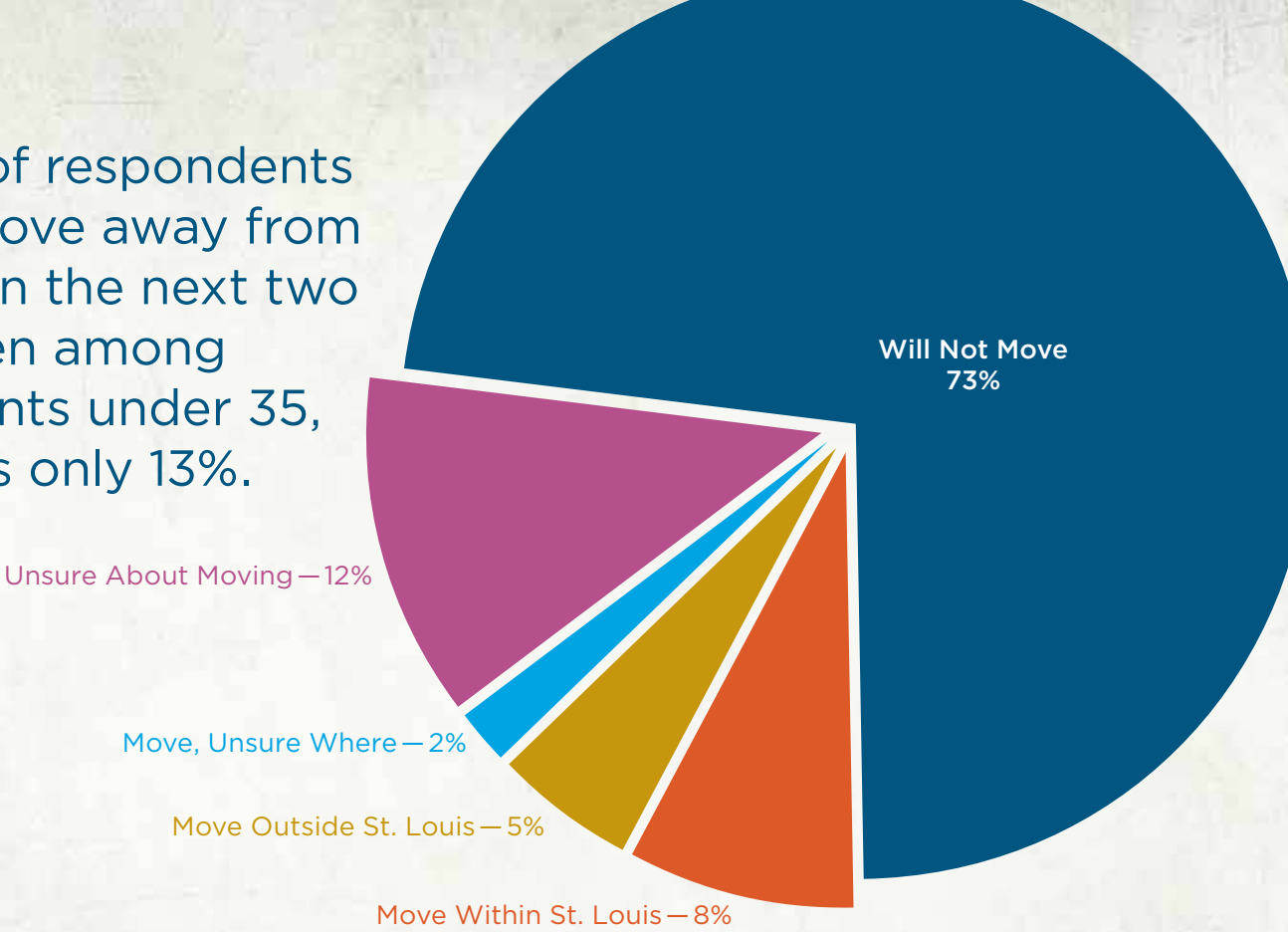
## Other Findings:

- 71% of all Jewish survey respondents and spouses under age 65 are employed. 16% are self-employed.
- 70% of Jewish respondents and spouses have earned at least a college degree. 37% have a graduate degree.
- 55% of survey respondents were born in the St. Louis area. 4% were born in the Former Soviet Union and 1% in Israel.
- 11% of respondents have moved to St. Louis in the past 10 years.
- 4% of St. Louis Jewish households include someone who is lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Among respondents under age 30, the LGBT proportion is 9%.
- 13% of Jewish households are multi-racial, Hispanic and/or non-white.





Only 5% of respondents plan to move away from St. Louis in the next two years. Even among respondents under 35, this rate is only 13%.

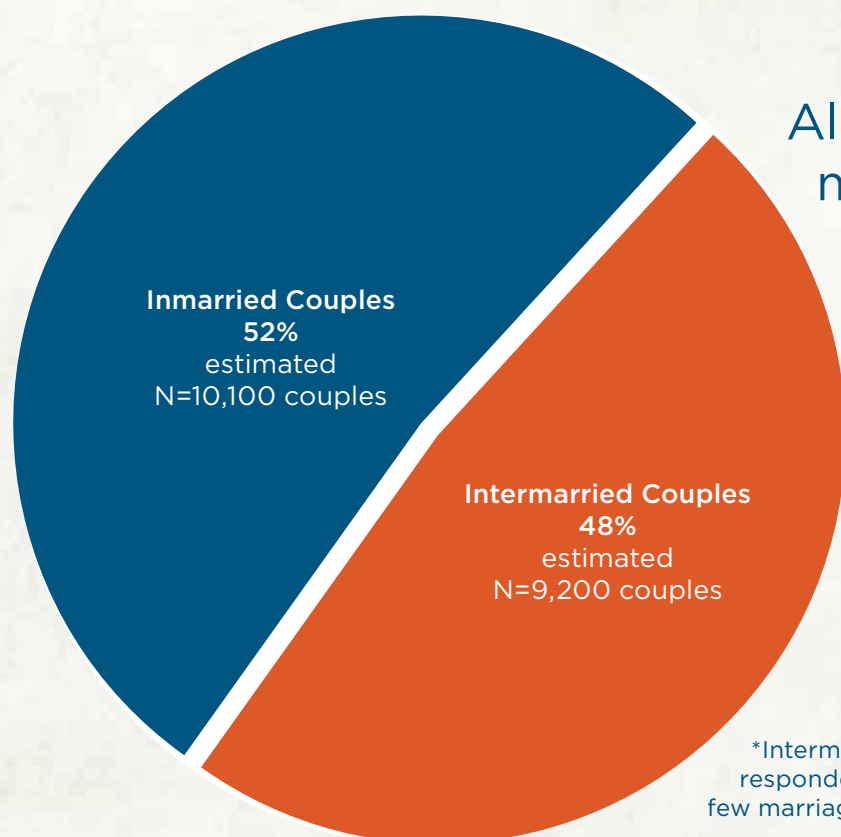


Almost 10,000 Jewish households include at least one child – 29% of all Jewish households in the St. Louis area.

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	PERCENT
No Children in Household (adults age 18-64)		
Respondent Under Age 50, No Children	6,200	19%
Respondent Age 50-64, No Children	6,750	21%
Children in Household (adults age 18-64)		
Unmarried Parent, Respondent 18-64	1,400	4%
Married Couple, Respondent 18-64	7,200	22%
Child and Senior in Household	850	3%
Senior Households (any household member 65+)		
Age 65+ Person, Married or Lives w/Other Adults	8,050	22%
Respondent 65+, Lives Alone	3,000	9%
TOTAL (includes 300 households incomplete data)	32,900	100%

Jewish households refer to households with at least one Jewish adult. The term has no implications for the identity of all household members or the nature of their engagement in Jewish life.

# INTERMARRIAGE



Almost half (48%) of married couples in St. Louis Jewish households are intermarried.

In 1995, 25% of married couples were intermarried.

\*Intermarriage rates are calculated for currently married respondents and spouses only, and do not include the very few marriages of other adults in the household.

The St. Louis intermarriage rate appears to have leveled off since the 1980s. 56% of couples married in the 1980s and 63% of those married since 2000 are intermarried.

Married 2000-2014 **63%**

Married 1990s **58%**

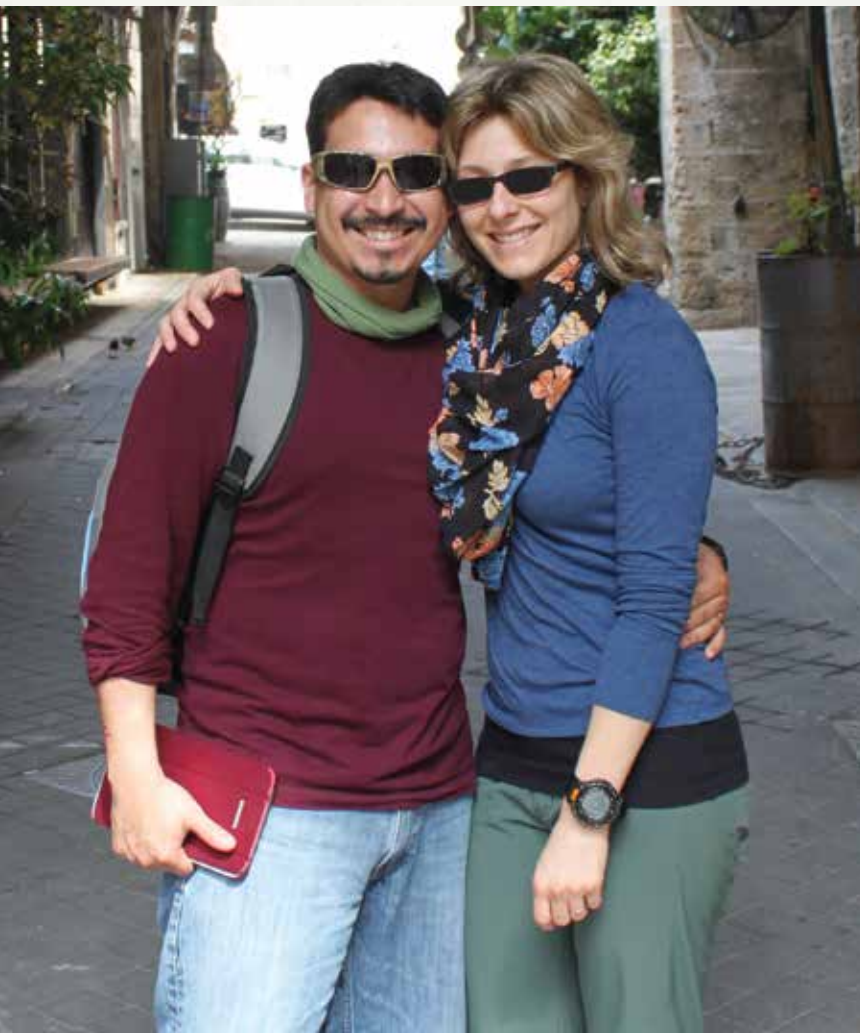
Married 1980s **56%**

Married 1970s **29%**

Married Before 1970 **7%**

Overall, 52% of children in Jewish households are being raised Jewish only, 10% are being raised partly Jewish, and 14% are undecided. 13% of children in these households are being raised in another religion.

CHILD BEING RAISED	AGES 0-4	AGES 5-8	AGES 9-12	AGES 13-17	ALL CHILDREN
Jewish Only	38%	53%	61%	65%	52%
Partly Jewish	24%	5%	4%	6%	10%
Undecided, Don't Know	19%	19%	2%	7%	14%
Not Jewish, No Religion	11%	10%	14%	10%	11%
Not Jewish, Other Religion	8%	13%	19%	12%	13%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



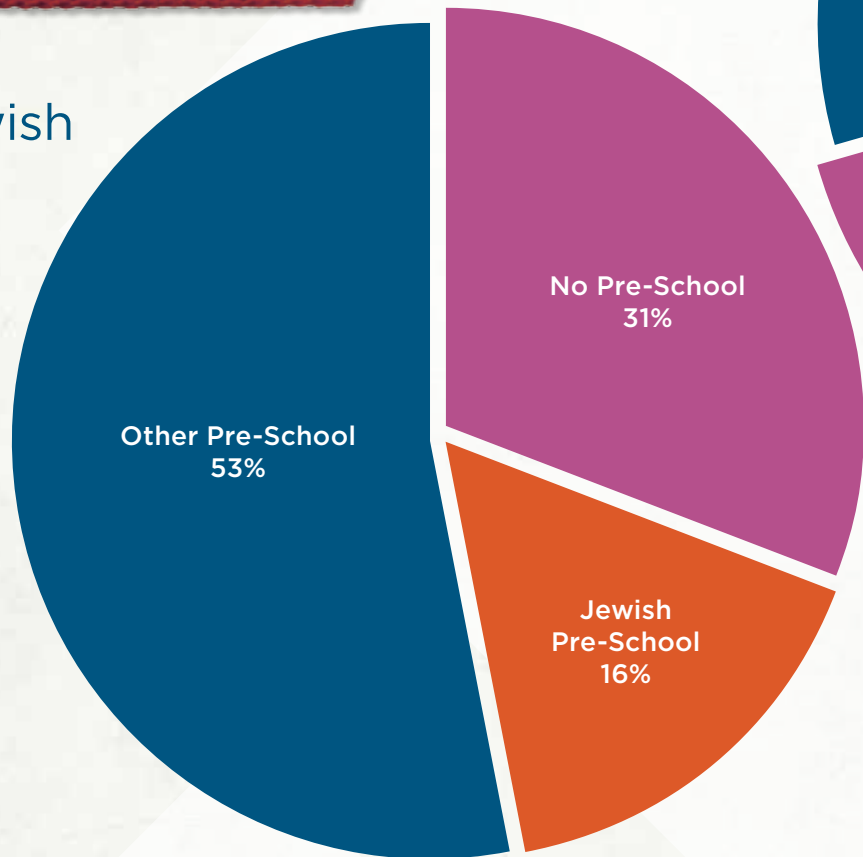
## Other Findings:

- 43% of all children in St. Louis Jewish households live in intermarried households (7,500 children).
- The youngest children in these households are most likely to be raised “partly Jewish” (24% of those ages 0-4 but only 5% of those ages 5-8). This is likely due to the engagement in religious education that begins as early as age 5.

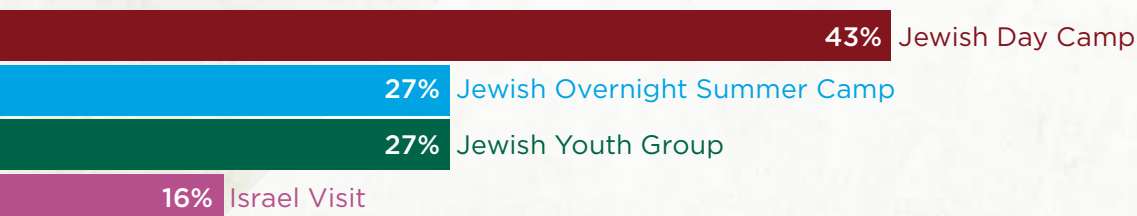


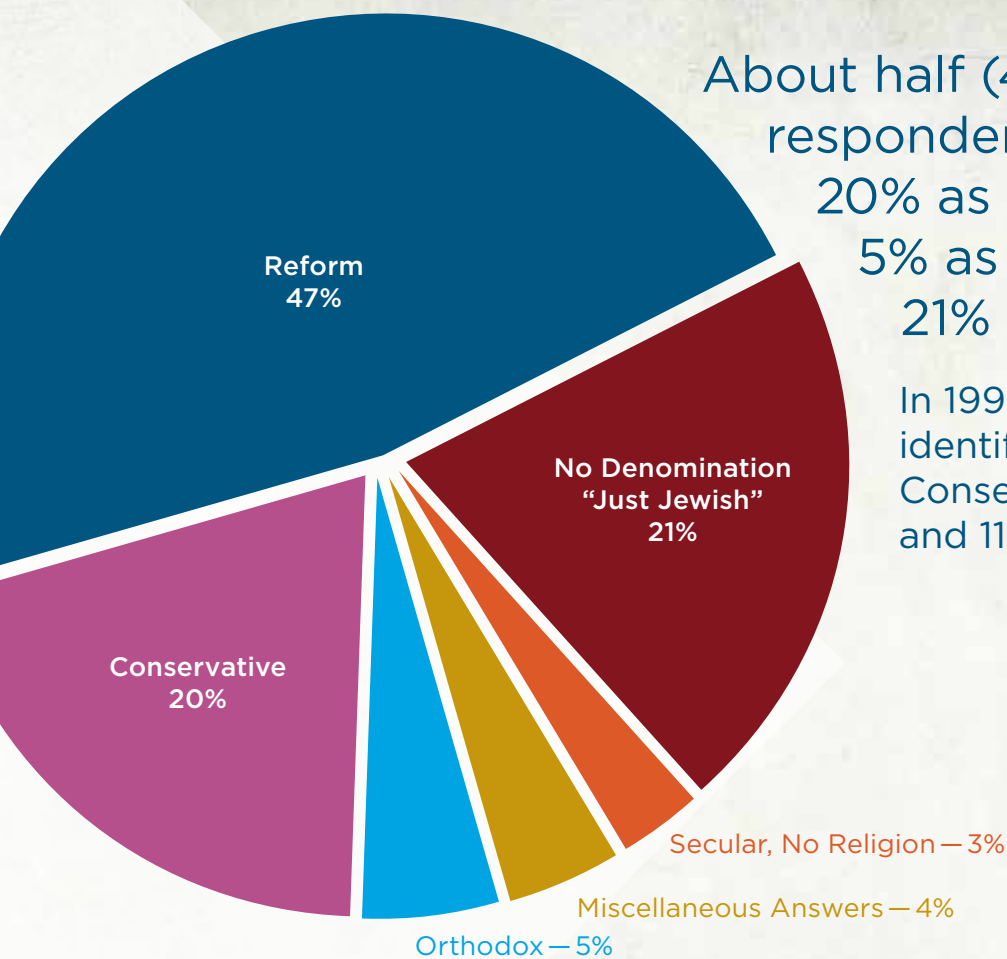
# JEWISH ENGAGEMENT

Of all children in Jewish households, only 16% attend or have attended Jewish preschools.



Children ages 5-17 in more than one-quarter of Jewish households have attended Jewish overnight summer camp or participated in a Jewish youth group. Children in more than four in 10 households have attended Jewish day camp. Children in 16% of households have visited Israel.

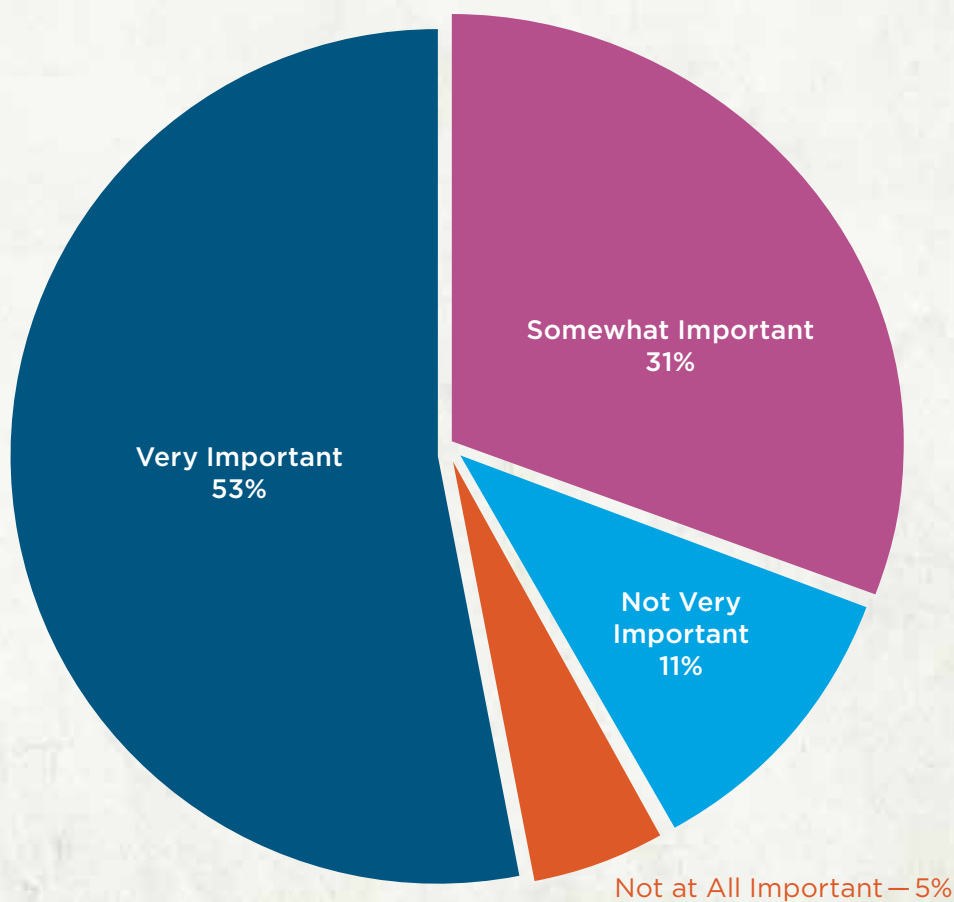




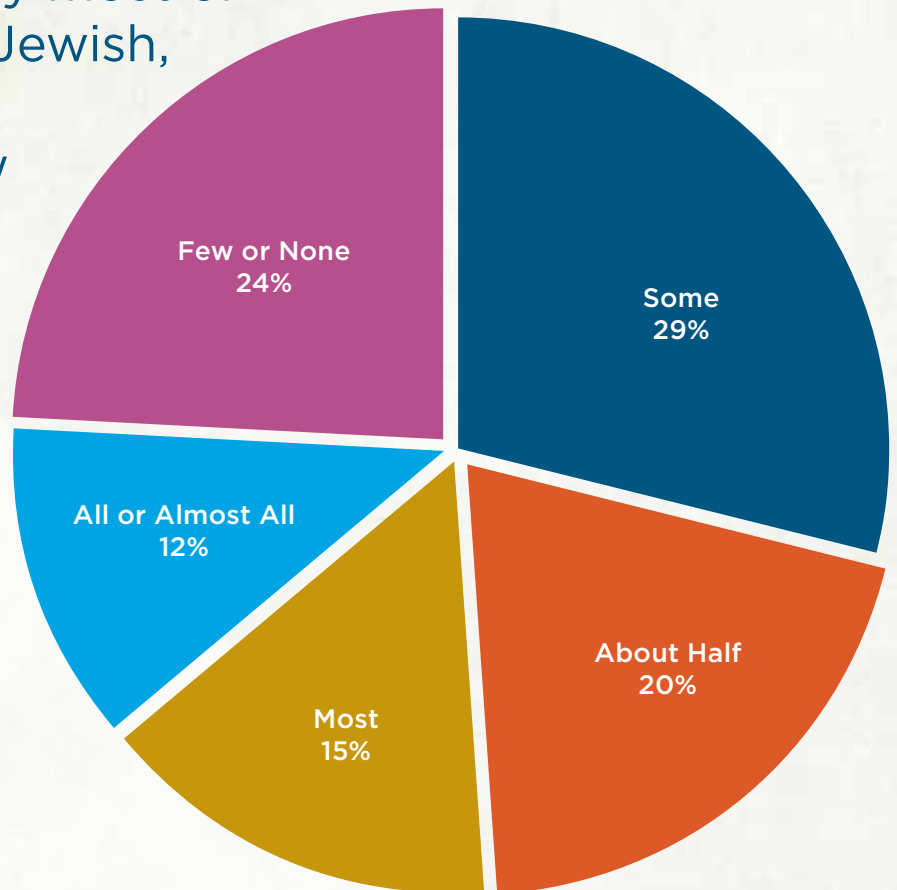
About half (47%) of Jewish respondents identify as Reform, 20% as Conservative, 5% as Orthodox and 21% as “Just Jewish.”

In 1995, 60% of Jewish respondents identified as Reform, 21% as Conservative, 3% as Orthodox and 11% as “other.”

53% of Jewish respondents believe that being Jewish is very important, and another 31% feel it is somewhat important.



Wide variation in Jewish friendship patterns exists in our community. 27% of respondents say most or all of their friends are Jewish, 20% say half, 29% say some and 24% say few or none.



## Other Findings:

- 62% of respondents feel very welcome at Jewish organization events.
- 48% of Jewish respondents visit Jewish websites.
- 47% of respondents read the *St. Louis Jewish Light*.
- 37% of Jewish respondents talk about Jewish topics regularly.
- 33% of Jewish respondents feel strongly connected to the St. Louis Jewish community.
- There are wide gaps in engagement between inmarried and intermarried respondents. For example, 50% of inmarried respondents strongly feel part of the Jewish community, compared to 18% of intermarried.
- Non-denominational and secular Jews show a similar pattern to intermarried households. Only 31% feel that being Jewish is very important, compared to 87% of Orthodox respondents, 83% of Conservative and 51% of Reform.





## Many Jewish rituals are less widely practiced than in 1995.

### ALWAYS/USUALLY LIGHTS CHANUKAH CANDLES

72%

1995

58%

2014

### ALWAYS/USUALLY PARTICIPATES IN SEDER

77%

60%

### \*ALWAYS FASTS ON YOM KIPPUR (includes cannot fast for health reasons)

57%

57%

### ALWAYS/USUALLY LIGHTS SHABBAT CANDLES

24%

17%

### KOSHER (1995 = separate meat/dairy dishes; 2014 = kosher home)

9%

13%

### SYNAGOGUE MEMBER

56%

46%

### ATTENDS JEWISH SERVICES AT LEAST MONTHLY

31%

29%

### JCC MEMBER

24%

26%

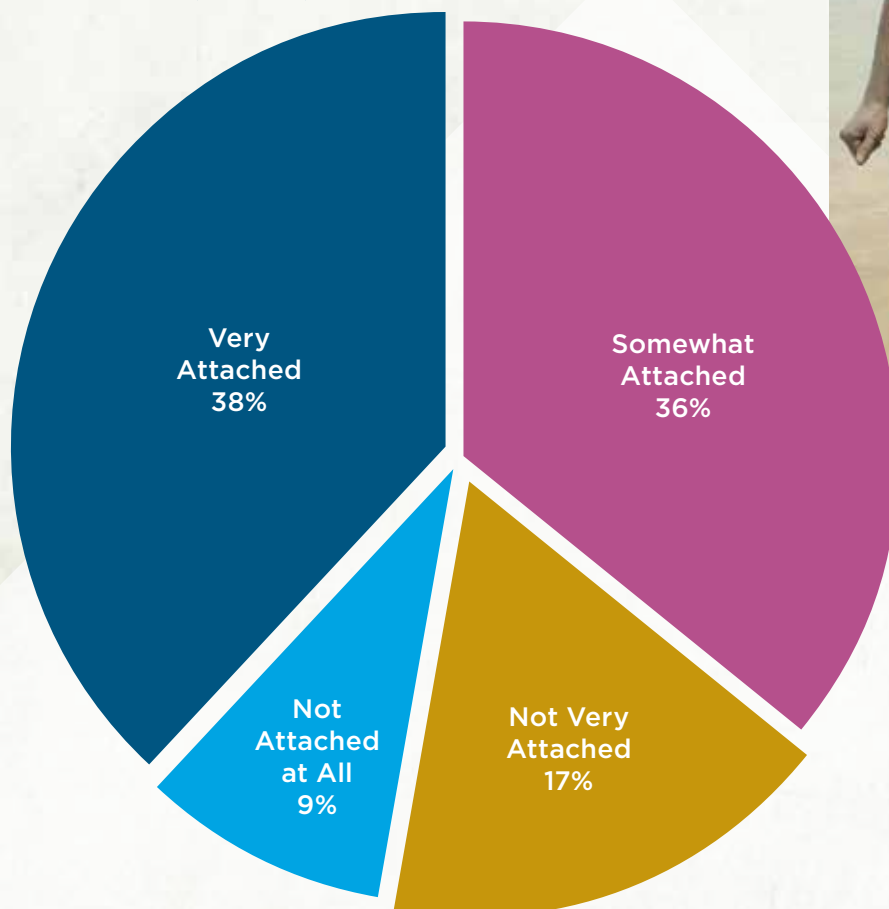
\*Asked only of Jewish respondents.



# ISRAEL

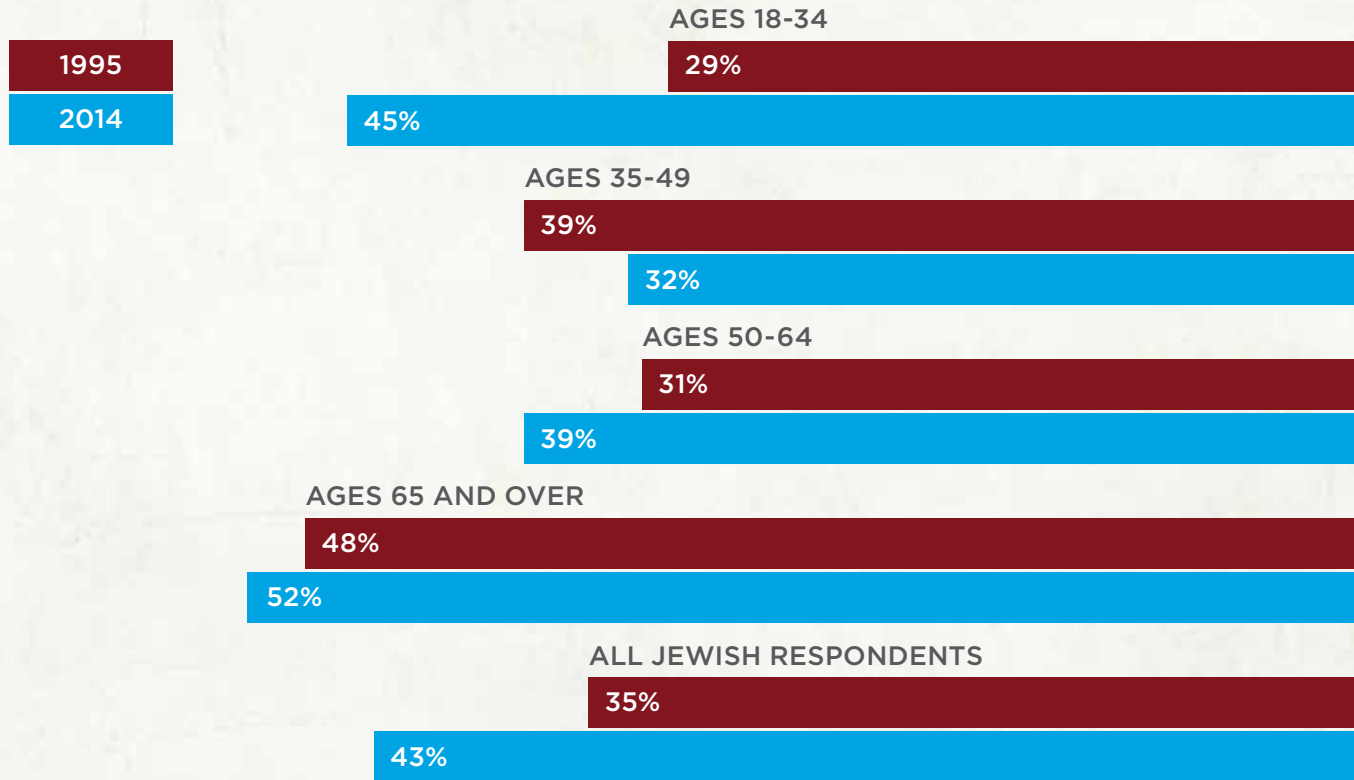
74% of Jewish respondents feel attached to Israel: 38% feel very attached and another 36% feel somewhat attached.

More young adults ages 18-34 feel very attached to Israel (47%) than adults ages 35-49 (29%), ages 50-64 (37%) and ages 65+ (42%).





Travel to Israel has increased since 1995, especially among younger Jewish respondents. In 1995, 35% of all Jewish respondents had traveled to Israel, compared to 43% in 2014.

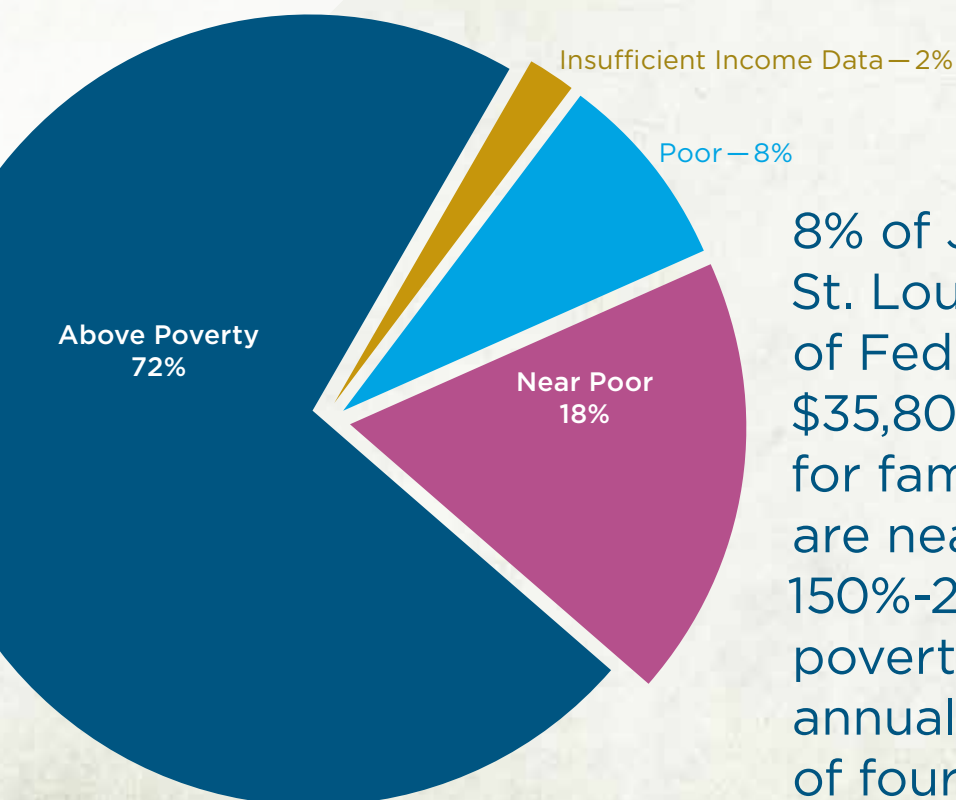
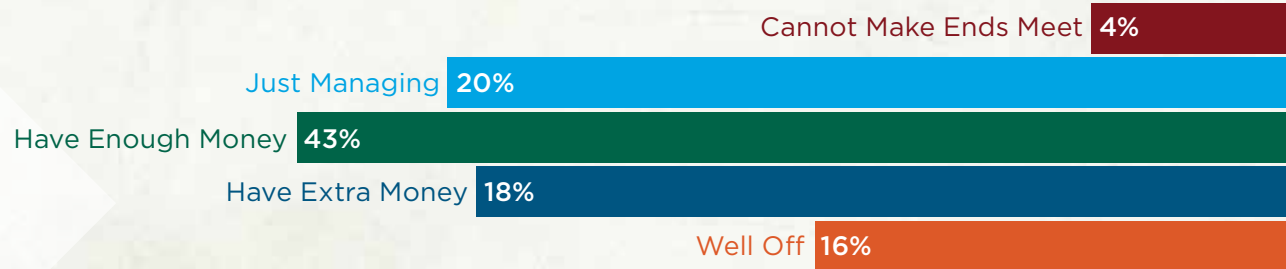




# POVERTY AND SOCIAL SERVICES

There is significant economic vulnerability within the St. Louis Jewish community.

24% of households “cannot make ends meet” or are “just managing” financially.

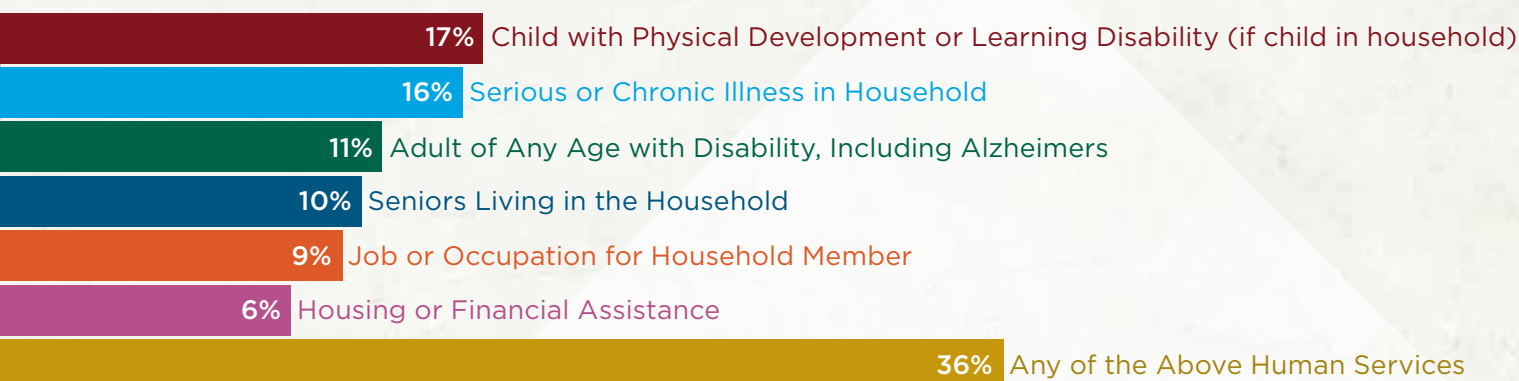


8% of Jewish households in St. Louis are poor (under 150% of Federal poverty level, or \$35,800 annual income for family of four) and 18% are near poor (between 150%-250% of Federal poverty level, or \$59,600 annual income for family of four).

Food insecurity: 25% of the Jewish poor and 28% of the near poor cut the size of their meals or skipped meals over the past year because there wasn't enough money for food.



36% of all Jewish households sought assistance for at least one human services need.



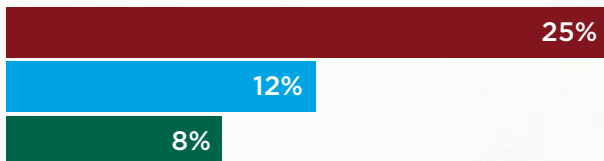
## Jewish seniors who live alone are potentially at-risk:

- Of the 3,000 Jewish seniors living alone, 64% have an adult child in the St. Louis area who could assist them if needed.
- Over one-third (about 1,000) of Jewish seniors living alone have no adult child living in the St. Louis area, or do not have any adult children at all.
- 12% of Jewish seniors living alone report “poor” health, and another 28% report “fair” health.
- In contrast, only 2% of Jewish senior respondents living with other people in the household are in “poor” health, while 21% are in “fair” health.

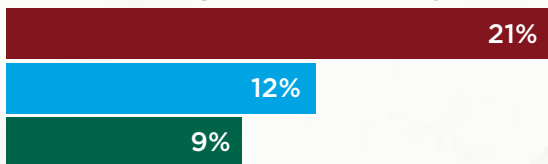
# Cost is a significant barrier to many low-income families to living a Jewish life.

PERCENT OF ALL HOUSEHOLDS THAT REPORT COST PREVENTED THEM FROM PARTICIPATING

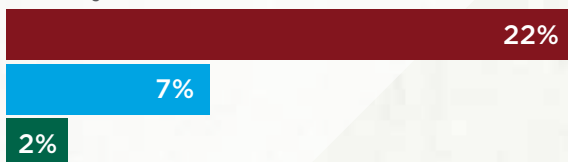
## Jewish Day Camp



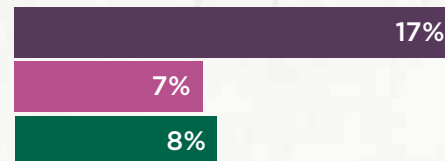
## Jewish Overnight Summer Camp



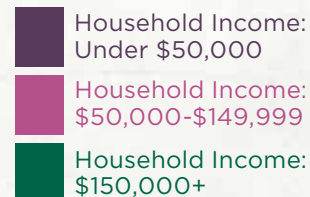
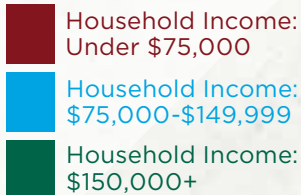
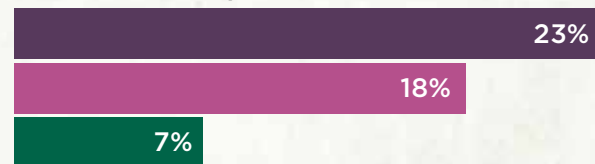
## All-Day Jewish School



## Synagogue Membership



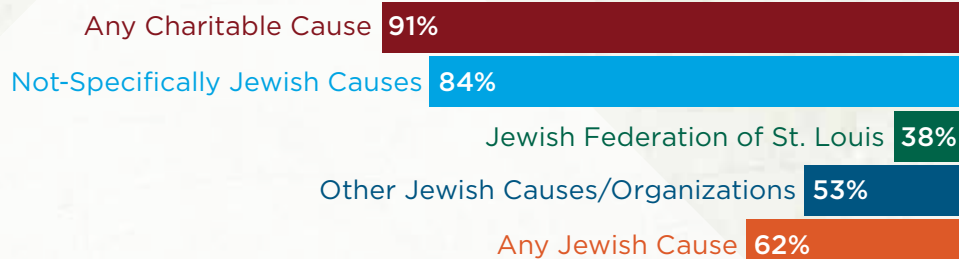
## JCC Membership





# JEWISH PHILANTHROPY & VOLUNTEERING

St. Louis Jewish households are philanthropic. 91% gave to charitable causes and 62% gave to a Jewish charity. Young adults are less likely to give to Jewish causes than older adults, but they are equally as likely to give to non-Jewish charities.



St. Louis Jews are also involved in Tikkun Olam, or “repairing the world,” through volunteerism.

- 80% volunteered in the past twelve months.
- 44% of the households volunteered in a Jewish organization.
- Young adults were more likely to volunteer than other age groups (86%) but less likely to volunteer for Jewish causes (36%).

# METHODOLOGY

The results of the 2014 St. Louis Jewish Community Study are based on a state-of-the-art survey sampling method. 181,762 randomly generated telephone numbers were called, including 38,344 cell phone numbers. 9,493 households (Jewish and non-Jewish) answered a three-to-five minute “screener,” which determined whether there was an adult in the household who self-identified as Jewish, and was used to establish a baseline for population estimates.

Extensive interviews were conducted with 1,003 respondents in Jewish households. 83% of all eligible individuals in these households who answered the phone agreed to complete the interview. The sampling error for data based on all 1,003 survey respondents is +/- 4.5% (including design effect) at the traditional 95% confidence level.

A detailed methodology report is available online at [JFedSTL.org/CountMeIn](http://JFedSTL.org/CountMeIn).

## DEFINITIONS

### **Jewish Persons**

- Survey respondents (age 18+) who report that Judaism is their religion or who say that “aside from religion” they consider themselves to be Jewish or partly Jewish
- Spouses reported by the respondent as being Jewish or partly Jewish either by religion or by self-definition
- All other adults in the household reported by the respondent as being Jewish or partly Jewish
- Children being raised as Jewish or as partly Jewish

### **Jewish Households**

Households that include at least one self-identified Jewish adult

### **All People in Jewish Households**

Jewish people, plus those who do not consider themselves Jewish (adults as well as children who are not being raised as Jews)

### **Non-Jewish Persons**

- Respondents, spouses and other household adults who are NOT Jewish — either by religion or by self-definition
- Children who are NOT being raised Jewishly — they are being raised in another religion, without a religion, or their status is defined as “undecided” by the respondent

### **Intermarried Households**

Only one spouse self-identifies as Jewish

### **Inmarried Households**

Both spouses self-identify as Jewish

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The 2014 St. Louis Jewish Community Study is funded in part by a generous gift from Terry and Harvey Hieken. Additional support has been provided by the Lubin-Green Foundation, the Morton J. and Morton D. May Fund of the Greater St. Louis Community Foundation, two anonymous donors and by community donors.

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