

# The 2018-19 Greater Denver Jewish Community Study

*A Portrait of Jewish Life in the Seven-county Region*



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## From Rose Community Foundation

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Thank you to the research team at the Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (CMJS) and the Steinhardt Social Research Institute (SSRI) at Brandeis University. Thank you to Fran Simon of Simon Analytics, Inc., for her ongoing assistance with the study.

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- Boulder JCC
- Chabad of NW Metro Denver
- Colorado Jewish Professional Women
- Congregation Har HaShem
- Denver Jewish Day School
- Hazon
- Hebrew Educational Alliance
- Hillel Academy
- Jewish Explorers (a program of JEWISHColorado)
- JEWISHColorado
- Judaism Your Way
- Kavod Senior Life
- Keshet national LGBTQ organization
- Kohelet
- MazelTogether
- Rocky Mountain Jewish Historical Society and Beck Archives
- Staenberg- Loup JCC
- Temple Emanuel
- The Jewish Life Center: Chabad North Denver
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# Introduction and Overview

The 2018-19 Greater Denver Area Jewish Community Study, conducted by the Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (CMJS) and the Steinhardt Social Research Institute (SSRI) at Brandeis University, employed innovative state-of-the-art methods to create a comprehensive portrait of the characteristics, attitudes, and behaviors of present-day Greater Denver Jewry. The study focuses on the Jewish community in Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas, and Jefferson Counties.

A sample survey of 2,507 Jewish households conducted in August-December 2018 and continued in June-July 2019 form the basis of the study findings. More information about survey methodology is summarized on the last page of this report and described in detail in a technical appendix.

Unless otherwise specified, this report presents weighted survey data in the form of percentages or proportions. Accordingly, these data should be read not as the percentage or proportion of respondents who answered each question in a given way, but as the percentage or proportion of the population that it is estimated would answer each question in that way had each member of the population been surveyed. No estimate should be considered an exact measurement. Differences of less than 10 percentage points should be treated with caution. The reported estimate for any value, known as a “point estimate,” is the most likely value for the variable in question for the entire population, given available data, but it is possible that the true value is slightly lower or slightly higher.

In some tables, not all response options are shown. For example, a table may show the proportion of a group who participated in a Passover seder, but the proportion who did not participate in the seder will not appear. When a percentage is between 0% and 0.5% and would otherwise round down to 0%, the number is denoted as < 1%. When there are insufficient respondents in a particular subgroup for reporting reliable information, the estimate is shown as “—”.

To provide context for interpretation of results, we sometimes provide relevant comparisons to the national Jewish population. Data on the US Jewish population is drawn from the Pew Research Center’s 2013 *A Portrait of Jewish Americans*.<sup>1</sup> Comparisons to Western Jews are drawn from the same study but are limited to Jews who live in the states of Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming, Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington. Although these analyses are informative, due to differences in methodology and question wording, comparisons across studies are not as reliable as the data from the present study.

<sup>1</sup> Lugo, L., Cooperman, A., Smith, G. A., O’Connell, E., & Sandra, S. (2013). *A portrait of Jewish Americans: Findings from a Pew Research Center survey of US Jews*. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center.

# Demographics

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# Population Estimates

The Greater Denver Area Jewish community includes an estimated 90,800 Jewish individuals residing in 51,100 households. Jewish households contain 134,900 individuals and include both Jewish and non-Jewish adults and children.

For purposes of this study, the following definitions are used:

- **Jewish adults** are those who consider themselves to be Jewish in any way (including Jewish and another religion) AND have at least one Jewish parent, or were raised Jewish, or converted to Judaism.
- **Jewish children** are children of at least one Jewish parent being raised Jewish in any way (including Jewish and another religion).
- **Jewish households** are defined as households in which at least one Jewish adult resides. **HH** is used as an abbreviation for households in report tables and always refers to Jewish households.
- **People in Jewish households** include all individuals who reside in Jewish households, regardless of their religion.
- **Children** are under age 18, unless otherwise specified.
- **Adults** are ages 18 and above.

*Note: throughout this report, be aware that no estimate should be considered an exact measurement. Differences of less than 10 percentage points should be treated with caution.*

## Greater Denver 2019 Population Estimates

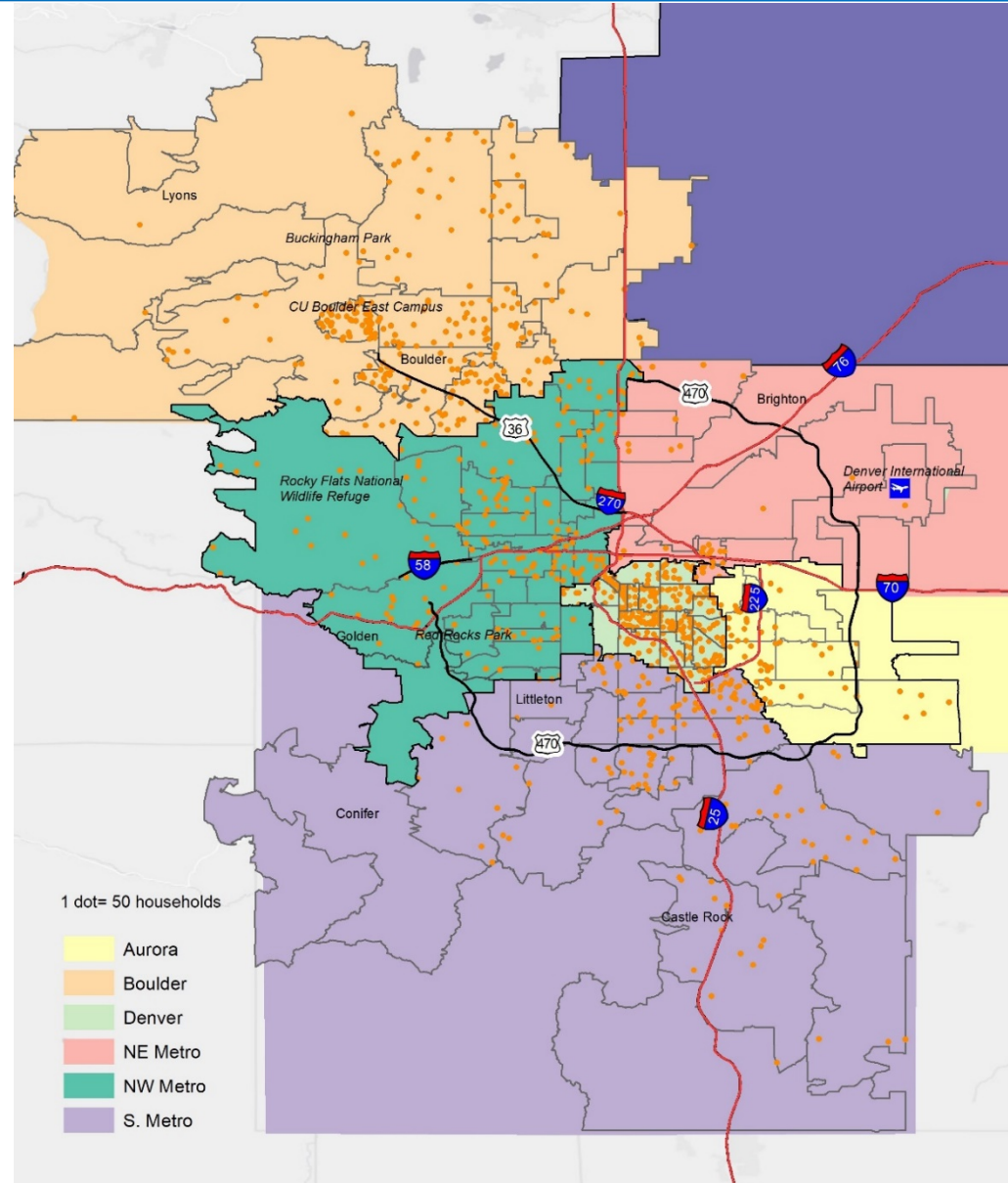
Total Jews	90,800
People in Jewish households	134,900
Jewish households	51,100
People in Jewish households include:	
- Jewish adults	72,900
- Non-Jewish adults	36,500
- Jewish children	17,900
- Non-Jewish children	7,500

# Geographic Distribution

The largest shares of Greater Denver Jewish households reside in Denver (29%) and Boulder (26%).

**Distribution of Greater Denver Jewish population by region**

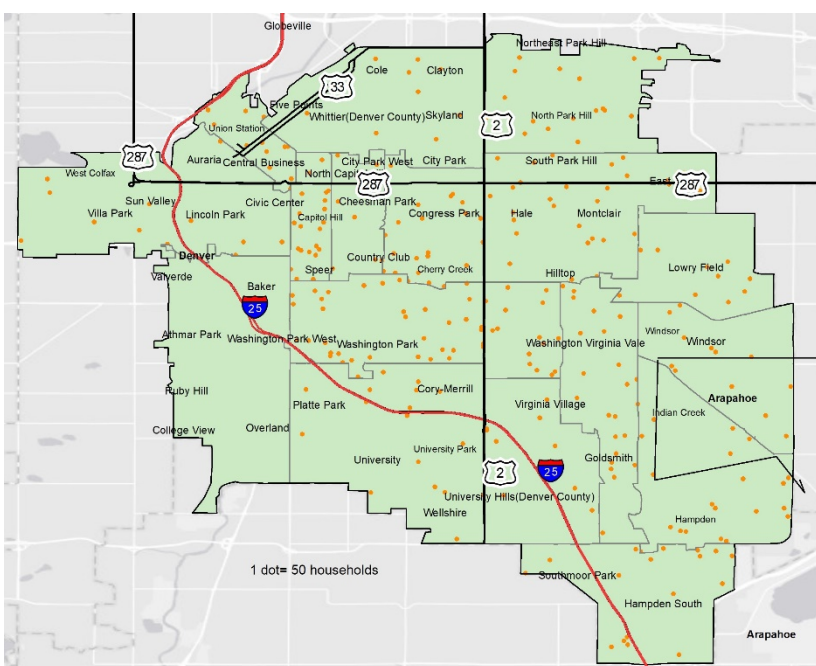
	Jewish households (%)	Jewish children (%)	Jewish individuals (%)	People in Jewish households (%)
Denver	29	23	27	26
Boulder	26	22	26	27
North & West Metro	20	27	19	21
South Metro	16	15	19	17
Aurora	5	4	5	5
North & East Metro	4	8	4	4
	100	100	100	100





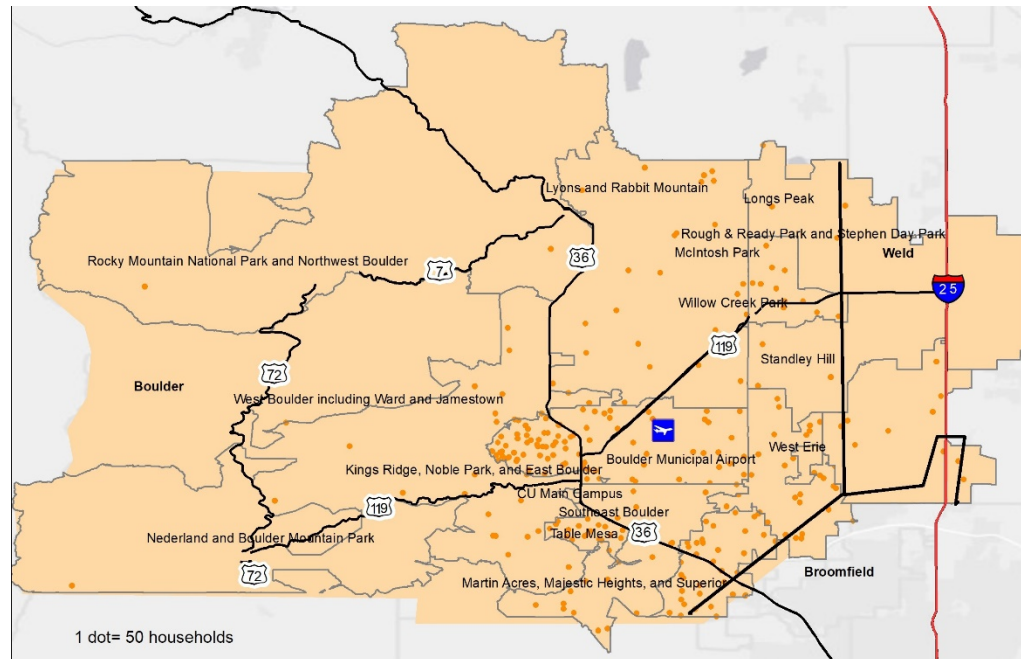
# Geographic Distribution

## Distribution of Jewish population within Denver



This map represents the distribution of the approximately 14,500 Jewish households in Denver. Each dot represents 50 households, placed randomly within the zip code in which those households are located.

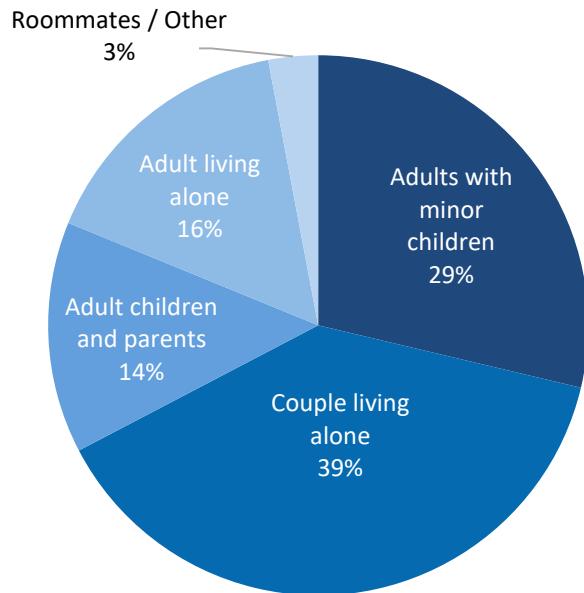
## Distribution of Jewish population within Boulder



This map represents the distribution of the approximately 13,000 Jewish households in Boulder. Each dot represents 50 households, placed randomly within the zip code in which those households are located.

# Community Demographics

## Household Composition



The largest share of households (39%) is composed of a couple either married or partnered and without children. The next largest share (29%) are households with one or more children under age 18.

The age distribution of the Greater Denver Jewish community is similar to that of Jews nationally and Jews in the Western U.S.

## Age Distribution

Age	Greater Denver Jewish adults (%)	U.S. Jewish adults (%)	Western U.S. Jewish adults (%)
18-34	27	28	25
35-49	23	20	23
50-64	28	30	34
65-74	15	12	11
75+	7	9	6

Other demographic characteristics:

- **Gender and sexual orientation:** 49% of Jewish adults are male and 51% are female. Less than 1% of Jewish adults are transgender or have another gender identity. 6% of Jewish adults identify as LGBTQ.
- **Racial and ethnic identity:** 10% of Jewish adults say their race is something other than white, and/or that they are Hispanic/Latino
- **Country of origin:** 3% of Jewish adults were born in Israel or have a parent who was born in Israel. 9% of Jewish adults were born in the Former Soviet Union and/or raised in a Russian-speaking household.

# Jewish Life, Synagogues, and Jewish Education

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# Jewish Denomination and Marriage

## Jewish denominational identification

Nearly half (46%) of Jewish adults do not identify with a specific Jewish denomination. This rate is similar to Jews in the West (42%) but higher than the national rate of 30%.

	Jewish adults (%)	U.S. Jewish adults (%)	Western U.S. Jewish adults (%)
<b>Orthodox</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>
Chabad	< 1		
<b>Conservative</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Reform</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Other denomination</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>
Humanist	3		
Reconstructionist	3		
Renewal	3		
Other	1		
<b>No denomination</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>42</b>
Cultural or Secular	25		
None	21		

## Marriage and intermarriage

Four-in-five Jewish adults are married or have a partner with whom they live. Among these married or partnered Jewish adults, 59% have a non-Jewish spouse or partner. This rate is similar to Jews in the West, of whom 60% have a non-Jewish spouse, but higher than the national rate of 44%.

	Jewish adults (%)	Jewish households (%)
Not married or partnered	20	24
Inmarried	33	20
Intermarried	47	56

# Typology of Jewish Engagement

We identified five distinct patterns of Jewish behavior among the Jews of the Greater Denver Jewish community. This typology is based on a statistical analysis of many dimensions of Jewish behavior: ritual life, communal life, cultural life, and personal life. The index provides a lens for understanding Jewish life that is more informative than an analysis based on denominational identification.

The engagement groups are based on the types of Jewish activities that members of the community do most frequently. The largest groups are the Holiday, with Jewish engagement primarily centered around holiday celebrations, and the Communal, which in addition to holiday observance, is notable for its attendance at community programs, volunteering, and donations to Jewish organizations.

**13% Minimally Involved**  
Little or no involvement in Jewish life



**12% Personal**  
Participates in activities that can be performed individually



**27% Holiday**  
Participates in holiday observances and celebrations



**29% Communal**  
Participates in more communal than ritual activities



**18% Immersed**  
Participates in all activities of Jewish life



# Activities Used to Determine Jewish Engagement

## Proportion of individuals engaging in Jewish activity for each engagement group

	Minimally Involved (%)	Personal (%)	Holiday (%)	Communal (%)	Immersed (%)
Jewish adults (%)	13	12	27	29	18
<b>Family holidays</b>					
Attended seder	11	17	75	98	98
Celebrate Shabbat or holidays	5	28	100	92	99
Light Shabbat candles	0	5	32	55	92
<b>Organizations and programs (past year)</b>					
Attend program at JCC	32	6	18	61	69
Attend program/service at Chabad	0	2	10	23	29
Attend program/service at a synagogue	0	24	51	89	100
Donated to Jewish organization	3	40	24	73	99
Volunteered for Jewish organization	0	9	2	39	87
Participate with Jewish social action group	0	8	7	35	61
Attend Jewish educational program	0	14	8	30	95
<b>Jewish congregations</b>					
Pay dues to congregation	0	1	1	24	72
Attend services at least monthly	5	1	0	4	50
<b>Personal activities (past year)</b>					
Visited Jewish websites	0	90	48	71	96
Read Jewish publications	33	87	81	86	100
<b>Legend</b>					
	0-19	20-39	40-59	60-79	80-100

A set of 14 behaviors across multiple dimensions were used to determine the Jewish engagement typologies.

This table shows the proportion of Jewish adults within each group who participated in each behavior. For example, 98% of Immersed and Communal Jews attended a Passover seder, compared to 11% of Minimally Involved Jews.

# Demographics and Jewish Engagement

	Minimally Involved (%)	Personal (%)	Holiday (%)	Communal (%)	Immersed (%)	Total (%)
<b>Overall</b>	13	12	27	29	18	100
<b>Age</b>						
18-34	5	20	35	27	13	100
35-49	14	8	27	31	20	100
50-64	22	11	17	24	26	100
65-79	9	18	25	29	20	100
75 +	14	7	30	26	23	100
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	12	14	29	26	20	100
Female	15	13	24	28	20	100
<b>Region</b>						
Denver	14	7	21	26	31	100
South Metro	10	15	30	27	18	100
Boulder	12	17	27	29	15	100
N&W Metro	15	17	38	23	8	100
Aurora	19	13	18	29	21	100
N&E Metro	7	10	7	45	31	100
<b>Marital status</b>						
Unmarried	12	13	31	28	16	100
Married	13	13	25	28	21	100
<b>Financial status</b>						
Well off	12	11	27	27	23	100
Not well off	13	14	27	28	19	100

Demographics of the engagement groups vary. For example, The largest shares of Jews in Denver are in the Communal (26%) and Immersed (31%) groups, but the largest shares of Jews in Boulder are in the Holiday (27%) and Communal (29%) groups.

# Jewish Background and Jewish Engagement

	Minimally Involved (%)	Personal (%)	Holiday (%)	Communal (%)	Immersed (%)	Total (%)
Overall	13	12	27	29	18	100
Denomination						
Orthodox	< 1	< 1	1	16	83	100
Conservative	8	5	21	29	38	100
Reform	5	12	19	38	27	100
Other	15	11	31	28	16	100
None	20	18	33	22	8	100
Marital status (of married)						
Inmarried	4	2	20	37	38	100
Intermarried	20	21	28	21	9	100
Parents						
Parents inmarried	12	13	23	29	22	100
Parents intermarried or converted	18	15	38	18	11	100
Childhood Jewish Education						
Jewish education	12	13	23	30	22	100
No Jewish education	17	12	36	22	14	100

Denominational labels do not capture the full range of Jewish engagement. Among the Orthodox, 83% are Immersed, but Jews of all denominations (including none) are part of the Immersed group.



# Synagogue Membership and Participation

- Sixteen percent of households include a dues-paying synagogue member.
- Twenty percent of Jewish adults live in a household in which someone is a dues-paying synagogue member.
- In the U.S. West, 27% of Jewish adults live in a household with a synagogue member. Nationally, 38% of Jewish adults live in a household in which someone is a synagogue member.
- Twenty-eight percent of Jewish adults never attend Jewish religious services. Ten percent attend once a month or more.

## Frequency of attending Jewish religious services

	Jewish adults (%)
Once a week or more	4
Once or twice a month	6
A few times a year	30
Seldom	31
Never	28

## Jewish households that include a dues-paying synagogue member

	Synagogue members (%)
Jewish households	16
Engagement group	
Minimally Involved	0
Personal	1
Holiday	1
Communal	24
Immersed	72
Age	
18-34	6
35-49	15
50-64	19
65-74	21
75 +	25
Region	
Denver	19
South Metro	22
Boulder	12
North & West Metro	8
Aurora	27
North & East Metro	21

# Jewish Holidays

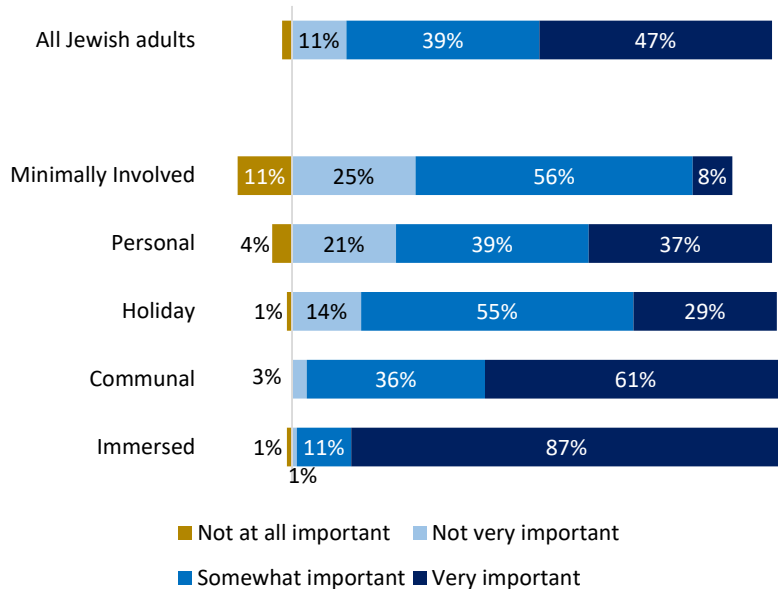
	Celebrated Shabbat or holiday (%)	Attended Seder (%)	Ever lit Shabbat candles (%)
<b>All Jewish adults</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Engagement group</b>			
Minimally Involved	5	11	0
Personal	28	17	5
Holiday	100	75	32
Communal	92	98	55
Immersed	99	98	92
<b>Age</b>			
18-34	83	64	48
35-49	81	72	53
50-64	68	64	39
65-74	69	82	28
75 +	76	77	31
<b>Region</b>			
Denver	77	77	51
South Metro	78	71	39
Boulder	79	65	36
North & West Metro	67	61	35
Aurora	66	63	45
North & East Metro	78	91	64
<b>Marital status</b>			
Inmarried	93	93	65
Intermarried	65	55	27
Not married	72	65	42

- Three-in-four Jewish adults in Greater Denver marked Shabbat or a holiday in some way in the last year; 70% attended a Seder.
- Participation in these holiday celebrations is highest among the Immersed group and rare among the Minimally Involved.
- Inmarried families have much higher rates of holiday celebrations than do intermarried families.

# Attitudes about Being Jewish

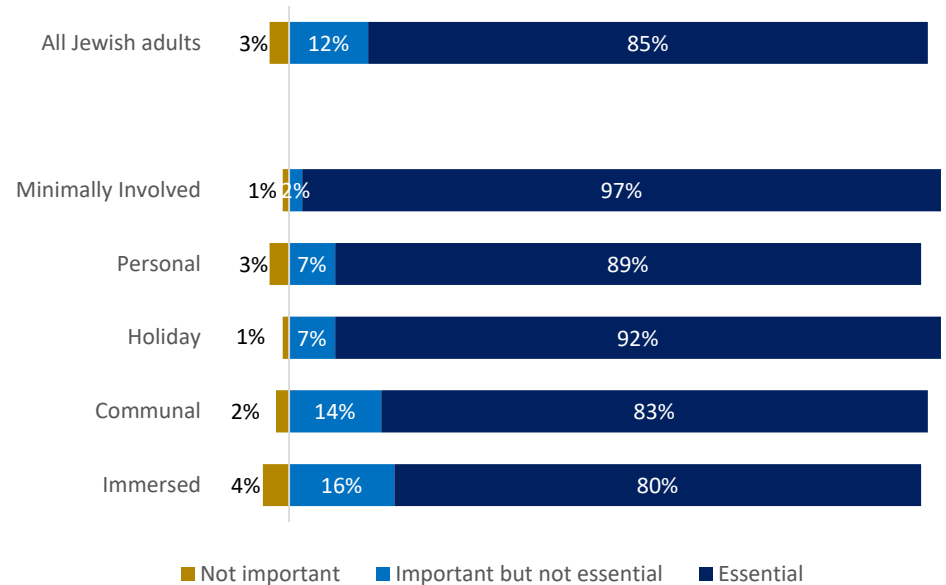
- Comparing attitudes about being Jewish is one way to illustrate the differences among the engagement groups. Almost nine-out-of-ten (87%) Immersed Jews indicate that being Jewish is very important to them, compared to only 8% of Minimally Involved Jews. All groups, however, share the belief that acceptance of all people is an essential aspect of being Jewish.
- Among all Jewish adults, 22% report that they have personally experienced antisemitism in the past year, 67% have not, and 11% are unsure.

**Importance of Being Jewish**



Question: "How important is being Jewish for you?"

**Tolerance is important to being Jewish**



Question: "How important to what being Jewish means to you... Being accepting of all people, regardless of their race or religion?"

# Jewish Education

- Seven percent of Jewish children are enrolled in Jewish preschool. This represents 500 Jewish children.
- Twenty-eight percent of age eligible K-12 Jewish children are enrolled in Jewish formal education, with 21% in part-time school (Hebrew school, Sunday school, or religious school), and 7% in day school.
- There are an estimated 2,200 Jewish children enrolled in Jewish part-time school, and 900 Jewish children enrolled in Jewish day school.
- Participation in all forms of Jewish education is higher among inmarried families than intermarried families.

## Jewish households with age-eligible Jewish children who have at least one child in each form of Jewish education

	Preschool	Part-time	Day school
<b>Households with age-eligible Jewish children (%)</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Engagement group</b>			
Minimally Involved	--	--	--
Personal	--	--	--
Holiday	10	2	0
Communal	5	27	1
Immersed	23	30	31
<b>Region</b>			
Denver	19	18	23
South Metro	13	32	6
Boulder	6	15	0
North & West Metro	1	9	2
Aurora	--	28	5
North & East Metro	10	34	2
<b>Marital status</b>			
Inmarried	13	28	20
Intermarried	6	15	< 1
Not married	--	17	5

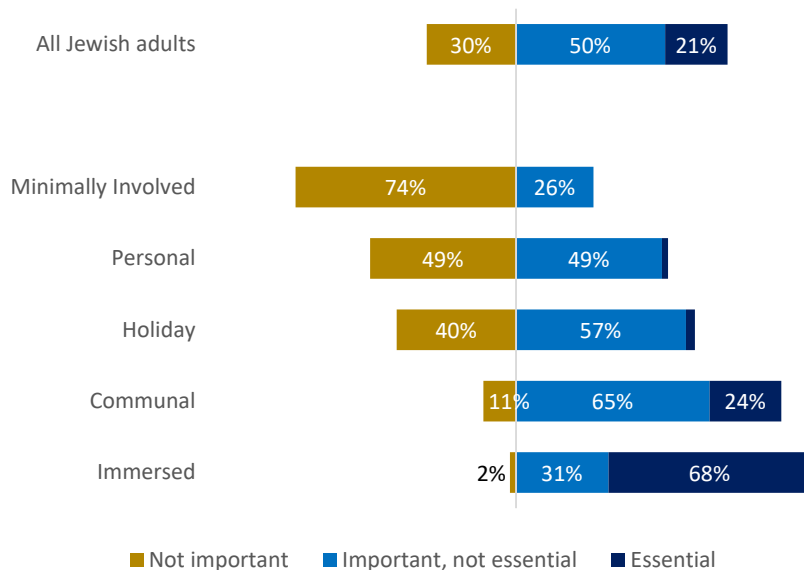
# Jewish Communal Life

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# Connections to Jewish Community

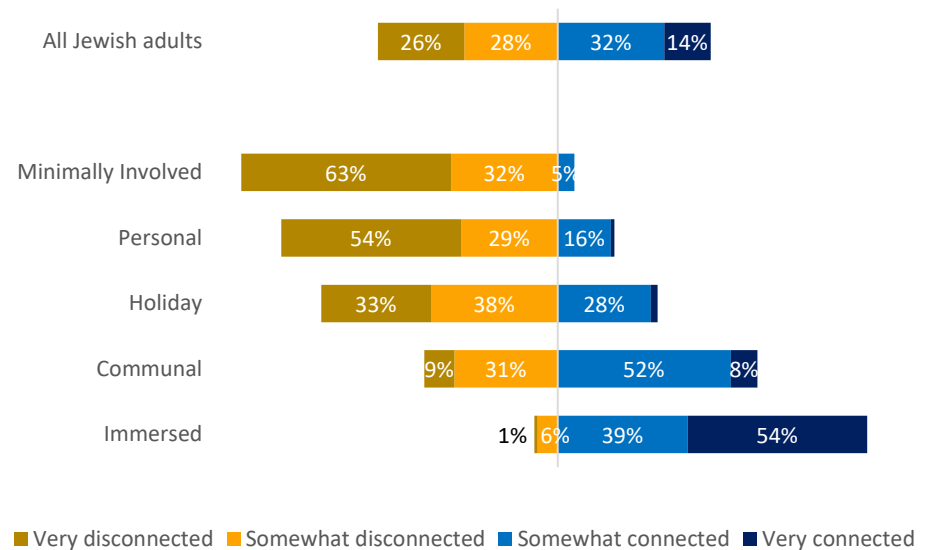
- Seven-in-ten Jewish adults feel it is important to be connected to a local Jewish community. Sixty-eight percent of the Immersed feel that the connection to a local Jewish community is essential to being Jewish. Among Communal Jews, one quarter (24%) feel this connection is essential, and two thirds (65%) believe it is very important. Of the Minimally Involved, Personal, and Holiday Jews, almost none think that a connection to the local Jewish community is essential to being Jewish.
- Less than half of Jewish adults feel connected to ANY Jewish community, and just over half feel disconnected. Among the Immersed, 54% feel very connected to the Jewish community, and 39% feel somewhat connected. Among the Communal, 60% feel at least somewhat connected to the Jewish community.

## Local Jewish community is important to being Jewish



Question: "How important to what being Jewish means to you...Being part of your local Jewish community where you live?"

## Feeling connected to Jewish community



Question: "Generally speaking, how connected do you feel to any type of Jewish community right now?"

# Disconnection from Jewish Community

## Reasons for feeling disconnected from any Jewish community

	Feels disconnected from any Jewish community (%)	Among those disconnected from Jewish community, % who gave this as a reason (select all that apply) (%)							
		Not relevant to your life right now (%)	Do not have enough time (%)	Do not feel that you belong (%)	Geographically isolated from the Jewish community (%)	Do not feel you know enough about being Jewish (%)	Do not want to exclude non-Jewish friends and/or partners (%)	Uncomfortable with the connection between being Jewish and Israel (%)	Do not feel that you would be welcomed (%)
<b>All Jewish adults (%)</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Engagement group</b>									
Minimally Involved	95	81	44	34	19	25	20	31	4
Personal	83	77	42	52	38	26	15	12	26
Holiday	71	65	62	23	42	8	15	7	11
Communal	40	39	33	35	30	7	21	14	14
Immersed	7	15	61	71	34	8	13	9	23
<b>Age</b>									
18-34	57	63	54	35	36	21	12	12	14
35-49	57	46	58	37	37	15	25	16	14
50-64	53	82	51	39	31	22	17	24	15
65-74	53	68	24	30	26	3	20	9	5
75 +	44	83	12	38	10	5	46	13	25
<b>Region</b>									
Denver	45	65	58	39	9	21	22	30	10
South Metro	61	66	44	34	50	24	7	4	19
Boulder	57	67	39	24	13	10	24	14	9
North & West Metro	62	62	63	44	71	16	22	17	15
Aurora	58	72	27	51	44	7	14	7	17
North & East Metro	36	50	74	47	49	21	6	19	33
<b>Marital status</b>									
Inmarried	39	52	52	34	37	9	10	8	13
Intermarried	66	72	46	37	34	8	22	19	13
Not married	52	60	51	34	25	21	19	15	18

Over half of Jewish adults feel somewhat or very disconnected from any Jewish community.

Except for the oldest Jewish adults (age 75+), younger and older adults are similar in their level of connection to Jewish community.

Among those disconnected from Jewish life, the top reason was lack of relevance.

Question text: *Generally speaking, how connected do you feel to any type of Jewish community right now? Very connected, somewhat connected, somewhat disconnected, very disconnected. [If somewhat/very disconnected:] Which explain why you feel disconnected from the Jewish community? You...*

# Participation in Jewish Community Institutions

## Attended program or service at three Jewish institutions in past year:

	Synagogue (%)	JCC (%)	Chabad (%)
<b>All Jewish adults</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>15</b>
Engagement group			
Minimally Involved	0	32	0
Personal	24	6	2
Holiday	51	18	10
Communal	89	61	23
Immersed	100	69	29
Age			
18-34	67	30	19
35-49	63	51	21
50-64	58	45	10
65-74	57	31	10
75 +	53	41	8
Region			
Denver	69	50	15
South Metro	59	27	16
Boulder	59	52	16
North & West Metro	51	24	12
Aurora	60	29	11
North & East Metro	75	43	24
Marital status			
Inmarried	80	50	18
Intermarried	45	34	11
Not married	68	39	19

Note: Question was asked only about these three organizations. Participation in other organizations was not measured in the survey.

- Although only 20% of Jewish adults live in a household in which someone is a dues-paying synagogue member, 61% of Jewish adults attended a program or event at a synagogue in the past year.
- Forty percent of Jewish adults attended a JCC program, and 15% attended a Chabad program.
- Minimally Involved Jews attend programs at the JCC more than at any other institution.



# Participation in General Activities

## General activity and program participation, at least 2-3 times per month

	Explore new restaurants (%)	Exercise class/group (%)	Attend cultural productions (%)	Host dinner parties (%)	Meditate (%)	Adult ed. class (%)
<b>All Jewish adults</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Engagement group</b>						
Minimally Involved	78	48	46	41	52	10
Personal	84	54	54	29	48	20
Holiday	81	52	46	54	50	15
Communal	80	54	55	58	52	20
Immersed	72	56	53	61	47	54
<b>Age</b>						
18-34	90	58	52	53	53	23
35-49	72	56	43	55	53	19
50-64	81	51	50	51	52	20
65-74	65	50	52	46	46	32
75 +	83	50	75	49	39	51
<b>Region</b>						
Denver	81	58	52	63	49	27
South Metro	73	54	34	39	36	23
Boulder	86	57	59	50	64	28
North & West Metro	73	49	57	55	51	10
Aurora	75	36	42	36	33	22
North & East Metro	77	53	54	49	63	42
<b>Marital status</b>						
Inmarried	72	54	44	63	44	31
Intermarried	82	53	51	51	55	18
Not married	82	55	61	32	50	30

Jewish adults regularly participate in a wide variety of social and cultural activities. Seventy-seven percent explore new restaurants two to three times per month. This is the most frequent activity for all ages and engagement groups.

# Participation in Jewish Activities

## Participation in Jewish activities, ever in past year

	Read about Jewish topics (%)	Visited Jewish website (%)	Took Jewish class (%)	Joined a Jewish social action group (%)	Used Jewish dating app (if single) (%)
<b>All Jewish adults</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Engagement group</b>					
Minimally Involved	33	0	0	0	3
Personal	87	90	14	8	2
Holiday	81	48	8	7	5
Communal	86	71	30	35	17
Immersed	100	96	95	61	21
<b>Age</b>					
18-34	82	68	25	23	13
35-49	77	64	27	26	11
50-64	80	61	38	23	4
65-74	82	59	35	26	5
75 +	85	65	34	21	5
<b>Region</b>					
Denver	87	63	44	34	13
South Metro	83	62	27	22	12
Boulder	78	69	28	19	8
North & West Metro	72	51	21	15	4
Aurora	75	63	27	27	20
North & East Metro	88	84	36	33	5
<b>Marital status</b>					
Inmarried	86	73	47	36	n/a
Intermarried	76	57	18	15	n/a
Not married	83	60	38	27	10

Jewish adults participate in a range of Jewish activities. The most common were those that do not involve a group or organization, such as reading about Jewish topics (80%) and visiting a Jewish website (63%). A much smaller share took a Jewish class (31%) or joined a Jewish social action group (24%).

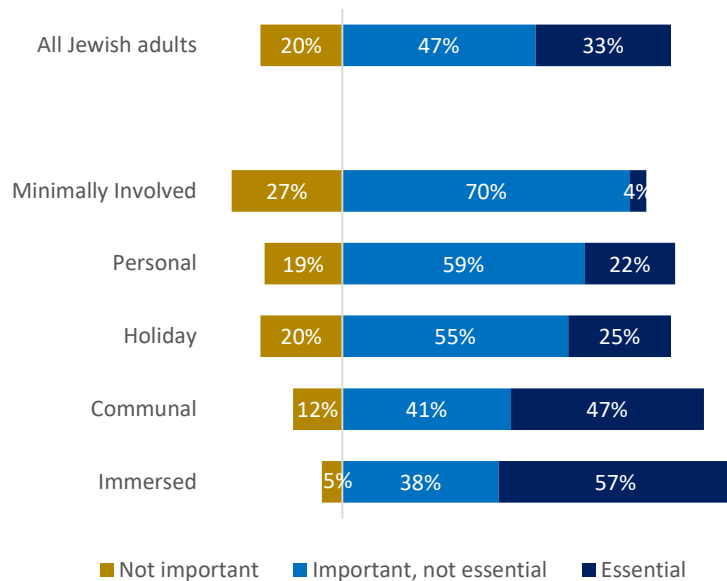
These patterns held for Jewish adults of all ages and across all regions.

Among the Immersed Jews, nearly all read about Jewish topics, visited a Jewish website, and took a Jewish class.

# Attachment to Israel

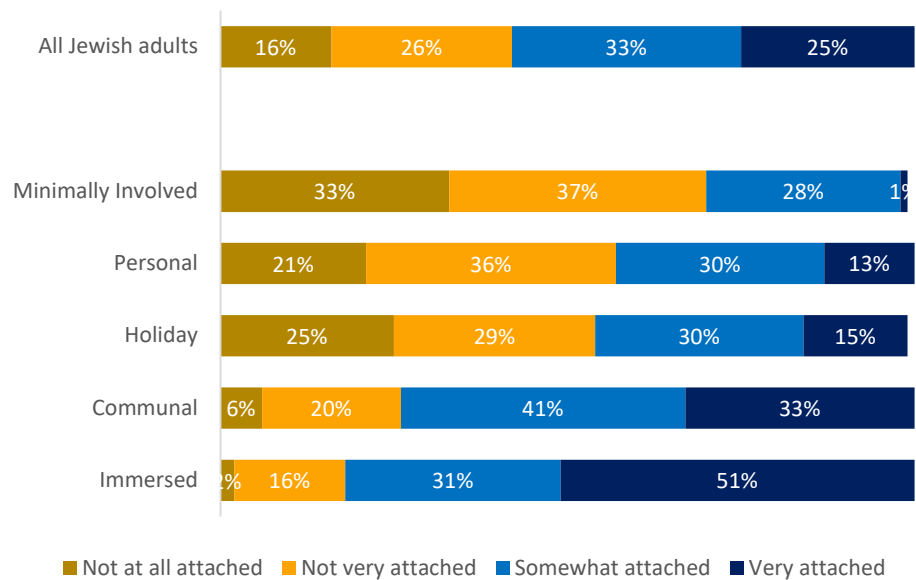
- Over half (55%) of Jewish adults have been to Israel.
- Eight-in-ten Jewish adults feel that caring about Israel is important to being Jewish, including 33% who feel it is essential to being Jewish. About half of the Immersed and the Communal consider Israel as essential to being Jewish, as do one quarter of the Personal and Holiday Jews.
- Over half (58%) of Jewish adults feel at least somewhat attached to Israel and another quarter (26%) feel not very attached. Only 16% of Jewish adults are not at all attached to Israel.

## Caring about Israel is important to being Jewish



Question: "How important to what being Jewish means to you... Caring about Israel?"

## Emotional attachment to Israel



Question: "How emotionally attached are you to Israel?"

# Philanthropy and Volunteering

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# Jewish Charitable Donations

## Donations to Jewish charity in past year

	Donated to Jewish charity (%)	Of donors, amount given (%)					
		< \$100	\$100-500	\$500-1,000	\$1,000-2,500	\$2,500-5,000	\$5,000 +
<b>All Jewish households</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Engagement group</b>							
Minimally Involved	6	80	14	0	6	0	0
Personal	41	42	43	6	4	0	5
Holiday	19	32	52	4	3	10	0
Communal	73	20	36	13	17	6	8
Immersed	98	7	16	20	23	15	20
<b>Age</b>							
18-34	46	44	42	7	5	1	2
35-49	44	27	30	13	14	7	9
50-64	42	9	25	21	18	13	13
65-74	58	12	42	8	20	7	11
75 +	54	15	28	14	14	16	13
<b>Standard of living (Self-reported)</b>							
Well-off	52	7	30	9	17	11	26
Not well-off	45	24	34	15	15	7	5
<b>Region</b>							
Denver	53	14	28	19	19	8	13
South Metro	58	16	35	8	13	15	12
Boulder	46	29	29	15	11	7	9
North & West Metro	31	20	54	7	10	3	6
Aurora	51	23	20	7	24	9	17
North & East Metro	55	7	42	19	21	8	2
<b>Marital status</b>							
Inmarried	75	13	21	10	22	16	18
Intermarried	39	21	40	16	12	5	6
Not married	46	27	34	12	12	5	9

Nearly half of Jewish households donated to a Jewish charity in the past year. Of those who did, more than half donated \$500 or less. Ten percent donated \$5,000 or more.

More engaged households donated at higher levels than less engaged households.

Although younger Jewish adults, ages 18-34, made nearly as many donations as older adults, those donations were smaller dollar amounts.

Households who described themselves as financially well off made somewhat more donations, and those donations were significantly larger than those from other households.

# Non-Jewish Charitable Donations

## Donations to non-Jewish charity in past year

	Donated to non-Jewish charity (%)	Of donors, amount given (%)					
		< \$100	\$100-500	\$500-1,000	\$1,000-2,500	\$2,500-5,000	\$5,000 +
<b>All Jewish households</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Engagement group</b>							
Minimally Involved	91	12	29	18	13	5	23
Personal	78	10	24	39	14	5	8
Holiday	83	11	37	18	23	7	5
Communal	91	13	32	10	18	9	18
Immersed	91	11	32	13	25	10	9
<b>Age</b>							
18-34	80	14	47	28	5	3	3
35-49	88	9	39	17	23	6	5
50-64	92	10	28	10	19	9	24
65-74	87	11	26	19	21	10	13
75 +	84	12	28	24	13	5	19
<b>Standard of living (Self-reported)</b>							
Well off	96	1	20	10	23	11	36
Other	85	14	37	20	16	6	7
<b>Region</b>							
Denver	89	8	29	13	23	7	20
South Metro	81	13	31	25	12	11	8
Boulder	93	4	37	23	17	7	12
North & West Metro	86	17	37	14	12	3	16
Aurora	77	22	29	7	23	5	13
North & East Metro	90	17	34	10	22	14	2
<b>Marital status</b>							
Inmarried	88	14	36	14	18	8	10
Intermarried	89	7	29	18	19	8	19
Not married	85	18	42	16	15	4	6

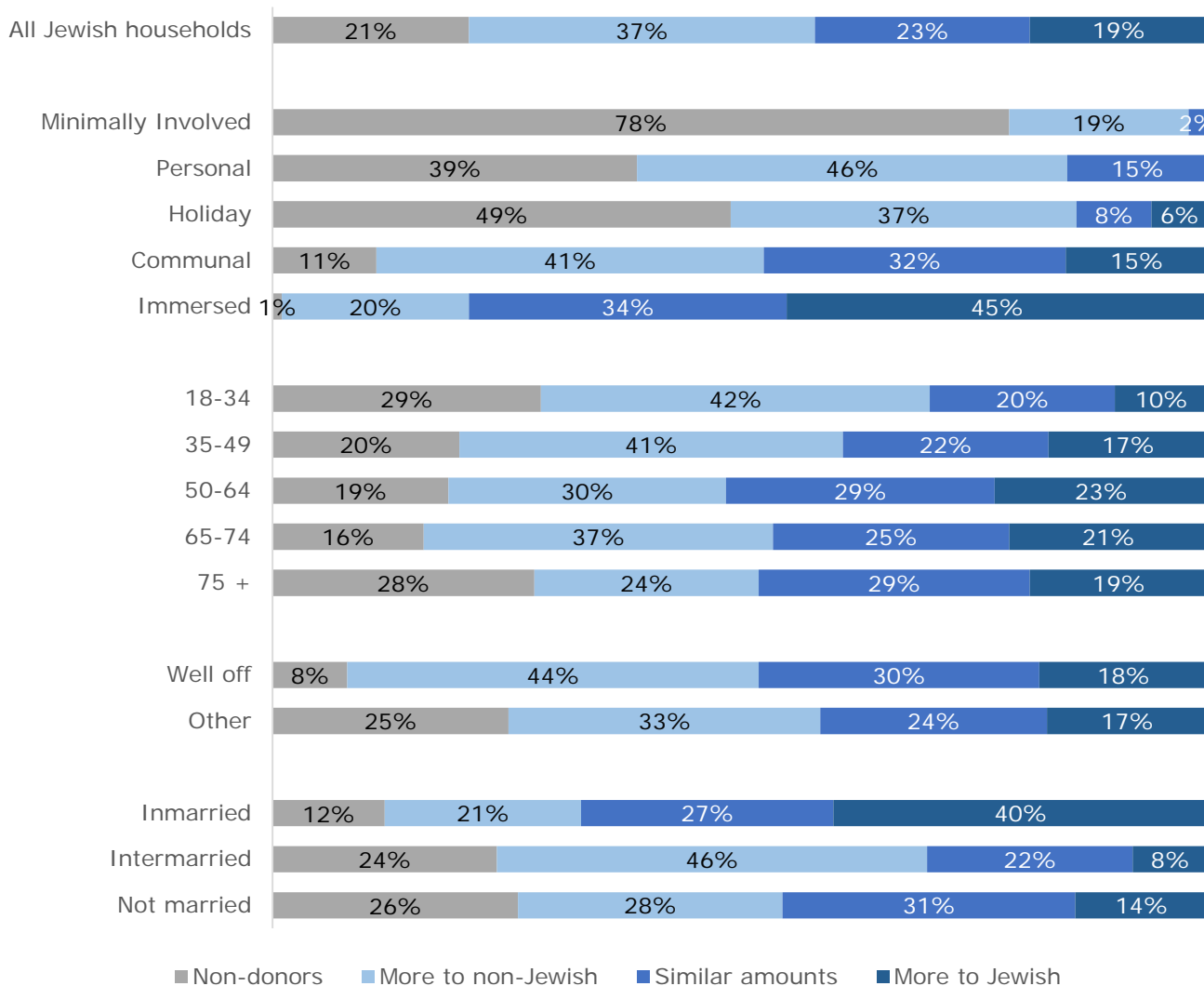
Eighty-eight percent of Jewish households made a donation to a non-Jewish charity in the past year. Of those that did, 45% donated \$500 or less. Twelve percent donated \$5,000 or more.

There were few differences in donations to non-Jewish organizations between the engagement groups.

Households who described themselves as financially well-off made somewhat more donations, and those donations were significantly larger than those from other households.

# Comparison of Jewish and Non-Jewish Donations

**Donations amounts: no donations, more non-Jewish causes, more Jewish causes, about equal**



This graph compares donation patterns to Jewish and non-Jewish causes.

One-in-five Jewish households (21%) did not make any charitable donations in the past year. Seventy-eight percent of the Minimally Involved made no charitable donations.

One third (37%) of Jewish households donated more to non-Jewish causes than to Jewish ones.

One quarter (23%) of Jewish households donated about the same to Jewish and non-Jewish causes.

One in five (19%) of Jewish households donated more to Jewish causes.

# Reasons for Making Charitable Donations

## Reasons for giving: Being asked to give by someone you know personally

	Very important (%)	Important (%)	Not that important (%)	Not at all important (%)
<b>All Jewish adults</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Engagement group</b>				
Minimally Involved	4	33	42	21
Personal	9	42	13	36
Holiday	12	35	37	17
Communal	18	36	33	13
Immersed	18	35	37	10
<b>Age</b>				
18-34	14	41	35	10
35-49	15	43	27	15
50-64	11	32	41	16
65-74	17	30	33	20
75 +	14	23	36	27
<b>Standard of living (Self-reported)</b>				
Well off	13	35	36	16
Other	14	35	34	17
<b>Region</b>				
Denver	13	38	34	14
South Metro	8	33	39	19
Boulder	14	33	34	20
North & West Metro	15	38	36	11
Aurora	12	24	33	31
North & East Metro	28	37	24	11

When making donations to charitable causes, over half of Jewish adults say it is important (39%) or very important (16%) to be asked by someone they know personally.

This response is similar across most segments of the Jewish community.



# Reasons for Making Charitable Donations

## Reasons for giving: As part of your commitment to being Jewish

	Very important (%)	Important (%)	Not that important (%)	Not at all important (%)
<b>All Jewish adults</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Engagement group</b>				
Minimally Involved	0	2	32	66
Personal	3	17	21	59
Holiday	3	21	42	34
Communal	18	38	33	11
Immersed	40	41	17	2
<b>Age</b>				
18-34	9	27	34	31
35-49	15	25	31	29
50-64	9	21	32	38
65-74	12	32	25	31
75 +	22	23	19	37
<b>Standard of living (Self-reported)</b>				
Well off	15	18	23	43
Other	11	27	32	30
<b>Region</b>				
Denver	17	26	32	25
South Metro	12	31	35	22
Boulder	8	21	26	45
North & West Metro	6	24	30	40
Aurora	15	26	29	30
North & East Metro	28	29	23	21

About one third of Jewish adults consider the connection between being Jewish and charitable giving as important (23%) or very important (13%) when making donations.

Those who are more engaged in Jewish life feel most strongly about this relationship. Eighty-one percent of the Immersed and 56% of the Communal consider the connection between being Jewish and charitable giving to be important or very important.

# Reasons for Making Charitable Donations

## Reasons for giving: A desire to support organizations where you volunteer

	Very important (%)	Important (%)	Not that important (%)	Not at all important (%)
<b>All Jewish adults</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Engagement group</b>				
Minimally Involved	16	58	9	17
Personal	23	30	16	31
Holiday	18	47	18	17
Communal	25	44	21	10
Immersed	30	40	24	7
<b>Age</b>				
18-34	27	52	13	8
35-49	24	47	18	12
50-64	18	44	23	15
65-74	19	38	20	23
75 +	19	19	25	37
<b>Standard of living (Self-reported)</b>				
Well off	21	37	19	23
Not well off	21	46	19	14
<b>Region</b>				
Denver	21	45	22	12
South Metro	21	42	22	15
Boulder	30	30	20	20
North & West Metro	14	53	14	19
Aurora	12	49	19	19
North & East Metro	23	57	15	6

About two thirds of Jewish adults say it is important (46%) or very important (18%) to consider financially supporting organizations where they volunteer when making donations.

This response is similar across most segments of the Jewish community.

# Reasons for Making Charitable Donations

**Reasons for giving: A desire to support an organization that benefitted you or someone close to you**

	Very important (%)	Important (%)	Not that important (%)	Not at all important (%)
<b>All Jewish adults</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Engagement group</b>				
Minimally Involved	15	59	11	15
Personal	30	31	11	28
Holiday	25	45	17	13
Communal	30	48	16	6
Immersed	35	40	21	4
<b>Age</b>				
18-34	36	46	13	5
35-49	35	48	13	3
50-64	22	48	17	12
65-74	23	38	19	20
75 +	11	41	23	24
<b>Standard of living (Self-reported)</b>				
Well off	21	42	22	15
Not well off	29	46	15	10
<b>Region</b>				
Denver	27	43	20	10
South Metro	19	48	15	18
Boulder	29	34	22	15
North & West Metro	24	67	5	3
Aurora	26	43	13	18
North & East Metro	46	37	15	2

When donating to charitable causes, nearly three quarters of Jewish adults say it is important (46%) or very important (26%) to support an organization that benefitted them or someone close to them.

This response is slightly higher among younger Jewish adults than older Jewish adults.

# Volunteering

## Volunteering at Jewish and non-Jewish organizations in past year

	Volunteered, total (%)	Volunteered, non-Jewish org. (%)	Volunteered, Jewish org. (%)
<b>All Jewish households</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>19</b>
Engagement group			
Minimally Involved	67	67	0
Personal	56	56	8
Holiday	65	65	1
Communal	69	63	23
Immersed	83	60	73
Age			
18-34	68	69	15
35-49	64	57	18
50-64	74	68	23
65-74	59	54	20
75 +	43	40	12
Standard of living (Self-reported)			
Well off	60	53	19
Not well off	67	62	19
Region			
Denver	73	26	66
South Metro	65	19	60
Boulder	67	16	63
North & West Metro	61	11	58
Aurora	42	23	29
North & East Metro	69	24	62
Marital status			
Inmarried	67	54	36
Intermarried	65	62	14
Not married	64	58	18

Two thirds of households include someone who volunteered for a not-for-profit organization.

More (60%) Jewish households volunteered at non-Jewish organizations (60%) than at Jewish organizations (19%).

Immersed Jews volunteered more frequently at Jewish than at non-Jewish organizations.

# Intermarried Families

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# Jewish Life in Intermarried Households

	Jewish partners (%)	Non-Jewish partners (%)
<b>How couples balance religions</b>		
We each practice our respective religions separately	13	3
We practice both religions together	19	8
Neither of us practices a religion	46	80
My spouse/partner does not practice a religion, so we practice mine	21	< 1
I do not practice a religion, so we practice my spouse's/partner's religion	2	10
<b>Comfort at Jewish events</b>		
Very comfortable	45	21
Somewhat comfortable	25	54
Somewhat uncomfortable	11	22
Very uncomfortable	3	0
It depends, varies	15	3
<b>What makes comfortable</b>		
Host acknowledges/welcomes non-Jewish individuals	88	94
Jewish rituals explained	90	98
Events not religious	84	93
Other	27	9
<b>What makes uncomfortable</b>		
Not understanding Hebrew	29	75
Pressure for non-Jewish spouse/partner to convert	27	n/a
Not understanding what is going on	34	78
Interfaith marriage talked about as a problem	55	65
Other	13	6
<b>Had a Christmas tree last year</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>70</b>

Among interfaith couples, the largest share say that they practice neither religion.

Jewish partners feel more comfortable than non-Jewish partners at Jewish events.

# Weddings of Interfaith Couples

## Rituals and officiant(s) in wedding ceremonies

	Intermarried households (%)
A rabbi or cantor or both	16
A minister or priest	13
Both Jewish and Christian clergy	7
A justice of the peace or a judge	30
A friend, relative, or other person	24
Someone else	9

Among interfaith married couples, 16% had only Jewish clergy officiate at their weddings, and 7% had Jewish and Christian clergy.

Sixty-two percent of interfaith married couples included at least one Jewish ritual in their wedding ceremony. The most common ritual was breaking a glass.

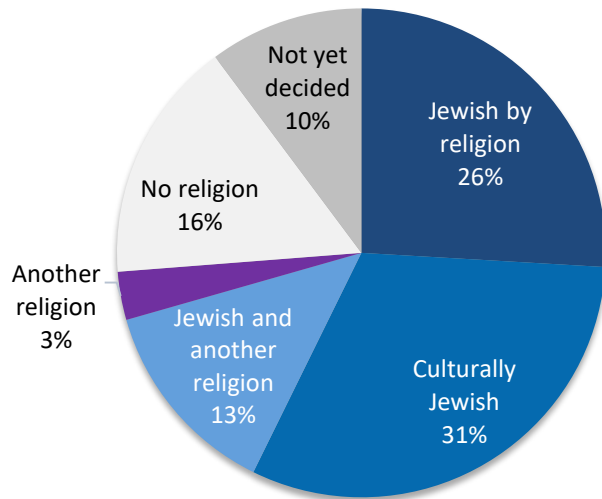
## Jewish wedding rituals in interfaith weddings

At least one Jewish ritual	62
Breaking a glass	46
English translation of Jewish blessings	39
Chuppah	37
Jewish music	24
Ketubah	22
Other	5

# Children's Religion

Fifty-seven percent of children in Jewish households are being raised exclusively Jewish, either by religion (26%) or culturally Jewish (31%). Another 13% are being raised Jewish and another religion.

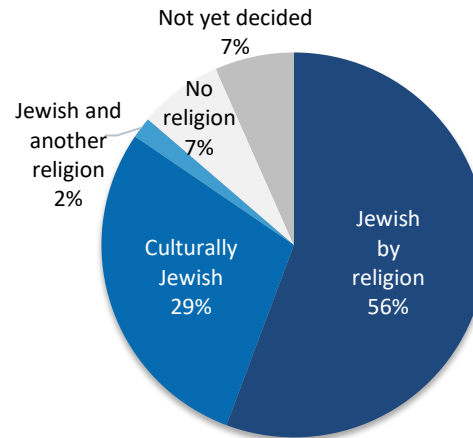
**Religion raised of all children**



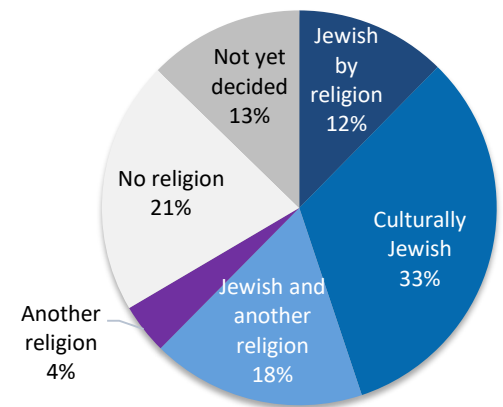
Twenty-six percent of children in Jewish households are being raised by inmarried parents. Eighty-five percent of those children are being raised exclusively Jewish, either by religion (56%) or culturally (29%).

Sixty-seven percent of children in Jewish households are being raised by intermarried parents. 45% of those children are being raised exclusively Jewish, either by religion (12%) or culturally (33%). Eighteen percent are being raised Jewish and another religion. Among intermarried parents, only 4% of children are being raised exclusively in a religion other than Judaism.

**Children of inmarried parents**



**Children of intermarried parents**





# Importance of Judaism to Parents

## Parental attitudes about children's Jewish life

	All parents (%)	Inmarried parents (%)	Intermarried parents (%)
Important child feels positive about being Jewish			
Very important	72	80	68
Somewhat	18	19	22
Not very	6	2	2
Not at all	3	0	7
Important child be involved in activities with other Jewish children			
Very important	34	54	23
Somewhat	30	30	24
Not very	14	6	22
Not at all	22	10	31
Important child have strong attachment to Israel			
Very important	21	32	10
Somewhat	25	32	20
Not very	19	17	24
Not at all	34	19	47

The vast majority of parents hope that their children feel positive about being Jewish. Among inmarried parents, 80% feel that being positive about being Jewish is very important; among intermarried parents, 68% feel this is very important.

More than half (54%) of inmarried parents think it is very important that their children be involved activities with other Jewish children, compared to 23% of intermarried parents.

# Grandparents and Extended Families

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# Grandparents and Grandchildren

Fifty-one percent of parents of minor children have their own parents or in-laws in Greater Denver. Eighty percent of these parents report that the grandparents help with childcare about once a month or more.

## Parents' report of local grandparent participation in their children's life

	Parents with local grandparents (%)
<b>Parents/In-Laws helped with childcare</b>	
At least once a week	25
Once every couple of weeks	25
About once a month	20
Once every few months	14
Less frequently than that	16
<b>Support provided by grandparents</b>	
Talked to (grand)children about religion	40
Took to synagogue or Jewish event	24
Took to church or church event	18
Hosted Jewish holiday celebration	42
Helped pay for Jewish education	6

Twenty-four percent of Jewish adults ages 50+ have grandchildren living in Greater Denver. About 7 in 10 say that they help with childcare about once a month or more.

## Grandparents report of participation in local grandchildren's life

	Grandparents with local grandchildren (%)
<b>Helped with childcare</b>	
Several times a week	33
At least once a week	15
Once every couple of weeks	13
About once a month	7
Once every few months	7
Less frequently than that	24
<b>Support for grandchildren</b>	
Talked to (grand)children about religion	59
Took to synagogue or Jewish event	31
Took to church or church event	0
Hosted Jewish holiday celebration	51
Read Jewish book	30
Helped pay for Jewish education	12

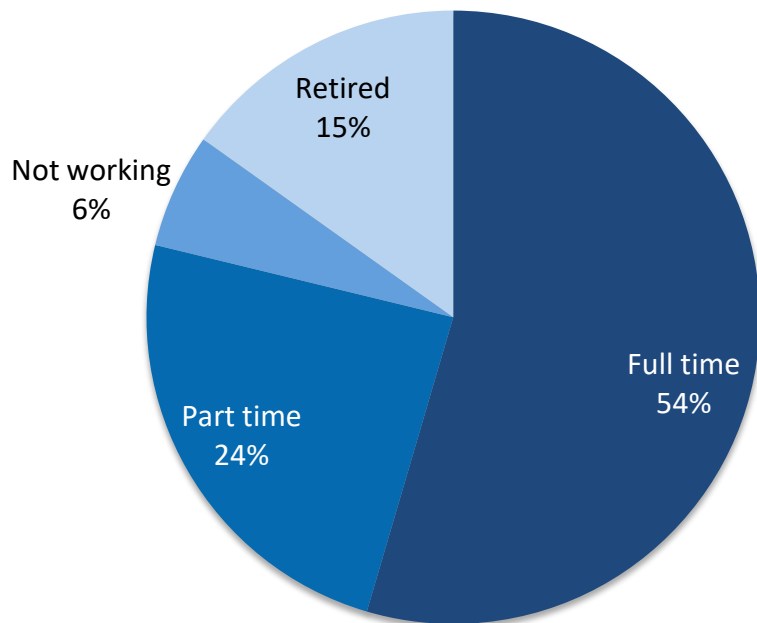
# Economics and Health

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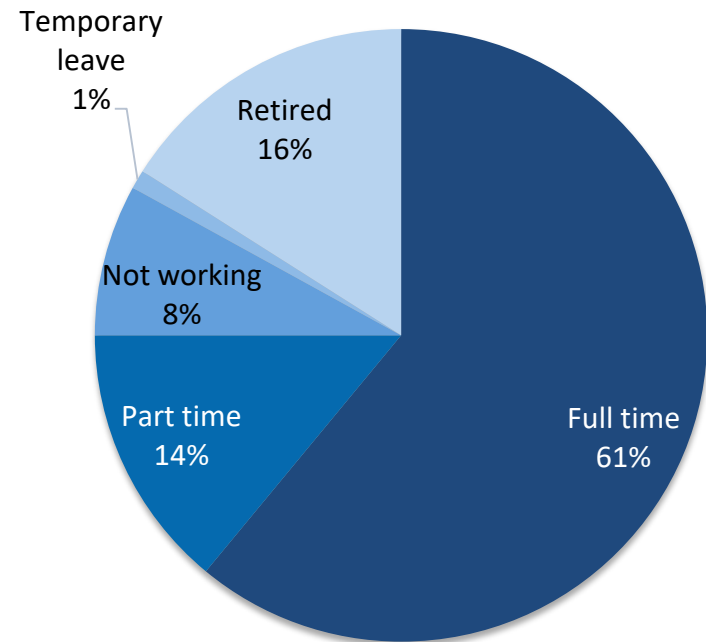
# Employment Status

Among survey respondents, 54% work full time and 24% work part time.  
Of their spouses, 61% work full time and 14% work part time.

**Employment status, adult respondents**



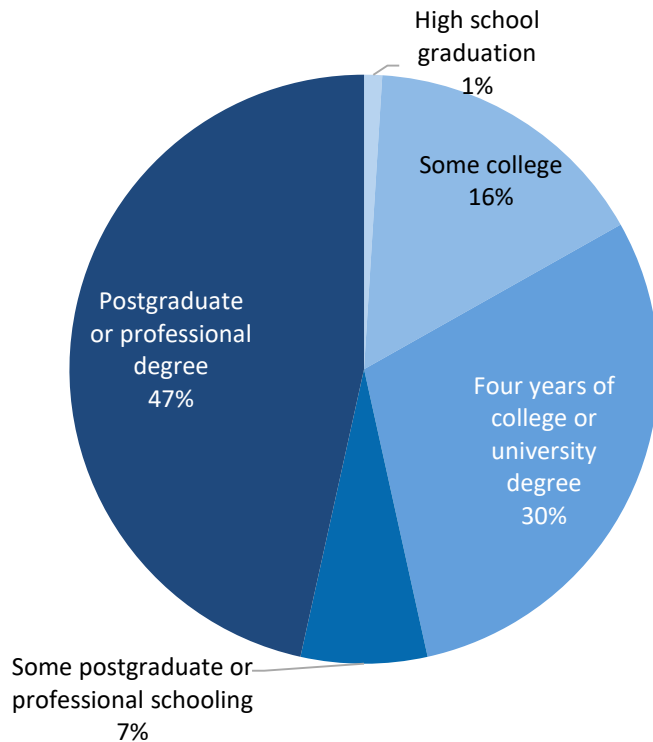
**Employment status, spouse**



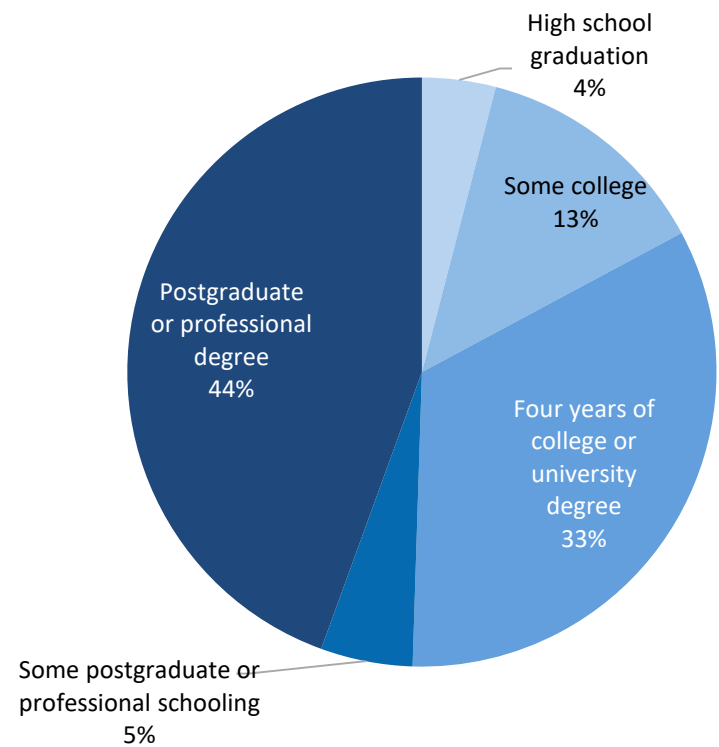
# Educational Attainment

Among survey respondents and their spouses, 82% have at least a college degree.  
Nearly half of those have a postgraduate or professional degree.

**Highest level of education completed, respondent**



**Highest level of education completed, spouse**



# Income, Standard of Living, and Wealth

Eighteen percent of Jewish households may be economically vulnerable, with 3% reporting they cannot make ends meet, and 15% reporting they are just managing to make ends meet. Twenty-four percent of households report that they are well off.

Twenty percent of households have a household income of \$200,000 or more. 28% of households report that their total wealth is \$1 million or more.

## Household income and self-reported standard of living

	All Jewish households (%)
<b>Standard of living</b>	
Cannot make ends meet	3
Just managing to make ends	15
Comfortable - have enough money	38
Have some extra money	17
Well off	24
Prefer not to answer	4
<b>Income</b>	
Less than \$25,000	4
\$25,000 to \$49,999	7
\$50,000 to \$74,999	9
\$75,000 to \$99,999	13
\$100,000 to \$149,999	18
\$150,000 to \$199,999	11
\$200,000 and \$500,000	17
Over \$500,000	3
Prefer not to answer	17

## Household wealth

	All Jewish households (%)
<b>Wealth</b>	
Less than \$5,000	4
\$5,000 to \$40,000	8
\$40,000 to \$75,000	5
\$75,000 to \$150,000	6
\$150,000 to \$250,000	5
\$250,000 to \$500,000	9
\$500,000 to \$1M	11
\$1M to \$2M	13
\$2M to \$3M	6
\$3M or more	9
Prefer not to answer	24

# Financial Burden of Jewish Life

## Ways in which finances prevented participation in Jewish life in past five years

	Join Synagogue (%)	Travel to Israel (%)	Sending child to Jewish camp (%)	Sending child to Jewish preschool (%)	Sending child to Jewish school (%)	Enrolling in Jewish senior housing (%)
<b>All age-eligible Jewish households</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>7</b>
Engagement group						
Minimally Involved	17	18	---	---	0	0
Personal	10	34	12	---	2	6
Holiday	24	19	30	12	20	10
Communal	34	31	43	22	20	10
Immersed	17	32	22	23	16	8
Age						
18-34	30	33	19	23	14	---
35-49	30	35	35	19	21	---
50-64	18	26	18	---	5	10
65-74	16	16	---	---	---	7
75 +	11	13	---	---	---	5
Region						
Denver	20	22	15	14	9	6
South Metro	21	26	25	---	12	3
Boulder	19	27	36	19	6	7
North & West Metro	26	27	29	9	23	18
Aurora	22	30	48	---	44	5
North & East Metro	32	40	44	---	36	0
Standard of living (Self-reported)						
Well off	4	7	5	0	1	0
Not well off	27	33	34	26	19	10

For 22% of Jewish households, finances were a barrier in the decision to join a synagogue.

For 28% of Jewish households with children ages eight or older, finances prevented sending children to Jewish camp.

For 26% of families, finances prevented someone from going to Israel.



# Health and Special Needs

Over three-in-five (62%) Jewish households include someone who experienced depression, anxiety, or stress in the past year.

One-in-five (22%) Jewish households include someone with a serious chronic physical illness.

Although these findings suggest prevalence of a variety of conditions, we do not have details about the impact or severity of the household members' conditions.

## Health conditions experienced by Jewish households

	All Jewish households (%)
Depression, anxiety or stress	62
Serious chronic physical illness	22
Relationship issues	19
Child with learning disability (if child in HH)	14
Elderly relative in Denver who needs assistance	13
Other serious mental health issues	7
Eating disorder	4

# Study Methodology

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# Study Methodology Summary

## Summary of data collected for this study

	Primary	Supplement	Total
<b>ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS</b>			
Completes	1,266	1,150	2,416
Partials	37	54	91
TOTAL eligible	1,303	1,204	2,507
<b>INELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS</b>			
Screened out	1,291	232	1,523
Incomplete	227	48	275
Ineligible	41	27	68
TOTAL households reached	2,862	1,511	4,373
<b>ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS BY SOURCE</b>			
Mid City	335	46	381
CMJS/SSRI	968	1158	2,126
TOTAL eligible	1,303	1,204	2,507

## Comparison to previous study

The previous study of Metro Denver/Boulder, conducted in 2007, reported that the Jewish population was 83,900. The adjusted CMJS/SSRI estimate, which is based on the American Jewish Population Project ([ajpp.brandeis.edu](http://ajpp.brandeis.edu)), is that the Jewish population in Metro Denver/Boulder in 2007 was approximately 69,500. This would indicate that the population increase from 2007-2019 was 31%.

Data for this study were collected online and by telephone in two phases. Phase 1 of the study was directed by Mid City LLC with data collection by SSRC. This phase was conducted August-December 2018.

Phase 2 was directed by CMJS/SSRI at Brandeis University. Data collection by Siena College was conducted June-July 2019. Data collected in the two phases were combined and weighted for analysis and reporting.

Complete methodological details can be found in the study appendix.

## Definitions

- **Jewish adults:** Individuals ages 18 and above who consider themselves to be Jewish in any way (including Jewish and another religion) AND have at least one Jewish parent, or were raised Jewish, or converted to Judaism.
- **Eligible:** Households that screened into the survey because they live in the study area and include at least one Jewish adult.
- **Completes:** households that screened in and completed the full survey
- **Partial:** households that screened in and completed enough of the survey for analysis.
- **Screened out:** households that indicated either that they do not live in the Greater Denver study area for any part of the year or that no one in the household identifies as Jewish, was raised Jewish, or had Jewish parents.
- **Incomplete:** households that started the survey but did not complete enough of it for analysis.
- **Ineligible:** households that completed the survey but turned out not to be eligible because there were no Jewish adults in the household or because they live outside of the study area.
- **Primary:** sample of households who were contacted by postal mail, email, and telephone. It is a representative sample and is used as a basis for population estimates and analyses of the community as a whole.
- **Supplement:** sample of households who were contacted by email only. This sample is used to increase respondents for subgroup analysis and is statistically adjusted to match the parameters in the primary sample.