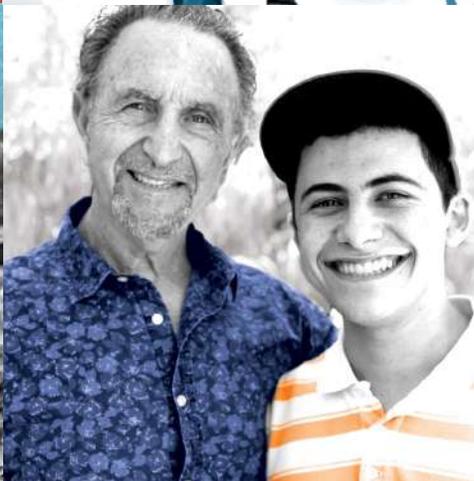
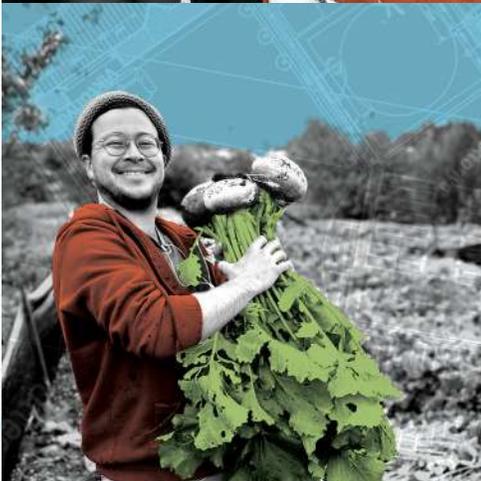


A Blueprint for Our Future

SAN DIEGO
JEWISH COMMUNITY STUDY



Brandeis

COHEN CENTER FOR
MODERN JEWISH STUDIES
STEINHARDT SOCIAL
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NORC at the University of Chicago

A BLUEPRINT FOR OUR FUTURE:

2022 SAN DIEGO JEWISH COMMUNITY STUDY

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A Blueprint for Our Future

SAN DIEGO
JEWISH COMMUNITY STUDY

On behalf of San Diego's Jewish Community Study Leadership Team, we are excited to share San Diego's Jewish Community Study, ***A Blueprint for the Future***, with you. It has been an honor to work together on behalf of our community.

As leaders committed to building a thriving community, we know the best planning decisions are made through meaningful collaboration using valid data. When we came together to develop our study planning process, we aspired to stimulate a renewed orientation toward research-driven decision making across organizations, initiatives, and programs. From the very beginning, our collective work on behalf of San Diego's Jewish community has been informed by these guiding principles:

- Gather actionable and usable data that sheds light on what Jews in San Diego think and feel.
- Recognize the diversity of the Jewish community and use an inclusive lens when recognizing Jewish identity.
- Ensure the full representation of Jews that are living on the margins and struggling to make ends meet.
- Identify and understand Jews that are disengaged and/or disconnected from Jewish life.

Now, we are delighted to share this report that we hope will provide the tools we need to chart a clear course for the vibrant, welcoming, and inclusive community we seek to build together – for you and with you.

We thank our research team, which brings together two preeminent research institutions, the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (CMJS) at Brandeis University and NORC at the University of Chicago. This team, led by Dr. Janet Aronson and Professor Leonard Saxe at Brandeis University, and Dr. David Dutwin and Dr. Zachary Seeskin at NORC, combines CMJS's extensive experience conducting dozens of Jewish community studies over the last two decades with NORC's expertise using the most advanced research methodologies. We are grateful for the contributions of our research partners whose comprehensive data collection and analysis has shone a light on the demographics, identities, needs, attitudes, and engagement of today's San Diego Jewish community.

In addition to providing strategic guidance, we also laid a strong financial foundation for this study. ***A Blueprint for the Future*** would not be possible without all the local individual donors who gave generously to support this effort. We are grateful to them for their belief in the power of data-driven decision making and the potential of this study. We are also thankful for the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation's support of our work to understand the racial and ethnic diversity of our community and collect data about financial insecurity.

The collaborative multi-year effort to bring our organizations' shared vision for this study to fruition was spearheaded by managing consultant, Shana Hazan, and guided by the tremendous work of our Core Team: Ollie Benn, Chris Edwards, Jessica Kort, Darren Schwartz, and Carole Yellen.

Over the last two years, we cast a wide net to help us understand the distinct contours of Jewish San Diego. More than a collection of data points, this study offers meaningful insight into the fabric of our Jewish community. It reflects the unique perspectives and experiences of thousands of people across San Diego County and Temecula – from those just planting roots here from homelands on the other side of the world, to those whose families have lived in San Diego for generations. It is a reminder that while some community members find meaning by participating in traditional aspects of Jewish life, others are deeply engaged in less formal ways.

For us, and we hope for you, ***A Blueprint for the Future*** is a starting point for introspection, deeper conversation, and collaborative community planning. While our study is complete, our community's work to translate data into action is now just beginning.

We invite you to review this report with curiosity and share what resonates most with you with your friends, family, and neighbors. As you read, we hope you will consider how these findings might shape the decisions you make individually and those we make together to build a thriving Jewish San Diego.

We hope you will join us on the journey ahead. Together, in the coming months and years, we will delve into the study data and engage in action-oriented conversations as we discern and grapple with the implications of the findings. We will continue to identify new questions, conduct further analysis, and gather new data to inform our collective planning work.

In partnership and in community,

San Diego Jewish Community Study Leadership Team

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INTRODUCTION

A Blueprint for our Future: The 2022 San Diego Jewish Community Study was conducted by the Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (CMJS) at Brandeis University, in partnership with NORC at the University of Chicago. The study was sponsored by the Jewish Community Foundation of San Diego, Jewish Family Service of San Diego, Jewish Federation of San Diego, Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center, JACOBS FAMILY CAMPUS, and the Leichtag Foundation, with support from the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation and other San Diego-based funders. The study employed innovative state-of-the-art methods to create a portrait of the characteristics, attitudes, and behaviors of the Jewish community. Some of the issues explored in this study emerged out of conversations surrounding the Pew Research Center’s *A Portrait of Jewish Americans*,¹ which pointed to growing and shrinking US Jewish sub-populations, declining affiliation in traditional institutions, new forms of Jewish engagement, an increase in both secular and Orthodox Jews, and a relationship between intermarriage and community growth.² A more recent Pew report, *Jewish Americans in 2020*,³ reinforced many of the findings of the original Pew study and contributed new insights into the state and character of the American Jewish community. With the Pew studies and the related national discourse as a backdrop, the *2022 San Diego Jewish Community Study* seeks to describe the current dynamics of its population.

The principal goal of this study is to provide valid data about the San Diego Jewish community that can be used by communal organizations and their leadership to design programs and policies that support and enhance Jewish life. Valid data are essential to effective decision making, allocation of resources, strategic priorities, community support, robust participation, and outreach.

Specifically, the study sought to:

- Estimate the number of Jewish adults and children in the community and the number of non-Jewish adults and children who are part of those households
- Describe the community in terms of age and gender, geographic distribution, economic well-being, and other sociodemographic characteristics
- Measure participation in and attitudes toward community institutions, programs, and services
- Understand the multifaceted cultural, communal, and religious expressions of Judaism that constitute Jewish engagement
- Understand the diversity of the community in terms of race and ethnicity, age, country of origin, religious identity, LGBTQ+, and more

¹ Pew Research Center, “A Portrait of Jewish Americans” (Washington DC: Pew Research Center, 2013).

² Leonard Saxe, Theodore Sasson, and Janet Krasner Aronson, “Pew’s Portrait of American Jewry: A Reassessment of the Assimilation Narrative,” in *American Jewish Year Book 2014*, ed. A. Dashefsky and I. Sheskin (New York, NY: Springer International Publishing, 2015), 78–81.

³ Pew Research Center, “Jewish Americans in 2020” (Washington DC: Pew Research Center, 2021).

- Gauge current and potential need for human services, particularly for community members who are struggling financially

The *2022 San Diego Jewish Community Study* provides a snapshot of today’s Jewish population in San Diego and considers trends and developments that diverge from those of the past.

Methodology overview

This study is based on an analysis of a rich set of data collected from 2,104 eligible households between June and September 2022. Survey respondents were randomly selected from all households in Greater San Diego.

The study design integrated households randomly selected from a combined set of Jewish organizational lists (the list sample) with a sample of all households in the study geographic area (an Address-Based Sample or ABS). In total, the study’s sample included 227,739 households. Households were contacted by mail, email, and telephone, and invited to complete the survey online or by telephone. Responses were statistically weighted to represent all Jewish households in San Diego. The response rates for the main sample were 4.2% unweighted and 3.9% weighted.

The survey of Jewish households conducted for this study was designed to represent the views of an entire community by interviewing a randomly selected sample of households from the community. When analyzing survey data, we are not only interested in the answers of the respondents, but also the larger subgroup or community that they represent. Each completed survey is assigned a numeric “weight” that indicates our estimate of how many people in the population of interest the respondent represents. The weighted respondent thus stands in for that segment of the population, and not only the household in which they reside.

Despite the careful methodological approaches employed in this study, bias in estimates is inevitable. Assigning weights is a way to minimize such bias. Estimates for the study are based on applying survey weights that account for the survey design, nonresponse, and adjustments based on external data on the Jewish and total San Diego populations, including data from the American Community Survey, American Jewish Population Project, and data on enrollment and membership in local organizations and programs.

Details of survey methods, weighting, and analysis are provided in the technical appendices, available from the study website.

How to read this report

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.

As you read this report, keep in mind the following:

- Note that the base category or denominator for each analysis may differ, e.g., Jewish adults, Jewish households, Jewish households with children. The relevant category is noted in the text, table, or figure. In most tables, it appears in the top left of the table in bold type.
- Unless otherwise specified, references to “all Jewish adults” or “all Jewish households” refer to Jewish adults and Jewish households in the San Diego area.
- Throughout this report, the term “couples” includes those who are legally married and those who are partnered and living together. Unless otherwise specified, “children” refers to minor children under age 18.
- 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 “—”.

How to read report tables

This report includes many tables. The table formatting provides important information regarding the interpretation of the data. We recommend familiarizing yourself with these formatting conventions before reading the report.

Numbers or estimates presented in a table are best understood as showing the percentage of the community, or a subset of the community, that has a particular characteristic or answered a survey question in a particular way. For the purpose of understanding tables, we define **group** as the overall population that we are reporting on in the table. Groups may be further divided as **subgroups** that are defined by demographic characteristics like age or region. We define **characteristic** as the attributes of the groups that we are attempting to understand through their responses to survey questions.

For example, we might ask: What percentage of Jewish households are members of a congregation? In this case, Jewish households constitute the group at issue, and congregation membership is the characteristic being explored.

Most tables in this report are “row tables.” In **row tables**, **groups/subgroups** are listed along the left side of the table and indicate which group the table row refers to. **Characteristics** are listed across the top and indicate which characteristic is being reported on in each column. These tables are read horizontally by row.

Less frequently we include “column tables” for reasons of space or content. These tables appear primarily in Chapter 1 and are generally describing the characteristics of the whole population or showing the size of subgroups. In **column tables**, **groups** appear along the top of the table and **characteristics** are listed on the left side of the table. These tables are read vertically by column. To underscore that this table should be read by column, we have inserted a down arrow (↓) under the column headers.

Examples:

Example Tables 1 and 2 illustrate the differences among subgroups with respect to particular characteristics. In Table 1, age is the subgroup, and congregation membership is the characteristic. We are interested in the share of Jewish individuals in each age group who are members of a

congregation. In Table 2, the group is San Diego Jewish individuals and the characteristic is age. We are interested in the age distribution of San Diego Jews.

Example Table 1 illustrates a “row table.” Groups (and subgroups) appear on the left side, and the characteristics being measured are along the top. In this case, the table is read horizontally by row and shows that of all Jewish households (the group), 14% are members of a congregation (the characteristic). Of households that are 18-34 years old (the subgroup), 10% are congregation members.

Example Table 2 illustrates a “column table.” In this case, the characteristics (age group) are listed on the left side, and the groups being measured (San Diego Jewish individuals) appear along the top. The down arrow under the group name reminds us that the table is read vertically by columns. This table tells us that of San Diego Jewish individuals (the group), 24% are between the ages of 18 to 34.

Example Table 1, row table

From report Table 4.1 Membership in Jewish congregations

	Congregation member (%)
All Jewish households	14
Age	
18-34	10
35-49	18
50-64	20
65-74	13
75 +	9

Example Table 2, column table

From report Table 1.5. Age of Jewish individuals in San Diego

Age	San Diego Jewish individuals (%)
0-17	12
18-34	24
35-49	17
50-64	19
65-74	17
75+	10
TOTAL	100

Row and column totals

When a table shows all possible values of a characteristic and those values are mutually exclusive, the characteristics will total 100. In that case, the table will show a TOTAL row or column of 100.

When the row total column does not appear, it usually indicates that not all possible values are shown. In some cases, it means that multiple options could be selected (usually as a “select all that apply” question), and the total could exceed 100.

Note that in all cases when the total of 100 is shown, the numbers may not add up exactly to 100 due to rounding.

Example:

Example Table 1 does not show the total column. The table shows the share of Jewish households who are congregation members but does not show the share that are **not** members.

Example Table 2 shows the age distribution of Jews in San Diego. Of San Diego Jewish individuals (the group), 12% are ages 0 to 17 (the characteristic is age). Because each individual belongs in only one age category, the total shown at the bottom of the column is 100.

Multiple part tables

Some tables include multiple characteristics. Presenting a set of characteristics in a single table saves space and facilitates comparisons. Vertical lines in these tables separate the different characteristics that are measured. When there is a double vertical line after the first column, it is an indicator that the first characteristic refers to an overall category, and the remaining characteristics are subsets.

Example Table 3 shows multiple ways of marking Shabbat by age. The first column of numbers, with the heading “Marked Shabbat in past year,” shows that 54% of all Jewish adults marked Shabbat in some way in the past year. The rest of the table shows specific ways of marking Shabbat: for example, 44% of Jewish adults lit candles. Among those who are ages 18 to 34, 65% marked Shabbat in some way, and 56% lit candles. Respondents could select each way that they marked Shabbat, so each column (along with the rows) can be treated as a separate table.

There are no totals shown here because each column shows the percentage who do each behavior but the percentage who do not do the behavior is not shown.

The gray shading indicates statistical significance, which is explained in the next section.

Example Table 3

From Table 4.9a and 4.9b Ways of marking Shabbat

	Marked Shabbat in past year (%)	Light candles (%)	Spend time with family/friends (%)	Have a special meal (%)	Attend religious services (%)
All Jewish adults	54	44	40	34	22
Age					
18-34	65	56	51	44	18
35-49	60	52	48	45	19
50-64	58	50	42	39	19
65-74	44	36	27	26	14
75 +	48	34	24	21	15

Interpretation of estimates and statistical significance

Because this report is based on survey data, no number in this report should be considered an exact measurement, but rather an estimate. The reported estimate for any value, known as a **“point estimate,”** is the most likely value we would expect to find if we had surveyed the entire population of San Diego Jewish households. It is likely that the true value is slightly lower or slightly higher.

In accordance with social science conventions, we provide estimates within a “95% confidence interval.” This means that we are 95% confident that, were we to obtain data from the entire population, the true number would lie within a relatively small range (hence a **“confidence interval”**), with this estimate at the center of the range. Although in some cases the range can be

much larger, as a rule of thumb, this range or confidence interval can be thought of as about five percentage points higher or lower than the reported number.

Survey questions with fewer respondents and/or more response options will have wider confidence intervals. The exact confidence interval is different for each estimate and is not shown in this report to preserve readability of the data. Confidence intervals for specific characteristics can be calculated through analysis of the dataset.

Statistical significance is a way to assess whether *differences* between estimates reflect true differences between different segments of the population or are just the results of random differences in the group that answered the survey. Statistical significance is not a property of individual estimates, but of the relationship between estimates, and is used only when comparing estimates to each other. When differences are statistically significant, there is at least a 95% probability that we would find differences between those population segments on the characteristic in question if we collected data from the entire population.

For this report, statistical significance is relevant when we compare estimates for a **characteristic** in one **subgroup** to estimates of the same characteristic in another **subgroup**.

In the **tables** in this report, we designate statistically significant differences by shading them **light gray**. When a set of numbers is in light gray, we can say that these groups (usually named in the leftmost side of each row) are significantly different from one another in terms of the characteristic measured in the table.

For the **figures** in this report, we designate statistically significant differences by adding an asterisk, *, at the end of the figure title. When the asterisk is present, we can say that the subgroups illustrated in the figure are statistically significantly different from one another in terms of the characteristic measured in the figure.

Statistical significance indicates that at least one pair of numbers is different from another, but does not indicate which pair or pairs are different; it is most likely to be the numbers with estimates that are farthest apart. Because this depends on the confidence intervals (as described above), knowing exactly which numbers are different requires additional analysis of the dataset.

As mentioned above, a useful rule of thumb is that most estimates have a confidence interval of at least ± 5 percentage points. That means that if estimates are less than 10 points different from one another, it is probable that the difference is not statistically significant. Larger differences are more likely to be statistically significant. Questions with fewer respondents or more response options will tend to have wider confidence intervals, meaning that differences between subgroups will have to be larger to be statistically significant.

Lack of statistical significance: In some cases, relatively large differences in estimates are not indicated as statistically significant. This might be the result of small sample sizes in the underlying data. It is possible that differences would be significant at the 90% or 85% level (i.e., we are 90% or 85% confident that the true value for the population falls within a particular range; lowering the specified degree of confidence makes the confidence intervals narrower). To fully understand particular estimates, we recommend further analysis of the dataset.

Example

In Example Table 4 below, we measure the share of households that are members of congregations. The first row indicates that 14% of all Jewish households are members. Because this is a single estimate and not a comparison, statistical significance is not relevant, and this row is never shaded gray.

The next section of the table tells us that there is a statistically significant difference related to congregational membership among the Jewish household engagement subgroups. (The Jewish engagement subgroups are explained in Chapter 2). Although the table does not tell us which specific differences are statistically significant, in this case, it is reasonable to assume that the differences in the estimates between the Immersed group (80%) and the Involved subgroup (35%) and the Involved subgroup and the Holiday subgroup (4%) are statistically significant. The difference between 80 and 35 is more than 10 percentage points, and the difference between 35 and 4 is more than 10 percentage points. It is unlikely that the Holiday subgroup (4%) is significantly higher than the other two subgroups, because the difference between 4 and 0 is smaller than 10 percentage points.

Although there are differences in point estimates for the age subgroups, this section is not shaded gray. That means that those difference are not significant at the 95% level. This is true even though there are differences that are more than 10 percentage points (i.e., 20 and 9).

Example Table 4

From report Table 4.1 Membership in Jewish congregations

	Congregation member (%)
All Jewish households	14
Jewish engagement	
Occasional	0
Cultural	< 1
Holiday	4
Involved	35
Immersed	80
Age	
18-34	10
35-49	18
50-64	20
65-74	13
75 +	9

In Example Table 3 above, the first column with numbers is not shaded. That means there is no statistically significant difference in the overall share of Jewish adults of different ages who mark Shabbat in any way. However, when it comes to the specific ways of marking Shabbat shown in the table, there are statistically significant differences among the age groups with respect to lighting candles, spending time with family and friends, and having a special meal; younger adults are significantly more likely to do all of these behaviors. There is no statistically significant difference by age in the share who attend religious services.

Reporting qualitative data

The survey included a number of questions that called for open-text responses. These were used to elicit more information about respondents' opinions and experiences than could be provided in a

check box format. All such responses were categorized, or “coded,” to identify topics and themes that were mentioned by multiple respondents. Because a consistent set of responses was not offered to each respondent, and because in some cases there were very few responses, it would be misleading to report the weighted proportion of responses to these questions. Instead, we may report the total number of responses that mentioned a particular code or theme. This number may appear in text or in parentheses after the response without a percent sign, or in tables labeled as “n” or number of responses. In many cases, sample quotes are also reported, with identifying information removed and edited for clarity.

To provide an additional layer of insight into the thoughts and feelings of members of the San Diego Jewish community, the survey concluded with two open-ended questions:

- Based on your own experience, what do you consider to be the strengths and gaps of the San Diego Jewish community? (1413 responses)
- We live in turbulent times. What, if anything, keeps you up at night? (1394 responses)

A sample of responses to these questions are incorporated throughout the report to illustrate selected themes. These quotes represent views of individual survey respondents. The full summary of responses is available at <https://www.brandeis.edu/cmjs/community-studies/san-diego-report.html>

Comparisons across surveys

Although comparisons across surveys are informative, because of methodological differences, they are less precise and reliable than assessments of the data from the present study alone. In several places throughout the report, data from Pew’s 2020 study, *Jewish Americans in 2020*,⁴ are used to show how the San Diego Jewish community is similar to or different from the United States Jewish community. All references to the US Jewish community are drawn from this report. Changes in the San Diego Jewish population are based on estimates in the *Demographic Study of the San Diego Jewish Population 2003* by Ukeles Associates.⁵

Limitations

Due to the methodology used to reach community members, some groups were likely to have been undercounted and/or underrepresented. In particular, residents of institutional settings such as hospitals, nursing homes, and dormitories on college campuses, as well as adults who were never in contact with a Jewish organization in San Diego, were less likely to have been identified and contacted to complete the survey. Some populations, such as financially struggling households, might be less likely to participate in the survey and therefore be undercounted. Although we cannot produce a precise count of these individuals, these undercounts were unlikely to have introduced

⁴ Pew Research Center, “Jewish Americans in 2020” (Washington DC: Pew Research Center, 2021).

⁵ Ukeles Associates, “Demographic Study of the San Diego Jewish Population 2003” (San Diego: United Jewish Federation of San Diego County, 2003), <https://www.jewishdatabank.org/databank/search-results?city=San+Diego&state=California&year=2003..>

significant bias into the reported estimates. Where appropriate, we noted the limitations of the methodology.

The present report has been designed to provide basic information about Jewish life across a wide range of topics and a variety of subgroups. It was not designed to provide detailed information about any single topic or subset of the community. Although detailed data cannot always be provided, the information that is included can serve as a springboard for more specific and targeted analyses as well as additional follow-up research. Note that more details about each item are available in the report appendices and through analysis of the dataset.

See the report appendices for methodological details and all study documentation. See the study comparison charts for more detailed data than is included in this report.

Report overview

This report presents key findings about the San Diego Jewish community. Beginning with a portrait of the community as a whole, the report continues with a more in-depth look at topics of interest to community members and leaders.

Chapter 1. Demographic Snapshot

The report begins with an overview of the demographic composition of the San Diego Jewish community today.

Chapter 2. Patterns of Jewish Engagement

This chapter describes the multifaceted ways in which the Jews of San Diego define and express their Jewish identity. A set of behavioral measures characterize Jewish engagement based on participation in Jewish life. A typology of Jewish engagement helps explain Jewish behaviors and attitudes. This chapter also reports on attitudes about the meaning and importance of Judaism to members of the San Diego Jewish community.

Chapter 3. Jewish Children

This chapter discusses Jewish children and families as well as participation in Jewish education.

Chapter 4. Congregations and Ritual Life

This chapter discusses membership in Jewish congregations and levels of participation in Jewish ritual life.

Chapter 5. Organizations and Philanthropy

This chapter discusses membership and involvement in organizational, social, and personal Jewish life as well as volunteering and philanthropy.

Chapter 6. Community, Connections, and Concerns

This chapter explores the connections of Jewish adults in San Diego to the Jewish community, barriers that limit their participation in the Jewish community, and the context of their concerns about antisemitism.

Chapter 7. Connections to Israel

This chapter describes the frequency and types of travel to Israel and other markers of Israel connection.

Chapter 8. Health and Social Service Needs

This chapter examines the health and social service concerns of San Diego's Jewish households.

Chapter 9. Financial Well-Being

This chapter examines the living conditions of San Diego Jewish households, in particular with regard to economic well-being and economic hardship.

Chapter 11. Future Directions

Key themes and questions that emerge from the study.

CHAPTER 1. DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT

Chapter highlights

Understanding the makeup, practices, and beliefs of the San Diego Jewish community requires knowledge of its size, geographic distribution, and basic socio-demographic features. The ways in which Jewish individuals and Jewish households—defined as any household that includes at least one Jewish adult—identify and engage with Judaism and the community vary significantly based on who they are, where they live, their household composition, their ages, and Jewish backgrounds. This chapter provides a demographic overview describing the size of the San Diego Jewish community and the basic characteristics of its members.

Population size and demographics

- There are 134,100 individuals living in 56,200 Jewish households in San Diego, of whom 100,700 are Jewish in some way.
- The rate of growth of the San Diego Jewish population since 2003 (13%) is similar to the growth of the overall county population (14%).
- The San Diego Jewish community is older than the general population of the area and of the US Jewish community. In the San Diego Jewish community, 12% of Jewish individuals are children. In contrast, 21% of all of San Diego County residents are children, and 24% of all US Jewish individuals are children. The smaller share of children corresponds to a larger share of older adults. In the San Diego Jewish community, 17% of Jewish individuals are ages 65 to 74. In contrast, 11% of all of San Diego County residents are ages 65 to 74, and 10% of all US Jewish individuals are ages 65 to 74.
- Nearly three quarters of Jewish adults are married or living with a partner. Of these adults, about half (49%) have a non-Jewish spouse or partner, higher than the share in the national Jewish population (42%).
- While 18% of Jewish individuals in San Diego identify as Hispanic or as any racial group other than white, 6% identify as a Person of Color. Although 5% of Jewish adults identify as a Person of Color, a larger share (13%) of Jewish children are identified as Persons of Color by their parents. This difference suggests that the Jewish community may become more racially and ethnically diverse in the future.

Geography and origins

- The largest share of Jewish individuals live in the Central region (41%), including almost half (48%) of Jewish children. Among Jewish individuals ages 18 to 34, 39% live in the South region.
- Seventeen percent of Jewish households in San Diego include an individual who was born outside the United States.
- Thirty percent of Jewish adults are relative newcomers to San Diego, with 16% having lived in the area for five to nine years, and 14% having moved to the area within the past four years. More than half of newcomers are younger than age 35.

- Nearly one quarter of Jewish households (23%) have members who regularly speak a language other than English at home, including 15% who have members who never speak English at home.

Jewish identification

- Among Jewish adults in San Diego, 3% identify as Orthodox, 15% as Conservative, 23% as Reform, and 9% as some other denomination. Fully half of Jewish adults (50%) do not identify with a specific denomination. In comparison, among all US Jews, 32% do not identify with a denomination.
- About three quarters of Jewish adults (76%) describe their Jewish heritage as Ashkenazi and 11% describe their heritage as Sephardi. Four percent of Jewish adults identify as Mizrahi or some other heritage. Nationally, 71% of Jewish adults are Ashkenazi, 6% Sephardi, and 3% Mizrahi or some other heritage.

Political orientation

- The majority of Jewish adults in San Diego describe their political orientation as liberal, either extremely liberal (17%), liberal (41%), or slightly liberal (10%). In total, about two thirds of San Diego's Jews are liberal, compared to half of US Jewry.

Jewish population estimate

There are approximately 56,200 Jewish households in the San Diego Jewish community (Table 1.1). These households include 134,100 individuals, of whom 100,700 are Jewish (see below for definitions).

The Jewish population comprises 3.2% of San Diego County, and Jewish households make up 4.8% of the households of San Diego County.⁶

⁶ Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.
<https://data.census.gov/table?q=san+diego+county+households+&tid=ACSDP1Y2021.DP02>

Table I.1. San Diego Jewish Community Population Estimates, 2022

Total people in Jewish households	134,100
Total Jewish households	56,200
Total Jews	100,700
Adults (ages 18+)	116,300
Jewish	88,800
Non-Jewish or unknown	27,500
Children (under age 18)	17,700
Jewish	12,000
Non-Jewish or unknown religion	5,700

Note: Numbers are rounded to nearest 100. Discrepancies in totals due to rounding.

People in Jewish households

Estimates of the size of the Jewish community rest on a set of fundamental questions about who is Jewish for the purposes of this study. Recent studies, such as the Pew Research Center’s 2013 and 2020 national studies of the US Jewish community, classify respondents according to their responses to a series of screening questions:

- What is your religion, if any?
- Do you consider yourself to be Jewish aside from religion?
- Were either of your parents Jewish?
- Were you raised Jewish?

Based on the answers to these questions, Jewish adults were categorized as “Jewish by religion” (JBR) if they responded to a question about religion by stating that they are solely Jewish, or “Jews of no religion” (JNR) if they identified as atheist or did not adhere to any religion but considered themselves Jewish by some other means. Jews by religion tend to be more engaged with Judaism than Jews of no religion, but many JBRs and JNRs look similar in terms of Jewish behaviors and attitudes. For the purposes of this study and to ensure that the San Diego Jewish community could be compared to the population nationwide, a variant of Pew’s scheme was employed, supplemented by several other measures of identity. Also included in the Jewish population are those adults who indicated they are both Jewish and another religion, such as Catholic or Buddhist; we refer to this category as “Jews of multiple religions” (JMR).

DEFINITIONS: WHO IS A JEW?

Definitions used in this report:



Jewish adults:

Identify as Jewish AND have Jewish background: at least one Jewish parent, raised Jewish, or converted to Judaism

- Jewish by religion (JBR) : Religion is Jewish only
- Jews of no religion (JNR) No religion but ethnically or culturally Jewish
- Jews of multiple religions (JMR):
 - Two religions – Jewish and another religion
 - A religion other than Judaism and ethnically or culturally Jewish



Non-Jewish adults

- Identifies as Jewish and has no Jewish background:
No Jewish parent, was not raised Jewish, and did not convert
- Does not identify as Jewish and has Jewish background
- Does not identify as Jewish and has no Jewish background



Children (birth to age 17):

Are classified based on whether their parents consider them to be Jewish

- Jewish: Parents consider children Jewish exclusively (either by religion, culturally or ethnically)
- Jewish and another religion: Parents consider children Jewish and another religion
- No religion: Parents consider children to have no religion
- Another religion: Parents consider children to be a religion other than Judaism



Jewish households: Includes at least one Jewish adult

Among Jewish adults in San Diego, 53,800 individuals can be classified as JBR (Table 1.2). In San Diego, 61% of Jewish adults are JBR, 26% are JNR, and 13% in JMR. In the overall US Jewish population reported by the Pew Research Center, which does not include JMRs, 73% of Jewish adults are JBR, and 27% are JNR. The comparable shares in San Diego are 70% JBR and 30% JNR.

Table 1.2. Jewish population of San Diego, detail (rounded to nearest 100)

Jewish adults	88,800
JBR adults	53,800
JNR adults	23,300
JMR adults	11,700
Non-Jewish adults in Jewish households	27,500
Jewish children in Jewish households	12,000
Exclusively Jewish	9,300
Jewish and something else	2,700
Non-Jewish children in Jewish households	5,700
No religion	3,300
Exclusively another religion	1,400
Undetermined or parents undecided	1,000

Note: Rounded to nearest 100. Discrepancies in totals due to rounding.

In 1979, approximately 30,000 Jewish individuals lived in San Diego, and by 2003, the population had increased to 89,000 (Table 1.3).⁷ Comparisons to 2003 should be interpreted with caution due to differences in methodology and definitions of Jewish and non-Jewish individuals and households. Because the population has spread geographically, the 2022 study also includes a larger geographic area than did past studies of the San Diego Jewish community.

Although the number of Jewish individuals increased by 13%, the number of households increased by 22%. This is likely due to an increase in adults living alone, without children, or in adults living with non-Jewish individuals.

Table 1.3. San Diego Jewish population change, 2003-2022⁸

	2003	2022	Percent change
Jewish individuals	89,000	100,700	13%
People in Jewish households	118,000	134,100	14%
Jewish households	46,000	56,200	22%

⁷ The 1979 estimates are not comparable to 2003 and 2022 due to methodological differences; Ukeles Associates, “Demographic Study of the San Diego Jewish population.”

⁸ Ukeles Associates, “Demographic Study of the San Diego Jewish Population.”

For purposes of comparison, Table 1.4 shows the population estimates for the entire San Diego County region over a similar time period. Growth in the number of individuals and households in the Jewish population is similar to the rate of growth in the overall county population.

Table 1.4. San Diego general population change, 2000-2021⁹

	2000	2021	Percent change
San Diego County individuals	2,813,900	3,194,800	14%
San Diego County households	995,500	1,162,900	17%

Geographic distribution

San Diego is a geographically diverse county. For purposes of this study, the Jewish community of San Diego can be divided by regions based on ZIP code (Figure 1.1, Table 1.5).

In this map, each dot represents about 100 Jewish households, and the dots are placed randomly within the ZIP code boundaries. ZIP codes that are shown with no dots were included in the study area but are estimated to have fewer than 100 Jewish households.



“The Jewish community exists in pockets and is not evenly spread throughout. This makes it difficult for our family to engage with local Jewish community. We very much want to be involved, but distance and traffic make it difficult.”

“The geography of San Diego causes communities to be separated. I grew up in a very connected community where the area was heavily Jewish, and it was always easy to run into people. I feel very much an ‘outsider’ here.”

⁹ Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

<https://data.census.gov/table?q=san+diego+county+households+&tid=ACSDP1Y2021.DP02>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 4.

<https://data.census.gov/table?q=san+diego+county+households+&y=2000&tid=DECENNIALDPSF42000.DP1>

Figure I.1. Geographic distribution of the San Diego Jewish community

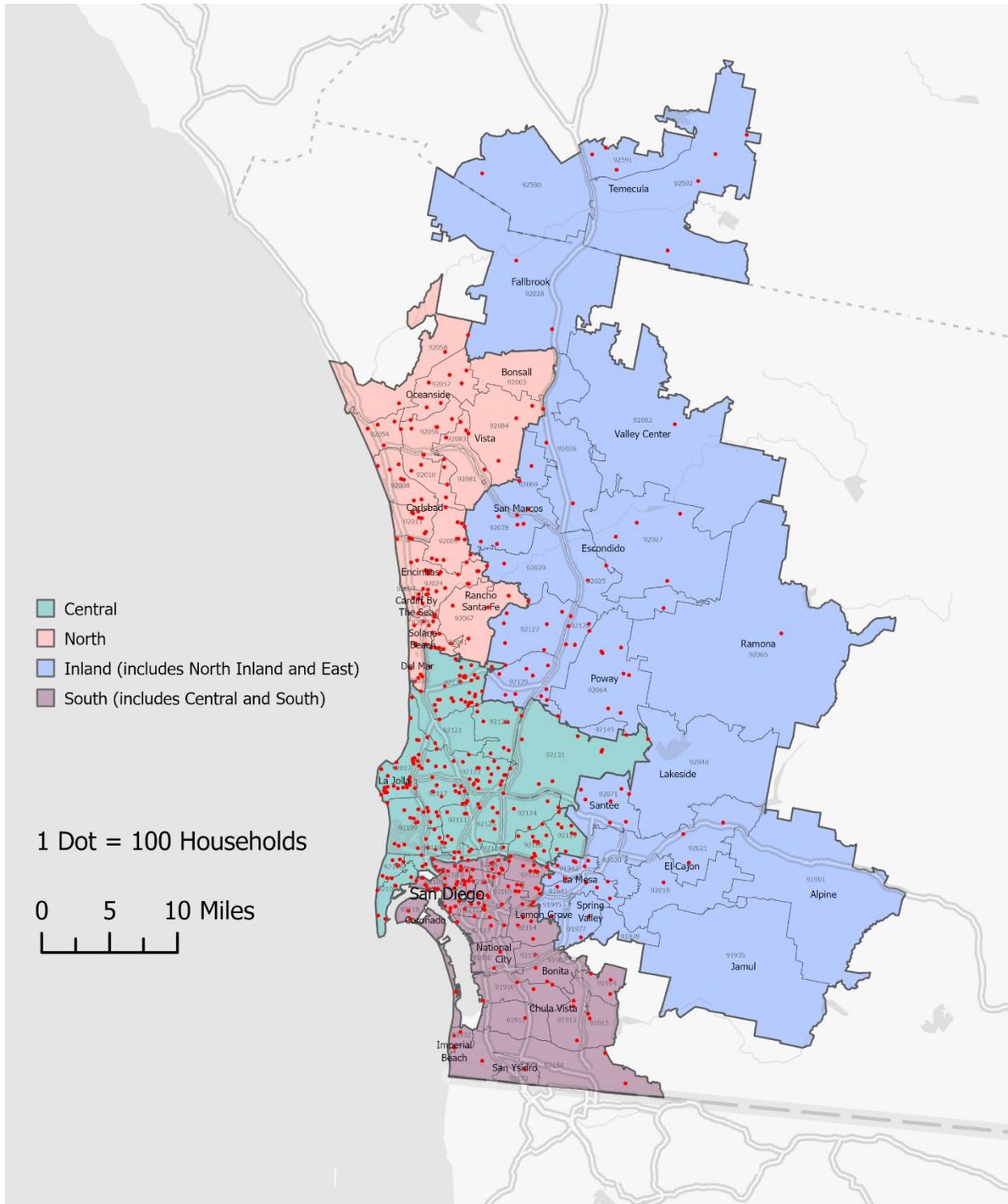


Table I.5. List of regions and ZIP codes

Region name	General description (refer to map for detailed boundaries)	ZIP codes
Central	South of HWY 56, North of HWY 8, West of HWY 15	La Jolla (92037, 92092), San Diego (92130, 92122, 92117, 92120, 92109, 92126, 92111, 92107, 92131, 92110, 92106, 92119, 92108, 92123, 92124, 92121, 92169)
North	South of Camp Pendleton, North of HWY 56, West of HWY 15	Bonsall (92003), Cardiff By The Sea (92007), Carlsbad (92009, 92008, 92011, 92010), Del Mar (92014), Encinitas (92024, 92023), Oceanside (92056, 92057, 92054, 92058), Rancho Santa Fe (92067), 92091, Solana Beach (92075), Vista (92084, 92083, 92081)
Inland (includes North Inland and East)	East of HWY 15 & HWY 125 to the end of the county line, from Jamul (southern-most community) through Temecula (northern-most community). Note that Temecula is not within the San Diego County limits. However, it was included in this study to better understand the current growth within this emerging Jewish community	
North Inland		Escondido (92027, 92025, 92026, 92029, 92046), Fallbrook (92028), Poway (92064), Ramona (92065), San Diego (92128, 92127, 92129, 92142, 92145, 92150), San Marcos (92078, 92069, 92096), Temecula (92592, 92591, 92590), Valley Center (92082)
East		Alpine (91903, 91901), El Cajon (92021, 92019, 92020), Jamul (91935), La Mesa (91942, 91941, 91943), Lakeside (92040), Lemon Grove (91945), San Diego (92160), Santee (92071), Spring Valley (91977, 91978)
South (includes Central and South)	South of HWY 8, North of the US/Mexico border, West of HWY 125	Bonita (91902), Chula Vista (91913, 91910, 91914, 91915, 91911), Coronado (92118), Imperial Beach (91932), National City (91950), San Diego (92103, 92101, 92104, 92115, 92116, 92102, 92105, 92114, 92139, 92113, 92154, 92166, 92168), San Ysidro (92173)

Note: For the purpose of this study, we used the same geographical regions created by the County of San Diego. Some regions needed to be combined because of the relative size of the Jewish population in those areas. The four regions in this study represent the six regions recognized by the county. We combined “North Inland” and “East” to form the “Inland” region. We also combined “Central” and “South” to form the “South” region.

The Jewish community is concentrated in the Central region, which contains 40% of Jewish households (Table 1.6). For purposes of analysis throughout the remainder of the report, the North Inland and East regions are combined in order to have sufficient responses for analysis.

Table I.6. Distribution of Jewish households and Jewish individuals across geographic regions

	Jewish households (%)	Jewish individuals (%)
	↓	↓
Central	40	41
North	21	20
Inland	18	22
North Inland	12	16
East	5	6
South	22	17
Total	100	100

Age distribution

The San Diego Jewish community is older than the general population of the area and of the US Jewish community (Table 1.7). In the San Diego Jewish community, 12% of Jewish individuals are children under age 18. In contrast, among San Diego County residents, 21% are children.¹⁰ Among all US Jews, 24% are children under age 18.

Although the San Diego Jewish community has a smaller share of children relative to the general population, the San Diego Jewish community has a larger share of older adults: 17% of Jewish individuals are ages 65 to 74. In contrast, 13% of all US Jewish individuals are ages 65 to 74, and 9% of all of San Diego County residents are ages 65 to 74.

The mean age of Jewish adults in San Diego is 51, and the median age is 52; in comparison, the national mean and median age of Jewish adults is 49. Including children in the analysis lowers the mean and median ages. The mean age of all Jewish individuals in San Diego is 46, and the median age is 47.

Table 1.7. Age of Jewish individuals in San Diego, all US Jews, and San Diego residents

Age group	San Diego Jewish individuals (%)	San Diego County residents (%)	US Jews (%)
0-17	12	21	24
18-34	24	26	21
35-49	17	20	17
50-64	19	18	15
65-74	17	9	13
75+	10	6	10
Total	100	100	100

The largest share of Jewish individuals live in Central (41%) including almost half (48%) of Jewish children (Table 1.8). Among Jewish individuals ages 18 to 34, 39% live in the South region.

Table 1.8. Age distribution of Jewish individuals by geographic regions

	All Jewish individuals (%)	Ages 0-17 (%)	Ages 18-34 (%)	Ages 35-49 (%)	Ages 50-64 (%)	Ages 65-74 (%)	Ages 75+ (%)
	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Central	41	48	28	45	48	34	39
North	20	15	14	15	21	32	21
Inland	22	24	20	23	19	13	21
South	17	13	39	16	12	21	18
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Gender identity and sexual orientation

Overall, the Jewish population of San Diego is 48% male, 51% female, and 1% non-binary/non-conforming or transgender. Sixteen percent of Jewish households include an individual, Jewish or not, who identifies as LGBTQ+, and 16% of adults in Jewish households identify as LGBTQ+. Among all US Jews, 4% identify as gay or lesbian, and an additional 5% say they are bisexual.

¹⁰ Source: US Census Bureau, “2021 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates,” 2021, <https://data.census.gov/table?q=san+diego+county+age&tid=ACSST1Y2021.S0101>

Of San Diego Jewish adults who are married or partnered, 6% are in a same-sex/queer relationship.¹¹ Among all US Jews who are married or partnered, 3% have a partner who is the same sex.

Marital status and household composition

Among Jewish **adults** in San Diego, 61% are married, and 10% have a partner with whom they live. The remaining Jewish adults are single/never married (17%), divorced (8%), separated (1%), or widowed (3%). Among all US Jews, 59% are married, and 7% live with a partner.

Two thirds of Jewish **households** (67%) include a couple, either married or partnered.

NOTE: Throughout this report, “couples” refers to spouses, significant others, partners, or fiancé/e who reside in the same household. A total of 72% of Jewish **adults** are coupled (married or partnered, after rounding the total).

Households can be characterized by the age of their members and the relationships among them. Twenty-one percent of San Diego Jewish households include a minor child (Figure 1.2). This



“There is more to do to make all Jewish spaces and events welcoming to the diverse identities of our Jewish community whether considering race, LGBTQ, ability...Lack of inclusivity also gives power to gatekeepers who try to say who is allowed to call themselves a Jew.”

category includes **all** households with minor children, regardless of the number and relationships of other adults in the household. Chapter 3 of this report provides additional details about households with children.

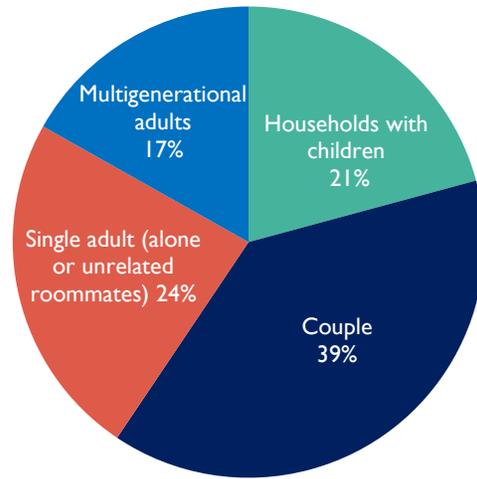
Thirty-nine percent of Jewish households include only a couple, either married or partnered. Twenty-four percent of Jewish households include people living alone or only with unrelated roommates.

Jewish households with multiple generations, defined as parents and adult children of any age living together, constitute 17% of households. This category can include older adults, typically in their 70s or 80s, who live with their adult children, or younger adults, typically in their 20s, 30s, or 40s, who live in their parents’ households.

The mean Jewish household size is 2.4 individuals. Among Jewish households with children, the mean number of children ages 0-17 is 1.5.

¹¹ For purposes of this study, this is defined as both partners having the same gender or either partner describing themselves as non-binary/non-conforming or transgender.

Figure 1.2. Household composition



In addition to minor and adult children living with their parents, 7% of Jewish households have children of any age living in other San Diego households, 18% have children living outside San Diego, and 13% have children living both inside and outside of San Diego.

Relationship status

Among Jewish adults in San Diego, 72% are married or partnered (Table 1.9). Half (51%) of those individuals have a non-Jewish partner or spouse. Among all US Jews who are legally married, 42% have a non-Jewish spouse. Although older adults are more likely to have a partner than younger adults, there are no significant age differences in the share who have a non-Jewish partner (not shown in table).

Table 1.9. Relationship status

	All Jewish adults (%)	All households (%)
Married/partnered	72	67
Religious composition among couples		
Jewish + Jewish	49	33
Jewish + non-Jewish	51	67
Total	100	100

Among Jewish adults in San Diego, 63% were raised by two Jewish parents, 29% were raised by one Jewish parent, and 8% had no Jewish parents and converted to Judaism. Among all US Jews, 24% had one Jewish parent, and 69% had two Jewish parents.

Jewish denomination and Jewish ethnicity

Denominational affiliation has historically been one of the commonly used markers of Jewish identity and practice. In San Diego, half of Jewish adults do not identify with a particular

denomination (Table 1.10). The share of Jewish adults with no particular denomination in the San Diego Jewish community is higher than the national share of 32%. Of Jewish adults who *do* identify with a denomination, the largest group identifies as Reform, followed by Conservative. San Diego has a smaller percentage of Orthodox Jews than does the US Jewish population (3% of local Jewish adults, compared to 9% nationally).

Table I.10. Denomination of Jewish adults in San Diego and the United States

	San Diego 2022 (%)	US Jews 2020 (%)
	↓	↓
Orthodox	3	9
Conservative	15	17
Reform	23	37
Other denomination	9	4
Reconstructionist	4	n/a
Humanist	3	n/a
Renewal	1	n/a
Other	1	n/a
No denomination	50	32
Total	100	100

With regards to Jewish ethnic heritage, 76% of Jewish adults in San Diego identify as Ashkenazi, 11% of Jewish adults identify as Sephardi, and 4% identify as Mizrachi (Table 1.11). Less than 1% identifies with some other ancestry. The remaining 19% identify with no particular Jewish ethnicity (10%) or say they do not know their Jewish ethnicity (9%). Nationally, 71% of Jewish adults identify as Ashkenazi, 6% as Sephardi, and 3% Mizrachi or some other heritage (not shown in table).¹²

Table I.11. Jewish ethnicity

	Jewish adults (%)	Jewish households that include someone with this ethnicity (%)
	↓	↓
Ashkenazi	76	76
Sephardi	11	10
Mizrachi	4	3
Other	< 1	< 1
None	10	12
Don't know	9	12

Race and ethnic identity

More than four-in-five (82%) Jewish individuals in San Diego identify solely as white and non-Hispanic (Table 1.12). The remaining Jewish individuals identify either with a racial identity other than white or as Hispanic. Nationally, 92% of Jewish adults identify solely as white and non-Hispanic.

Only a subset of non-white or Hispanic Jews, however, identify as a Person of Color. Across all Jewish individuals in San Diego, 6% of all Jewish individuals identify as a Person of Color. When considering all individuals in Jewish households, not limited to Jewish individuals, a larger share

¹² Analysis provided by Pew Research Center but not included in the study report.

(9%) identify as a Person of Color. Notably, the proportion of Jewish *children* whose parents consider them to be a Person of Color (13%) is considerably higher than that among Jewish *adults* (5%), suggesting that the Jewish community may become more racially and ethnically diverse in the future.

Table I.12. Race and ethnicity

	Jewish individuals (%)	Jewish adults (%)	Jewish children (%)	All individuals in Jewish households (%)
	↓	↓	↓	↓
Self-identifying Person of Color	6	5	13	9
Combined race and ethnicity				
Single-race, non-Hispanic white	82	83	70	79
Single-race, Hispanic white	6	6	8	6
Any non-white racial identity, including multiracial, non-Hispanic	8	7	15	11
Any non-white racial identity, including multiracial, Hispanic	2	2	6	4
Total	100	100	100	100

National origin and spoken languages

About four-in-five Jewish *adults* were born in the United States, including 16% of Jewish adults who were born in San Diego, 22% who were born elsewhere in California, and 44% who were born elsewhere in the United States. The remaining 18% of Jewish adults were born in another country, including Russia/Former Soviet Union, Mexico, South Africa, and Israel. Nationally, 10% of Jewish adults were born outside the United States.

In all, 17% of Jewish *households* include an individual, Jewish or non-Jewish, who was born outside of the United States (Table 1.13). However, a much larger share (71%) of households include an adult with at least one parent or grandparent who was born in another country.

Table I.13. Birthplace of Jewish households

	Households with someone born in... (%)	Household with adult whose parent/grandparent born in... (%)
	↓	↓
Anywhere outside US	17	71
Europe	6	27
Russia or Former Soviet Union	4	28
Mexico	4	3
Israel	3	3
Latin America	3	1
Canada	3	1
South Africa	2	< 1
Middle East (aside from Israel)	1	4
Another country	5	3

Note: Total exceeds 100% to account for multiple members of households.

In approximately three quarters (77%) of Jewish households, the only language spoken on a regular basis at home is English (Table 1.14). In 8% of Jewish households, English and another language are spoken regularly, and in 15% of households a language other than English is spoken exclusively. The

most commonly spoken language aside from English in San Diego Jewish households is Spanish; 11% of all Jewish households speak Spanish regularly.

Table I.14. Languages spoken regularly at home

All Jewish households	
	(%)
	↓
English only	77
English and another language	8
Another language only	15
TOTAL	100
Spanish	11
Hebrew	3
Russian	3
Other language	9

Among the 23% of Jewish households in which a non-English language is spoken, 70% prefer that Jewish programs and activities be conducted in English, 1% in their first language, 13% in English on occasion and first language on occasion, and 16% have no preference (not shown in table).

Five percent of Jewish adults in San Diego grew up in a Russian-speaking home, and 8% of Jewish households include someone who was raised in a Russian-speaking home (Table 1.15). (Note that only 3% of households currently speak Russian, see Table 1.14 above). Four percent of Jewish adults are Israeli citizens, and 5% of Jewish households include an Israeli citizen. It is not known if these Israeli citizens also hold US citizenship.

Table I.15. National origins

	Jewish adults (%)	Jewish households (%)
	↓	↓
Grew up in Russian-speaking home	5	8
Israeli citizens	4	5

Holocaust survivors and their descendants

Among Jewish adults ages 75 and older, 9% are Holocaust survivors or World War II refugees. Among Jewish households that include someone age 75 and older, 7% are Holocaust survivors or World War II refugees.

Among all Jewish adults, 27% are descendants of a Holocaust victim, survivor, or World War II refugee. Among all Jewish households, 34% include a descendent of a Holocaust victim, survivor, or World War II refugee.

Length of residence

Many Jewish adults in San Diego have longstanding ties to the area (Table 1.16). Most have lived in the area for more than a decade, including 17% who have lived in the area for 40 or more years. Thirty percent of Jewish adults are relative newcomers to San Diego, with 16% having lived in the area for five to nine years, and 14% having moved to the area within the past four years.

Table I.16. Length of residence

All Jewish adults (%)	
	↓
0-4 years	14
5-9 years	16
10-19 years	19
20-29 years	20
30-39 years	14
40+ years	17
Total	100

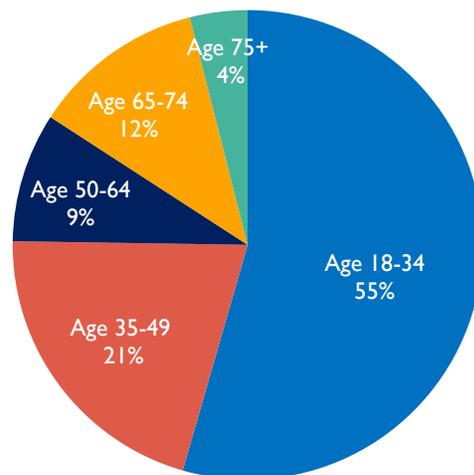
Age and length of residence are closely intertwined (Table 1.17). About three-in-five Jewish adults ages 18-34 (61%) have lived in San Diego for fewer than 10 years. However, 18% of adults ages 65-74 and 9% of adults ages 75 and older are also relative newcomers, having moved to the area within the previous decade.

Table I.17. Age of Jewish adults by length of residence

	0-9 years (%)	10-19 years (%)	20+ years (%)	Total (%)
18-34	61	16	23	100
35-49	36	38	25	100
50-64	13	18	69	100
65-74	18	10	71	100
75+	9	14	77	100

Figure 1.3 shows the age breakdown of San Diego Jewish residents who have lived in the area for fewer than 10 years. More than half of newcomers are below age 35.

Figure 1.3. Ages of Jewish newcomers to San Diego
(% of Jewish adults who have lived in the area for fewer than 10 years)



Half of the Jewish adults living in the South region have lived in San Diego for less than one decade (Table 1.18). In contrast, 53-58% of Jewish adults living in the other regions of San Diego have lived in the area for 20 or more years.

Table 1.18. Geography of Jewish adults by length of residence

	0-9 years (%)	10-19 years (%)	20+ years (%)	Total (%)
Central	26	22	53	100
North	27	15	58	100
Inland	20	22	58	100
South	50	16	33	100

Of the Jewish adults who moved to San Diego within the previous decade, one third moved from somewhere else in California (Table 1.19). Nearly all remaining Jewish adults moved to San Diego



“It took me time when I moved here to find the community, but once you do get involved it’s very warm and inviting.”

from somewhere else in the United States. Just 6% moved to San Diego from another country.

Table 1.19. Previous residence of newcomers (Lived in SD less than 10 years)

	Jewish adults in San Diego for 0-9 years (%)
	↓
Elsewhere in California	33
In the Northeastern US	14
In the Midwest	9
In the Western US	8
Elsewhere in the United States	30
Israel	2
Mexico	1
Other country	3
Total	100

Political orientation

The majority of Jewish adults in San Diego described their political orientation as liberal, either extremely liberal (17%), liberal (41%), or slightly liberal (10%; Figure 1.4). Another 16% identified as moderate and a similar share, 15%, as conservative (including slightly and extremely conservative). In total, about two thirds of San Diego’s Jews are liberal, compared to half of US Jewry (Figure 1.5).

Figure I.4. Political orientation of San Diego Jewish adults

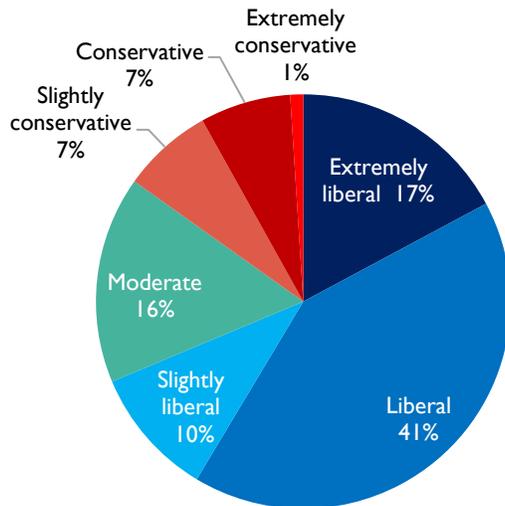
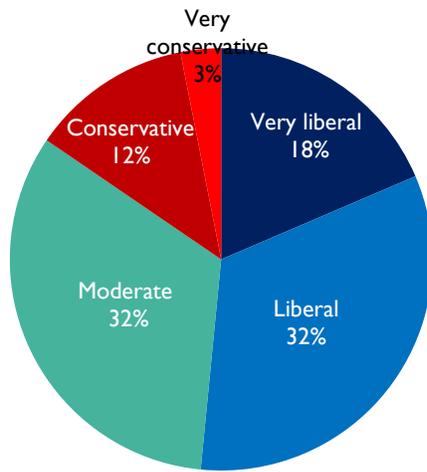


Figure I.5. Political orientation of all US Jewish adults



Almost four-in-five Jewish adults under age 35 are liberal, including 19% extremely liberal, 54% liberal, and 9% slightly liberal (Table 1.20). Although a majority of all age groups are liberal, older adults include a slightly larger share of political conservatives. The South region includes the largest share of Jewish adults who are extremely liberal (31%), and the Inland region includes the largest share who are conservative or extremely conservative (12%) (Table 1.21).

Table I.20. Age by political orientation

	Extremely liberal (%)	Liberal (%)	Slightly liberal (%)	Moderate (%)	Slightly conservative (%)	Conservative/ extremely conservative (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish adults	17	41	10	16	7	8	100
Ages							
18-34	19	54	9	8	10	< 1	100
35-49	16	36	11	20	8	9	100
50-64	17	36	11	19	5	12	100
65-74	21	39	9	17	4	10	100
75 +	15	42	10	15	4	13	100

Table I.21. Region by political orientation

	Extremely liberal (%)	Liberal (%)	Slightly liberal (%)	Moderate (%)	Slightly conservative (%)	Conservative/ extremely conservative (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish adults	17	41	10	16	7	8	100
Region							
Central	14	42	10	18	7	9	100
North	18	48	10	13	4	7	100
Inland	10	37	17	17	6	12	100
South	31	42	4	10	8	5	100

CHAPTER 2. PATTERNS OF JEWISH ENGAGEMENT

Chapter highlights

Members of the San Diego Jewish community exhibit a variety of types of Jewish identification and means of engagement in Jewish life. Examining the ways that Jewish adults not only view, but also enact their Jewish identities, is a valuable lens for identifying ways in which Jewish life in the region can be enhanced. This chapter introduces and discusses an “Index of Jewish Engagement,” created specifically for the San Diego Jewish community.

- The Index of Jewish Engagement focuses on Jewish behaviors—the ways in which individuals occupy and involve themselves in Jewish life in San Diego.
- The Index can be used to identify opportunities to improve communal planning based on people’s different needs and interests.
- Five distinct patterns of behavior emerge from the data.
- Engagement groups include people across demographic characteristics and Jewish backgrounds.

Index of Jewish Engagement

Jewish engagement is a complex, multidimensional expression of Jewish identity, in which attitudes and beliefs drive behaviors that, in turn, reinforce and influence attitudes and beliefs. Analyses of Jewish engagement have typically used markers of affiliation, such as congregation membership, denominational affiliation, and financial support for Jewish communal organizations, as indicators of Jewish strength and vitality. These behaviors continue to be measures of Jewish engagement but are not the primary indicators of involvement with Jewish life.

Jewish engagement can include ritual activities but may also expressed through involvement with Jewish cultural and non-religious activities. Members of the community may participate in programs through traditional institutions, but may also look to non-traditional and emerging organizations for opportunities. For this study we consider an expansive set of ritual, communal, and individual behaviors, as well as overall patterns of Jewish behaviors. The goal is to identify clusters of activities that engage particular groups of San Diego Jewry. Which Jewish adults tend to be engaged in ritual activities and which through cultural activities? Who prefers to connect with other Jews through organizations and institutions, and who practices their Jewish life on their own, at home, or primarily with friends and family?

As a tool to understand Jewish engagement in San Diego, this study identifies five patterns of Jewish involvement. These categories were developed using a statistical analysis (latent class analysis or LCA) of survey responses to questions about 20 different Jewish behaviors. The names of the five

groups reflect the primary ways in which each group engages in Jewish life.¹³ This typology is specific to the San Diego Jewish community and is used throughout this report to illustrate the diversity of expressions of Jewish life. The names of the groups are intended to highlight the behaviors that distinguish each group from the others.

The Index of Jewish Engagement is also helpful in identifying engagement opportunities for groups with different needs and interests. The Index focuses on behaviors—the ways in which individuals spend their time and involve themselves in Jewish life. Such behaviors are concrete and measurable expressions of Jewish identity. In many cases, behaviors correlate with an individual’s demographic characteristics, backgrounds, and attitudes, but in other cases behaviors cut across these features. Jewish adults’ decisions to take part in activities may reflect the value and meaning they find in these activities, the priority they place on them, the level of skills and resources that enable them to participate, and the opportunities available and known to them.

The set of Jewish behaviors used to develop this typology is inclusive of the variety of ways—public and private—that contemporary Jews engage with Jewish life. Some of the activities are located primarily within institutions (e.g., synagogue membership), while others are home based (e.g., Passover seders). These behaviors are classified into four dimensions of Jewish life:

- **Holiday celebrations**, such as attending or hosting a Passover seder, lighting Hanukkah candles, and observing the Yom Kippur fast for all or some of the day
- **Ritual behaviors**: marking Shabbat in any way, attending Jewish services, attending High Holiday services, and keeping kosher at home
- **Organizational behaviors**: Belonging to a synagogue, belonging to other Jewish organizations, belonging to informal Jewish groups, participating in Jewish programs, volunteering for Jewish organizations, and donating to Jewish organizations
- **Cultural activities**: Studying Jewish texts, eating Jewish foods, reading Jewish publications, discussing Jewish topics, engaging with Jewish cultural activities like books, films, and music, engaging with Jewish-focused social media, and following news about Israel

We employed LCA to cluster similar patterns of behavior based on respondents’ answers to survey questions. LCA identifies groups of behaviors that “cluster” together by analyzing patterns of responses. The result of the LCA analysis was the identification of five unique patterns of Jewish engagement. Each Jewish adult in the community was classified into one of the five engagement groups according to the pattern that most closely matched the individual’s participation in different types of Jewish behaviors.

How we developed these categories

Survey respondents answered questions about their Jewish behaviors; based on their responses, we identified the primary patterns of behavior that are presented here. Survey respondents were **not** asked to assign themselves to the groups.

The LCA analysis presented here is unique to the San Diego Jewish community. Both the set of classifications and their names are derived directly from data collected for this study.

¹³ See also Janet Krasner Aronson et al., “A New Approach to Understanding Contemporary Jewish Engagement,” *Contemporary Jewry* 39 (2018): 91–113.

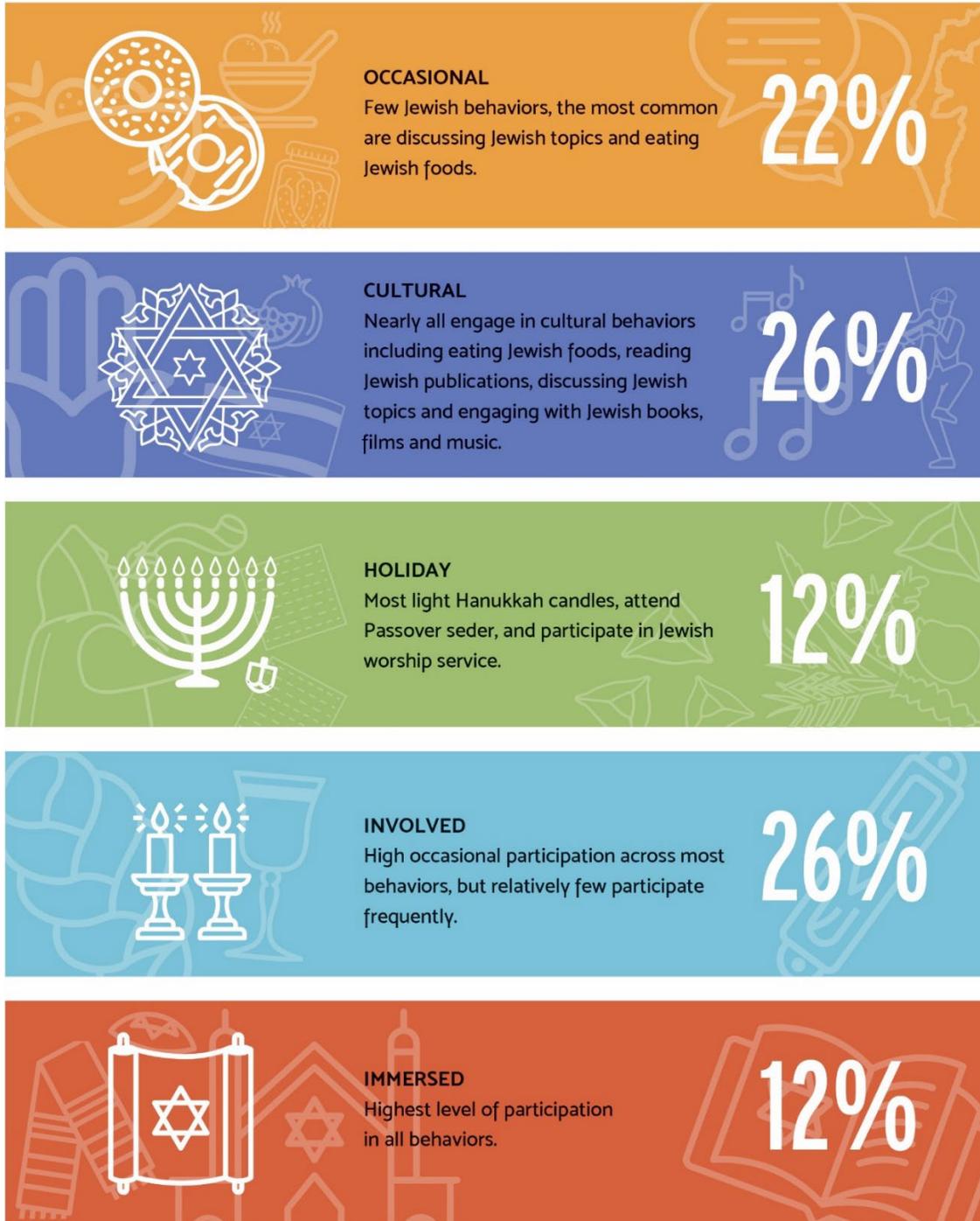
Patterns of Jewish engagement

The patterns of Jewish engagement found among Jewish adults in San Diego are summarized in Figure 2.1 and described below. For each pattern, Table 2.1 illustrates the level of participation in each of the behaviors that was used to construct the Index of Jewish Engagement. As shown in Figure 2.1, the Cultural and Involved groups each include 26% of Jewish adults, the Occasional group includes 22% of Jewish adults, and the Holiday and Immersed groups each include 12% of San Diego Jewish adults.

For the most part, these patterns of Jewish engagement describe a low-to-high continuum, whereby the Occasional group participates in few Jewish activities and the Immersed group engages in a wide range of Jewish activities. As shown later in this chapter, these differences in behavior correspond to different views about what being Jewish means. Two of the groups, however, the Cultural and Holiday, share similar attitudes about the role of being Jewish in their lives, despite having different ways of enacting their Judaism.

Figure 2.1. Index of Jewish engagement

INDEX OF JEWISH ENGAGEMENT



Jewish behaviors and Jewish engagement

The five patterns differ in degree and types of engagement with a broad set of Jewish behaviors. As shown in Table 2.1, the Jewish behaviors across the five engagement patterns vary widely, but all patterns include at least some behaviors that represent a connection to Jewish life. The table shows the proportion of people in each engagement group that participates in the listed behavior. In this table, the darker the box, the higher the proportion of people that engage in that behavior.

The 22% of Jewish adults who fall into the **“Occasional”** group tend to engage in very few Jewish behaviors, and the most common behaviors among this group include discussing Jewish topics and eating Jewish foods.

For the one quarter of Jewish adults (26%) who are in the **“Cultural”** group, nearly all engage in what has been classified as cultural behaviors, including eating Jewish foods (98%), reading Jewish publications (98%), discussing Jewish topics (98%), and engaging with Jewish-focused culture (100%). While some of these activities may be done in the context of Jewish organizations, most can be done independently, individually, or with friends and family. Few in this group participate in ritual activities such as attending services, and few belong to Jewish organizations.

“I wish there were more communities for those similar to me—young adults who are culturally Jewish but not religiously involved.”

Most of the members of the **“Holiday”** group (12%) participate in holiday and many ritual behaviors. Their primary means of participating in Jewish life include lighting Hanukkah candles (92%) and attending a Passover seder (75%). Over half (58%) marked Shabbat in some way during the previous year, and 83% attended services at least once. In comparison to the Cultural group, those in the Holiday group are less likely to read Jewish publications, engage with Jewish cultural activities, and follow news about Israel.

The Jewish adults in the **“Involved”** group (26%) have high rates of participation across most of the behaviors, but relatively few participate frequently in these behaviors. Most (90%) mark Shabbat, but just one quarter do so always or almost always. Nearly all Jewish adults (98%) in this group attended services at least once in the previous year, but just 8% did so at least monthly. Almost three quarters (71%) participated at least once in a Jewish program during the previous year, but 11% did so 10 or more times.

The remaining 12% of Jewish adults who are in the **“Immersed”** group have the highest level of participation in every behavior measured in the Index of Jewish Engagement, although they do not all engage in every item measured in this Index. Adults in the Immersed group have high participation in home-based holidays, ritual, organizational, and cultural activities.

Table 2.1. Jewish behaviors and engagement (% of Jewish adults in each engagement group who do each listed behavior)

	Occasional ↓	Cultural ↓	Holiday ↓	Involved ↓	Immersed ↓
Holiday behaviors					
Attended seder, 2022	10	45	75	87	99
Lit Hanukkah candles, 2021	38	73	92	99	99
Fasted on Yom Kippur, 2021	5	23	32	64	85
Ritual behaviors					
Marked Shabbat in past year, ever	5	37	58	90	100
Almost/always	0	6	6	25	81
Attended services in past year, ever	10	13	83	98	100
Monthly or more	2	0	1	8	71
Attended High Holiday services, 2021	0	0	34	75	98
Keep kosher at home	0	2	8	9	40
Organization behaviors					
Congregation member	0	0	6	39	80
Organization member	0	14	3	21	45
Informal group member	0	7	6	20	52
Participated in program, ever	11	31	41	71	91
10 or more times	0	4	4	11	50
Volunteered for Jewish organization	10	19	8	31	65
Donated to Jewish organization	16	62	40	83	97
Cultural behaviors					
Studied Jewish texts (ever)	10	43	0	64	91
Ate Jewish foods (ever)	65	98	74	95	100
Read Jewish publications (ever)	25	98	45	90	100
Discussed Jewish topics (ever)	83	98	97	99	100
Engaged with Jewish cultural activities (ever)	62	100	65	95	100
Engaged with Jewish social media (ever)	12	58	17	65	79
Followed news about Israel (somewhat/very closely)	28	72	43	68	75

Legend 0-19% 20-39% 40-59% 60-79% 80-100%

Demographics and Jewish engagement

It may be surprising that there are few significant differences in Jewish engagement for those with different demographic characteristics, such as age and region. Although there are differences in some of the specific behaviors that go into creating the Index, when looking at the overall patterns, we see few significant variations. There are no significant differences in overall Jewish engagement based on age, marital status, having children, or region of residence. There are, however some demographic differences in individual behaviors that go into the Index; these are discussed in other chapters of this report.

Jewish background and Jewish engagement

The best-known system for categorizing Jewish identity is denominational affiliation. In the past, Jewish denominational categories closely correlated with measures of Jewish engagement, including behavior and attitudes. However, because these labels are self-assigned, their meaning varies from one individual to another. In addition, an increasing number of Jews do not affiliate with any particular denomination—including, as noted in Chapter 2, half of Jewish adults in San Diego. Thus, denominational labels are limited in their ability to convey behavior and attitudes.

Tables 2.2 and 2.3 describe the denominational identity and Jewish backgrounds of those in each Jewish engagement category. Jewish denomination is related to Jewish engagement but is not identical (Table 2.2). Adults of all denominations are represented in each of the engagement groups. Three quarters of those in the Occasional group do not have a specific denomination, compared to 18% in the Immersed group. Around one third of Jewish adults in the Immersed group are Conservative (35%), and one quarter are Reform (24%).

Table 2.2. Jewish engagement by denomination

	Orthodox	Conservative	Reform	Other denom.	No denomination	Total
All Jewish adults	3	15	23	9	50	100
Jewish engagement						
Occasional	1	3	12	7	77	100
Cultural	1	9	14	3	73	100
Holiday	2	18	43	3	35	100
Involved	2	22	36	17	22	100
Immersed	17	35	24	7	18	100

Having two Jewish parents is generally associated with higher levels of Jewish engagement in adulthood. This is true in San Diego as well: 81% of those in the Immersed group had two Jewish parents growing up compared to between 51% and 70% of members of the other engagement groups (Table 2.3).

Table 2.3. Jewish engagement by Jewish parents

	No Jewish parents (converted to Judaism)	1 Jewish parent	2 Jewish parents	Total
All Jewish adults	8	29	63	100
Jewish engagement				
Occasional	5	44	51	100
Cultural	12	24	64	100
Holiday	4	31	65	100
Involved	9	22	70	100
Immersed	8	12	81	100

Patterns of Jewish engagement differ between couples with two Jewish partners and those with a non-Jewish partner (Table 2.4). For example, within the Occasional group, 19% of partnered Jewish adults have a Jewish partner, and 81% have a non-Jewish partner. In the Immersed group, in contrast, 85% of coupled adults have a Jewish partner, and 15% have a non-Jewish partner.

Table 2.4. Jewish engagement by relationship status

	Have a partner	Of partnered Jewish adults...		
		Jewish partner	Non-Jewish partner	Total
Jewish adults	72	49	51	100
Jewish engagement				
Occasional	66	19	81	100
Cultural	62	46	54	100
Holiday	73	56	44	100
Involved	70	54	46	100
Immersed	75	85	15	100

Political orientation and Jewish engagement

There is a significant relationship between the way that Jewish adults engage in Jewish life and their political orientation (Table 2.5). Most notably, the Immersed group includes the largest share who are conservative and extremely conservative (16%) and the smallest share who are extremely liberal (7%).

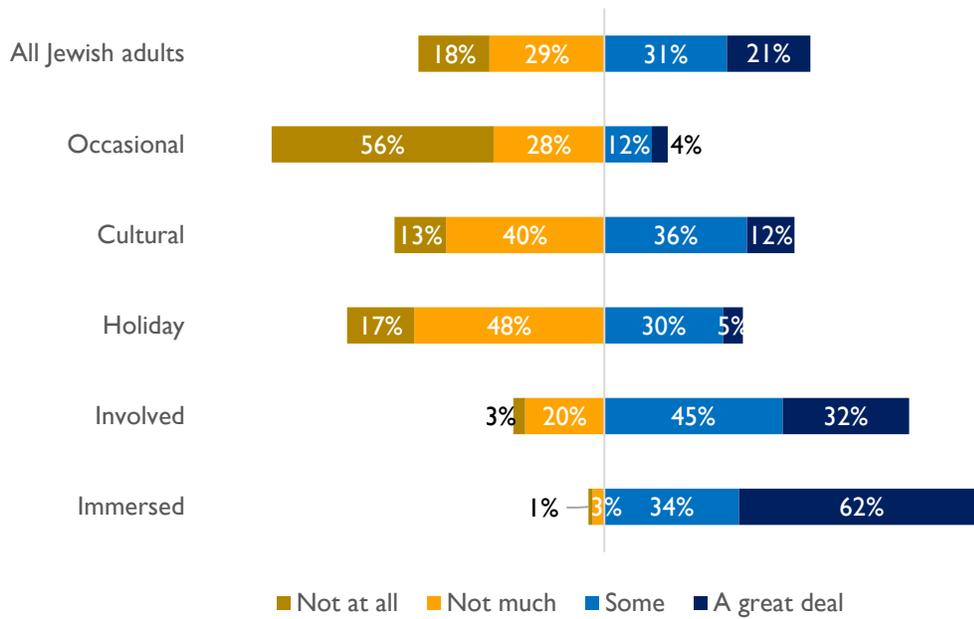
Table 2.5. Jewish engagement by political orientation

	Extremely liberal (%)	Liberal (%)	Slightly liberal (%)	Moderate (%)	Slightly conservative (%)	Conservative/ extremely conservative (%)	Total (%)
Jewish adults	17	41	10	16	7	8	100
Jewish engagement							
Occasional	23	31	20	18	1	6	100
Cultural	18	51	8	13	4	6	100
Holiday	24	49	3	16	4	4	100
Involved	18	40	8	13	12	9	100
Immersed	7	41	10	16	9	16	100

Attitudes about being Jewish

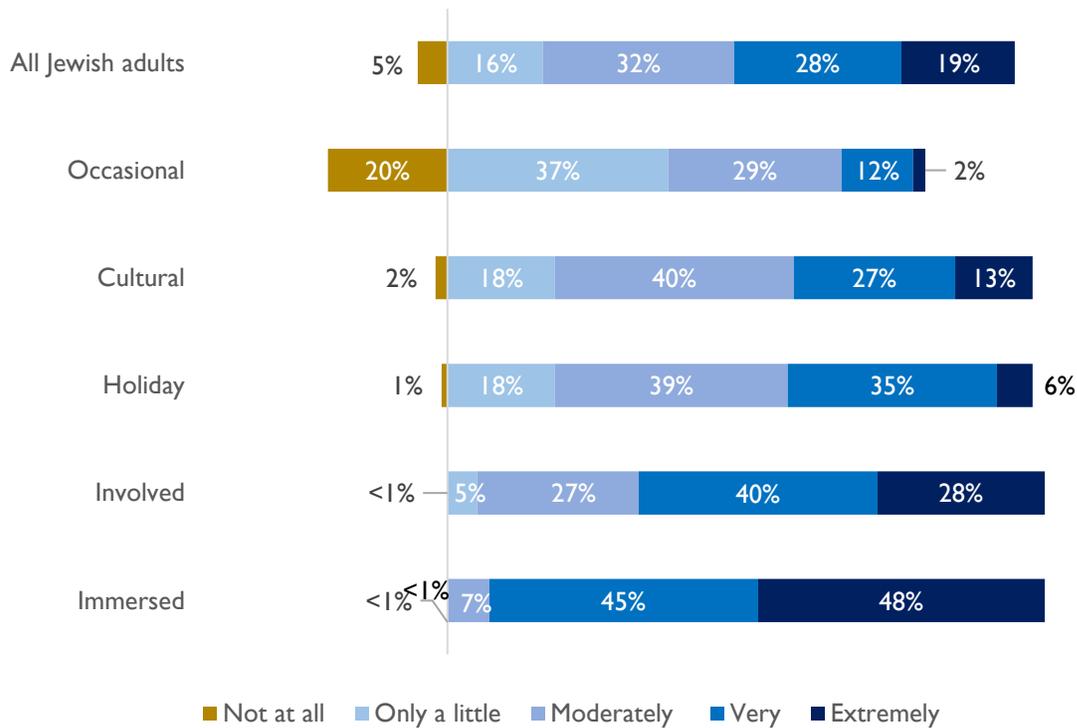
Comparing the attitudes about being Jewish across the engagement groups helps highlight their differences from one another as well as identify commonalities. About half of Jews in San Diego feel that being Jewish is at least somewhat part of their daily lives (Figure 2.2). The extent to which that is the case, however, varies among the engagement groups. While among the Immersed group the majority (62%) agrees a great deal that being Jewish is part of their daily lives, few (4%) of the Occasional group feel that way.

Figure 2.2. Being Jewish is a part of daily life (% of Jewish adults)*



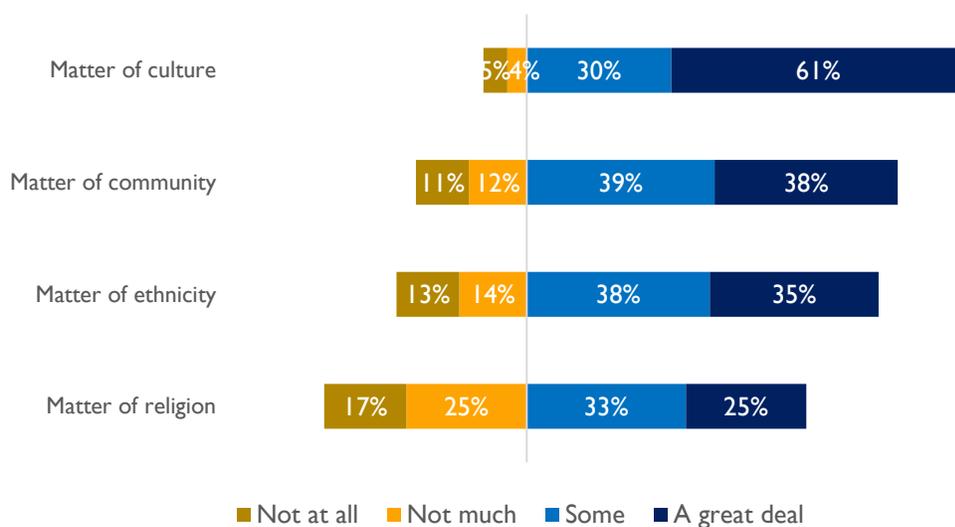
For nearly all of San Diego’s Jewish adults, being Jewish is at least a little important to how they think about themselves, including 19% who consider it extremely important (Figure 2.3). Among the Occasional engagement group, 20% consider it not at all important. In contrast, nearly all members of the Immersed group feel that being Jewish is very (45%) or extremely (48%) important to how they think about themselves.

Figure 2.3. Importance of being Jewish to how you think about yourself (% of Jewish adults)*



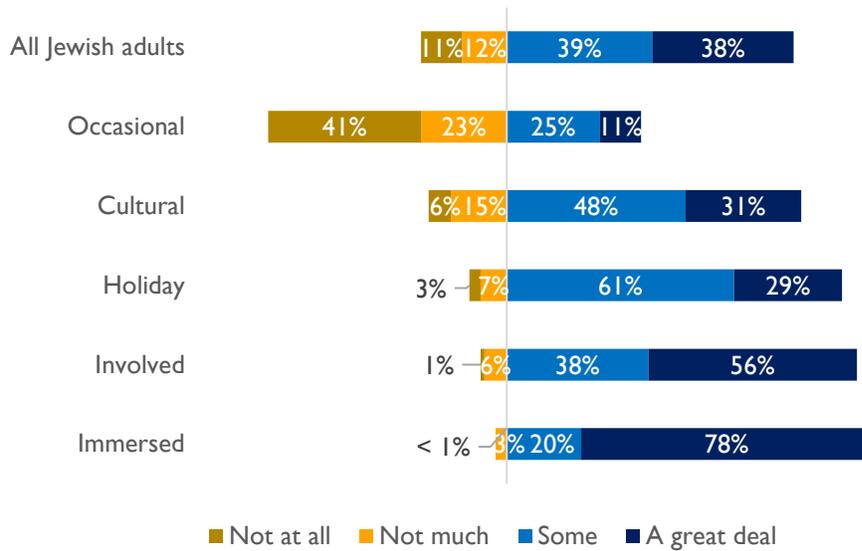
The study asked about four dimensions of Jewish identity: culture, community, ethnicity, and religion. The majority of Jewish adults believe that being Jewish is a matter of culture, with 61% indicating “a great deal” and 30% “some” (Figure 2.4). Fewer think that being Jewish is a matter of community and ethnicity. About half consider being Jewish to be a matter of religion, with 25% saying “a great deal” and 33% “some.”

Figure 2.4. Meaning of being Jewish (% of Jewish adults)*



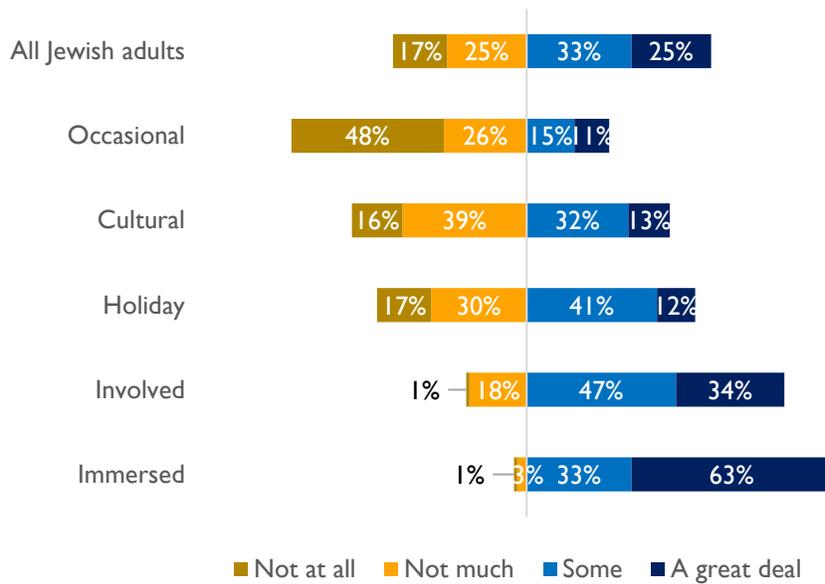
Views concerning the meaning of being Jewish, however, differ by engagement group. When one examines the importance of community by engagement group (Figure 2.5), about three quarters of the Immersed (78%) and about half of the Involved (56%) groups consider being Jewish very much a matter of community. Smaller shares of each of the other groups consider being Jewish very much a matter of community.

Figure 2.5. Being Jewish is a matter of community (% of Jewish adults)*



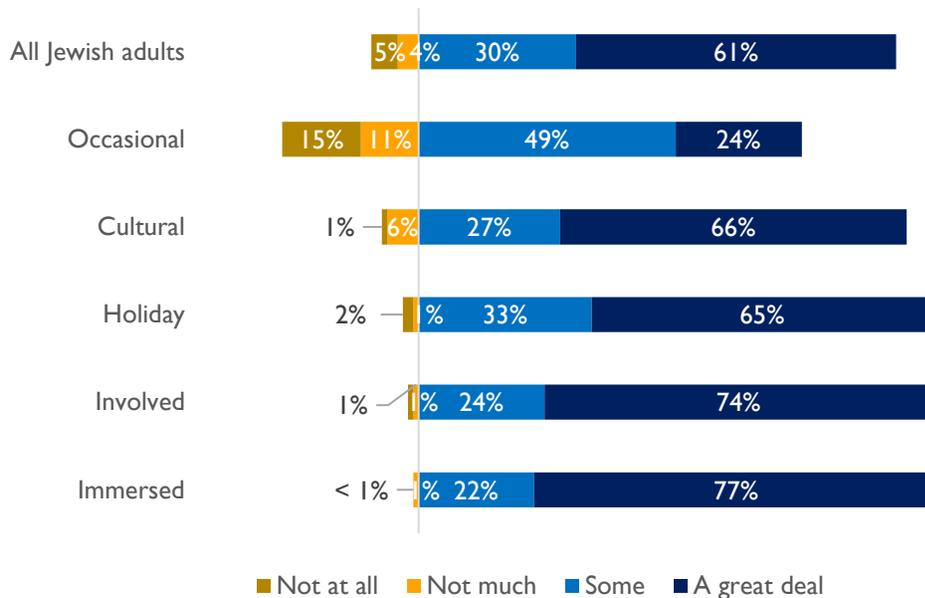
The importance of religion also varies by engagement group (Figure 2.6). About two thirds of the Immersed (63%) groups consider being Jewish very much a matter of religion. Smaller shares of each of the other groups consider being Jewish very much a matter of religion.

Figure 2.6. Being Jewish is a matter of religion (% of Jewish adults)*



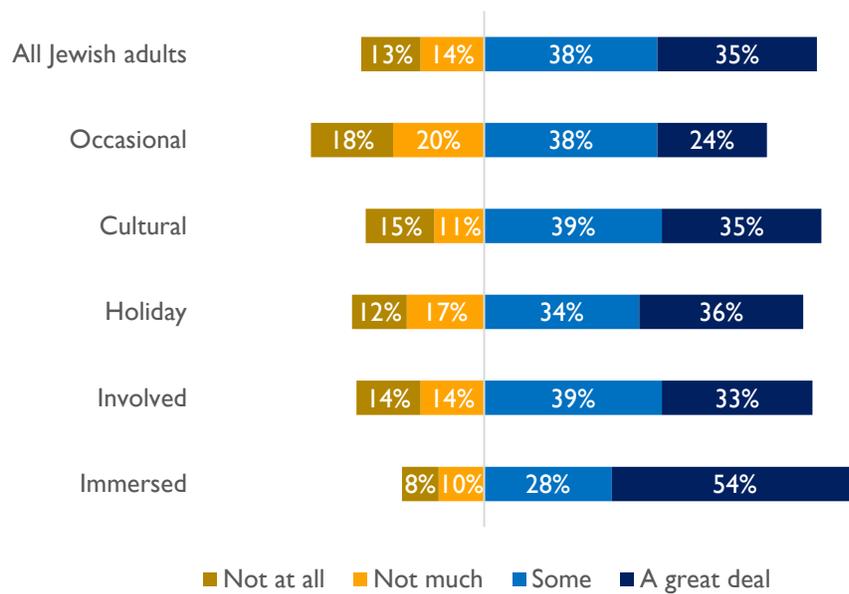
There is more agreement across the engagement groups about the extent to which being Jewish is a matter of culture (Figure 2.7) and ethnicity (Figure 2.8). A majority of the Cultural, Holiday, Involved, and Immersed groups see being Jewish very much a matter of culture; among the Occasional group, however, just 24% share this view.

Figure 2.7. Being Jewish is a matter of culture (% of Jewish adults)*



Just over half of the Immersed group (54%) consider being Jewish very much a matter of ethnicity (Figure 2.8). About one third each of the Occasional, Holiday, and Involved groups share this view, as does one quarter (24%) of the Occasional group.

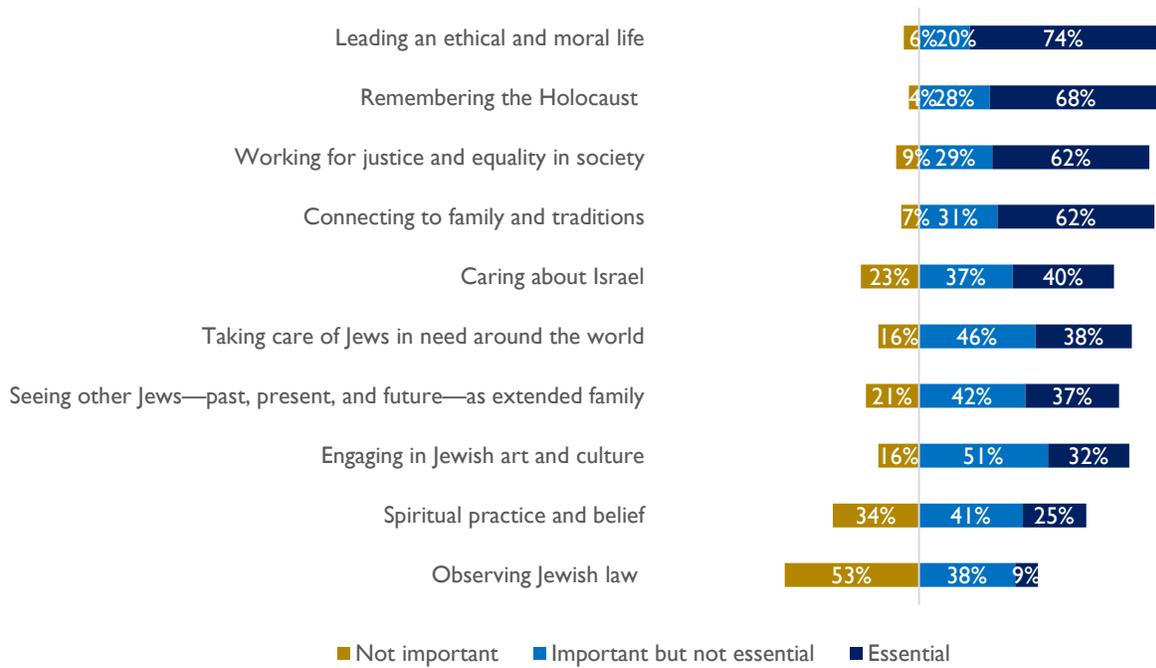
Figure 2.8. Being Jewish is a matter of ethnicity (% of Jewish adults)



The survey also asked about the aspects of Jewish life that are important or essential to being Jewish. Nearly all Jewish adults in San Diego agree that leading an ethical and moral life, remembering the Holocaust, working for justice and equality in society, and connecting to family and traditions are important or essential to being Jewish (Figure 2.9). There is less widespread consensus over caring about Israel, taking care of Jews in need around the world, seeing other Jews as extended family, and engaging in Jewish art and culture. While a majority believes that spiritual practice and belief are important or essential to being Jewish, just under half believes that observing Jewish law is essential to being Jewish.

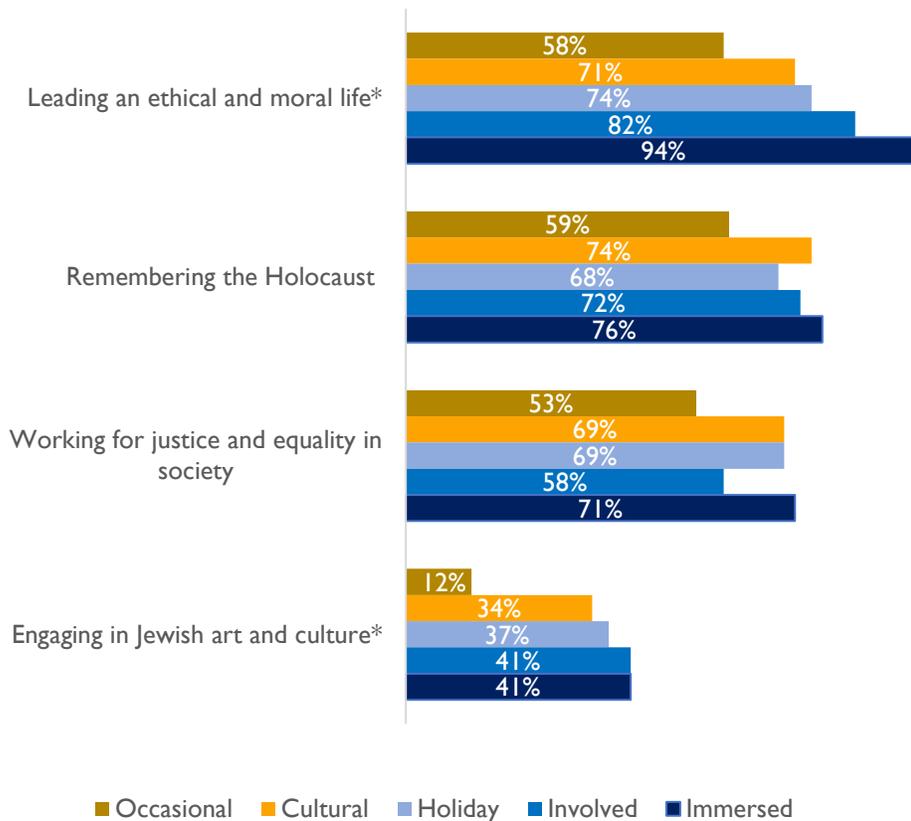
For similar questions that were asked of all US Jews, responses were similar but not identical. Among all US Jews, about three quarters say that remembering the Holocaust (76%) and leading a moral and ethical life (72%) are essential to their Jewish identity. Other essential aspects of being Jewish include working for justice and equality in society (59%), continuing family traditions (51%), caring about Israel (45%), and observing Jewish law (15%).

Figure 2.9. Essential to being Jewish (% of Jewish adults)



Across the engagement groups similar shares believe that leading an ethical and moral life, remembering the Holocaust, working for justice and quality in society, and engaging in Jewish arts and culture are essential to being Jewish (Figure 2.10). However, only 12% of the Occasional group consider Jewish art and culture to be essential to being Jewish.

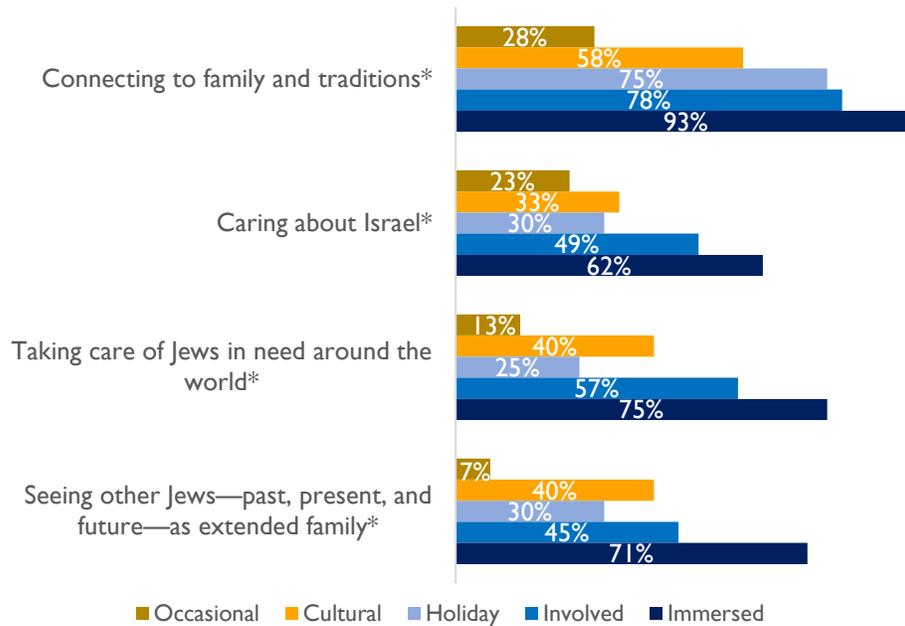
Figure 2.10. Essential to being Jewish, similar across engagement groups (% of Jewish adults)



There is less agreement across engagement groups regarding the importance of other aspects of being Jewish (Figure 2.11). The Immersed group includes the largest share who think each aspect of being Jewish listed in Figure 2.11 is essential, and the Occasional group includes the smallest share. The middle three groups, however, vary in the importance they assign to each.

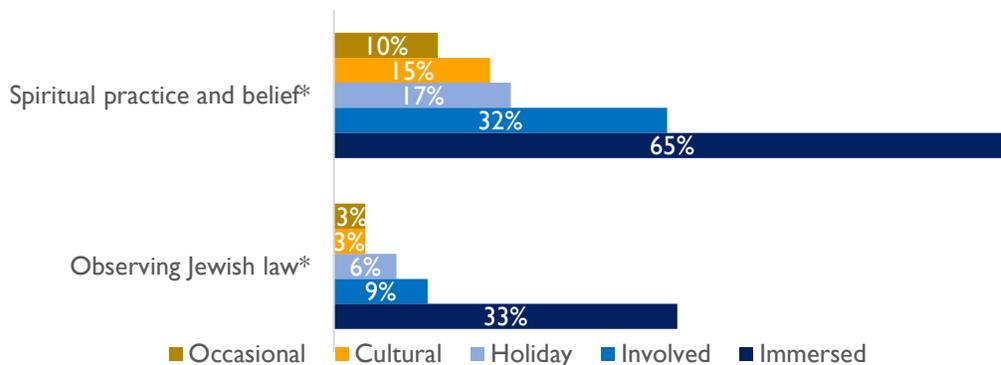
Comparing the Cultural and Holiday groups, a larger share of Cultural Jews feel that connections to other Jews is essential, including taking care of Jews in need around the world (Cultural group 40% essential and Holiday group 25% essential) and seeing other Jews as extended family (Cultural group 40% essential and Holiday 30% essential).

Figure 2.11. Essential to being Jewish, differences in engagement groups (% of Jewish adults)



For the items in Figure 2.12, spiritual practice and belief as well as observing Jewish law are far more essential to the Immersed group than any other engagement group. However, even among the Immersed group, only one third feel that observance of Jewish law is essential to being Jewish.

Figure 2.12. Essential to being Jewish, items more essential to Immersed group (% of Jewish adults)



CHAPTER 3. CHILDREN AND JEWISH EDUCATION

Chapter highlights

This chapter discusses the types of decisions parents make for their child's Jewish education and documents the community's level of participation in Jewish educational and programmatic opportunities. The San Diego Jewish community's landscape of educational offerings, includes Jewish preschools; formal Jewish education programs, both part-time (such as Hebrew School, Religious School, or Sunday School) and full-time day school or yeshiva; and informal Jewish educational programs, including camp and youth groups.

- There are 17,700 children in San Diego Jewish households, including 12,000 with parents who consider their children to be Jewish in some way.
- Among all Jewish children, 29% have two Jewish parents, and 59% have one Jewish parent and one parent who is not Jewish. Thirteen percent of Jewish children are being raised by a single parent.
- Ninety-four percent of children with two Jewish parents are considered Jewish by their parents, and 55% of children with one Jewish parent are considered Jewish by their parents.

Jewish education

- Twenty-eight percent of preschool-age Jewish children attended Jewish early childhood or preschool programs.
- Nearly one quarter (23%) of Jewish students in grades K-12 participated in some form of Jewish schooling during the 2021-22 school year, including 15% in a part-time school, like a Hebrew School, Religious School, or Sunday School; and 8% in a day school or yeshiva.
- In summer 2022, 23% of Jewish K-12 students attended a Jewish camp as a camper or staff member.

Children in Jewish households

To assess the religious identity of children in Jewish households, parents were asked if they considered their children to be Jewish. Of the 17,700 children who reside in Jewish households in San Diego, 12,000 (68% of all children) are considered Jewish by their parents (Table 3.1). More than half of these children are considered Jewish exclusively (9,300, or 53% of all children). Fifteen percent of all children are considered Jewish and another religion. Of the remaining third of children living in Jewish households who are not considered Jewish, most are considered to have no religious identity (3,300, or 19% of all children).

The remaining children who are not considered Jewish by their parents are either being raised exclusively in another religion (8% of all children). For the remaining 6% of children, their parents have not determined yet how they will be raised, or the response was not provided.

Table 3.1. Children in Jewish households

	Number	All children (%)
Jewish children	12,000	68%
Jewish	9,300	53%
Jewish and another religion	2,700	15%
Not Jewish	5,700	32%
No religion	3,300	19%
Another religion	1,400	8%
Undetermined*	1,000	6%
Total	17,700	100%

*For the rest of this chapter, analyses do not include the children whose Jewish identity is undetermined.

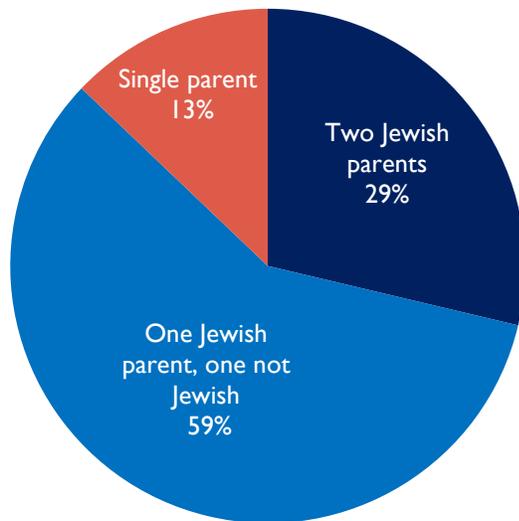
The population of Jewish children is evenly divided between the ages of 0-5, 6-12, and 13-17 (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2. Ages of Jewish children

	All Jewish children (%)
0-5	33
5-12	35
13-17	32
Total	100

Among all Jewish children, 29% have two Jewish parents, 59% have one Jewish parent and one parent who is not Jewish (Figure 3.1). Thirteen percent of Jewish children are being raised by a single parent.

Figure 3.1. Parents of Jewish children (% of Jewish children)



Of children in two Jewish-parent households, 93% are considered Jewish alone, 1% Jewish and another religion, and 1% are considered to have no religion (Figure 3.2). The remaining 6% are

considered to be another religion; in most cases, this appears to be related to step-parent relationships.

In households with one Jewish parent and one who is not Jewish, more than half (55%) of the children are considered Jewish alone (Figure 3.3). Twenty percent of the children are being raised Jewish and another religion, while 18% are being raised with no religion. The remaining 7% children have another religion.

Figure 3.2. Jewish identity of children with two Jewish parents (% of children)

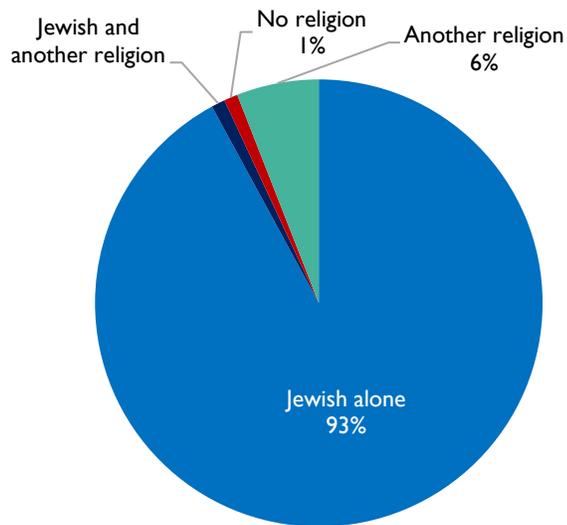
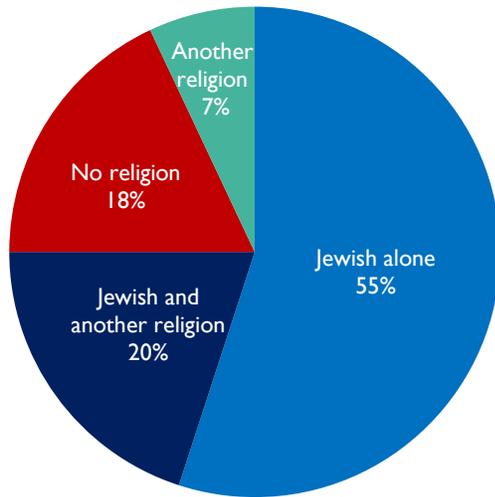


Figure 3.3. Jewish identity of children with one Jewish parent (% of children)



There is a relationship between children being considered Jewish and Jewish engagement group (Table 3.3). Less than two thirds of children raised by parents in the Occasional, Cultural, and Holiday engagement groups are considered Jewish in some way. In contrast, 89% each of children in the Involved and Immersed groups are considered Jewish.

Table 3.3. Children considered Jewish by parent characteristics

	Raised Jewish (%)
All children in Jewish households	68
Engagement group	
Occasional, Cultural, and Holiday	64
Involved	89
Immersed	89
Region	
Central	81
North	--
Inland	74
South	--
Relationship status	
No couple	--
Couple	81
Jewish+Jewish	94
Jewish+non-Jewish	75
Financial situation	
Struggling	--
Enough	80
Extra	66
Well-off	77

Note: Measures of statistical significance cannot be calculated for this table due to methodological constraints.

Parents were also asked how important it was to them that their children consider themselves to be Jewish (Table 3.4). Among all Jewish parents, 25% consider it extremely important that their children consider themselves Jewish, and 20% consider it very important.

Nearly all parents in the Immersed engagement group believe it to be very (21%) or extremely (71%) important that their children think of themselves as Jewish, compared to one quarter of Occasional, Cultural, and Holiday parents who think it is very (12%) or extremely (15%) important. Nearly half of parents married to another Jew think it is extremely important that their children think of themselves as Jewish, compared to 11% of parents married to someone not Jewish.

Table 3.4. Importance of children considering themselves Jewish

	Not at all (%)	Only a little (%)	Moderately (%)	Very (%)	Extremely (%)	Total (%)
Jewish parents	8	13	34	20	25	100
Jewish engagement						
Occasional, Cultural, and Holiday	13	23	38	12	13	100
Involved	< 1	2	30	43	24	100
Immersed	< 1	< 1	8	21	71	100
Region						
Central	5	13	36	20	26	100
North	--	--	--	--	--	100
Inland	15	12	22	21	30	100
South	--	--	--	--	--	100
Relationship status						
No couple	--	--	--	--	--	100
Couple	7	14	24	25	31	100
Jewish+Jewish	2	4	19	28	48	100
Jewish+non-Jewish	13	25	30	21	11	100
Financial situation						
Struggling	--	--	--	--	--	100
Enough	8	15	30	21	26	100
Extra	5	19	26	20	30	100
Well-off	13	11	20	29	27	100

Jewish education

Jewish education occurs in Jewish preschools; formal classroom settings, such as day schools and part-time supplementary schools, and informal settings, including camps, youth groups, and peer trips to Israel. Because the vast majority of children in Jewish education are being raised Jewish in some way, the analysis below is restricted to Jewish children. Also note that the analysis of K-12 Jewish education includes 18- and 19-year-old children who are still in high school. (This group was not included in the prior section of this report.)

Table 3.5 shows the early childhood programs available to Jewish children not yet in kindergarten during the 2021-22 school year. Twenty-eight percent of preschool-age Jewish children attended Jewish early childhood or preschool programs. Another one third of preschool-age Jewish children attended a non-Jewish program (33%). Smaller numbers attended a public program (5%) or a home-based program (4%).

Table 3.5. Early childhood programs, 2021-22

	Age-eligible Jewish children (%)
	↓
Jewish program	28
Non-Jewish program	33
Public program	5
Home-based program	4
No program	27
Total	100

Of Jewish children in grades K-12 during the 2021-22 school year, nearly one quarter (23%) were enrolled in a formal Jewish school (Table 3.6). Fifteen percent of age-eligible Jewish children attended part-time Jewish schools, and another 8% were enrolled in a full-time Jewish day school. Smaller shares of Jewish K-12 students participated in private classes or tutoring (5%), congregational classes (4%), or a Jewish youth group (9%).

Roughly one quarter (23%) of Jewish K-12 students in San Diego attended a Jewish camp in summer 2022. Twelve percent of those children attended a Jewish day camp, and 11% attended an overnight camp.

In total, 40% of K-12 Jewish children received some form of Jewish education during the 2021-22 school year or summer of 2022.

Table 3.6. K-12 Jewish education, 2021-2022 and summer 2022

	Jewish students in K-12 (%)
	↓
Any Jewish education	40
Formal Jewish school	23
Part-time school, like a Hebrew School, Religious School, or Sunday School	15
Full-time Jewish day school or yeshiva	8
Other Jewish programs	
Private classes or tutoring	5
Congregational classes	4
Jewish youth group	9
Any Jewish camp, summer 2022	23
Day camp	12
Overnight camp	11

Eleven percent of Jewish children ages 14 and older have participated in an organized teen trip to Israel. Among that same age group, an additional 3% have traveled on an immersive program located outside Israel (e.g., Mitzvah Corp, Kavannah, or USY on Wheels).

Lifecycle celebrations

Forty-one percent of age-eligible Jewish children have had a bar or bat mitzvah ceremony, and an additional 12% will have one in the future.

Children's programs

In addition to formal and informal education, family program options outside of school or preschool included Tot Shabbat, Shalom Baby, synagogue-based playgroups, or family holiday programs. Twenty percent of Jewish households attended at least one of these programs in the past year; 12% attended in person, 1% online, and 7% participated online and in person.

The PJ Library and PJ Our Way programs send Jewish books to households with at least one child ages 12 or younger. Among eligible households, 37% received books, and an additional 18% were not aware of the program.



“Shalom Baby has been an extremely supportive and welcoming community and resource for moms and their new babes.”

Grandparents and grandchildren

Of Jewish households with an adult ages 50 or older, 35% have grandchildren ages 22 or younger. Among grandparents, 57% have at least one grandchild who lives in that household or in the San Diego area. Among Jewish households with minor children, 89% report that their children have living grandparents.

Grandparents can play an important role in encouraging participation in Jewish life. Among San Diego Jewish grandparents, 27% somewhat encourage and 14% strongly encourage their grandchildren to be involved in Jewish life. Nearly half of parents say that their children's grandparents somewhat (33%) or strongly (14%) encourage them to expose their children to Jewish life.

One way by which Jewish grandparents encourage Jewish engagement is through their assistance with the expenses of Jewish education. Twenty-seven percent of San Diego Jewish grandparents report that they assist with expenses for Jewish education or activities. Among Jewish parents, 7% of report that their children's grandparents assist with Jewish education expenses.

CHAPTER 4. CONGREGATIONS AND RITUALS

Chapter highlights

Congregations, including synagogues and other worship venues, serve as sites for community and ritual practice for members as well as for those who participate without formal membership. This chapter also includes a discussion of Jewish rituals practiced at home and in non-religious communal settings.

Congregations

- Fourteen percent of Jewish **households** belong to a Jewish congregation of any type.
- Among Jewish **adults**, 22% live in a household in which someone is a congregation member. Among all US Jews, 35% reside in a congregation-member household.
- Over half of Jewish adults attended at least one Jewish religious service in the previous year, whether in person or online. Thirteen percent attended services monthly or more, and about one third of adults attended a High Holiday service in 2021. Among those who are not synagogue members, 44% attended at least one service.
- About half of service-going Jewish adults (52%) prefer to attend services in person, and another third are willing to participate in either online or in-person services.

Rituals

- Just over half of Jewish adults in San Diego marked Shabbat in some way during the previous year, including 19% who marked Shabbat always or almost always.
- The most common ways of marking Shabbat include lighting candles (44%), spending time with family and friends (40%), and having a special meal (34%).
- The most commonly observed holiday practice is lighting Hanukkah candles, with 78% of adults lighting Hanukkah candles in 2021.
- Fifty-six percent of adults attended a Passover seder in 2022.

Congregation membership

In San Diego, 14% of Jewish households include someone who currently belongs to a Jewish congregation, whether a synagogue, independent *minyan* or *chavurah*, Chabad, or other worship community (Table 4.1).

Most of the Immersed group (80%) belong to one or more congregations, as do about one third of members of the Involved group (35%). By contrast, few or none of the Occasional, Cultural, and Holiday groups are members of congregations.

Households with children and households with couples are more likely to belong to a congregation than other households. Thirty percent of households with a minor child belong to a congregation, compared to 11% of those without a child. While 19% of households with a couple belong to a Jewish congregation, 8% of households without couples belong.

Table 4.1. Membership in Jewish congregations

Congregation member (%)	
All Jewish households	14
Jewish engagement	
Occasional	0
Cultural	< 1
Holiday	4
Involved	35
Immersed	80
Region	
Central	18
North	12
Inland	18
South	11
Age	
18-34	10
35-49	18
50-64	20
65-74	13
75 +	9
Relationship status	
No couple	8
Couple	19
Jewish+Jewish	26
Jewish+non-Jewish	16
Minor child in household	
No minor children	11
Minor child in household	30
Financial situation	
Struggling	25
Enough	12
Extra	12
Well-off	15

Congregation types

These definitions may not capture the specifics of all congregations, but they provide useful categories for understanding varieties of congregational affiliation.

Synagogue: Typically has its own building, a dues/membership structure (though sometimes without fixed amounts), professional clergy, and programs or amenities commonly available in synagogues (e.g., Hebrew school). Usually targeted to those interested in a specific Jewish denomination or type of practice.

Independent *minyan* or *chavurah*: A group that gathers for prayer or worship without the formal structure of a synagogue. May lack its own building, conventional dues/membership structure, professional clergy, and/or amenities commonly available in synagogues.

Chabad: Jewish center or synagogue run by Chabad-Lubavitch. Often does not have a conventional dues/membership structure. Draws from across the denominational spectrum by emphasizing community outreach.

Among the 14% of households that belong to a Jewish congregation, 75% pay dues to at least one of their member congregations (Table 4.2). Regardless of membership dues, 76% of member households belong to a synagogue, 13% to a Chabad, and less than 1% to an independent minyan or chavurah located in San Diego (see sidebar above for definitions). Additionally, 5% of member households belong to a congregation of any type outside of San Diego. Of member households, 10% belong to multiple congregations in San Diego (not shown in table).

While three quarters of all congregation-member households pay dues to a congregation, just 45% of financially struggling households pay dues. Financially struggling member households are more likely to belong to a Chabad or to an out-of-area-congregation than other households.

“My congregation goes out of their way to be a welcoming, inclusive congregation! It’s so hopeful! They also make it possible for me to stay a member even though I can’t afford to pay much in dues.”

“Too expensive to attend services/ events if not a member of a congregation. I prefer to attend only on holidays and special events but wish there would be no cost/ low cost to make it more accessible.”

“The single strength of our Jewish community is the diversity of synagogue choices to meet our religious and secular needs.”

Table 4.2. Type of congregation membership among member households (14% of all Jewish households)

	Pays dues to any congregation (%)	Member of.... congregation types			
		Local synagogue (%)	Local Chabad (%)	Local minyan / chavurah (%)	Out of area congregation (%)
Congregation-member households	75	76	13	< 1	5
Jewish engagement					
Occasional	0	0	0	0	0
Cultural	--	--	--	--	--
Holiday	--	--	--	--	--
Involved	83	80	1	< 1	17
Immersed	76	71	25	< 1	6
Region					
Central	70	59	25	< 1	12
North	92	79	4	< 1	13
Inland	57	77	13	< 1	2
South	79	86	4	< 1	12
Age					
18-34	--	--	--	--	--
35-49	80	74	7	< 1	16
50-64	62	52	31	< 1	15
65-74	79	88	2	< 1	2
75 +	92	87	12	1	< 1
Financial situation					
Struggling	45	47	24	< 1	8
Enough	90	86	4	< 1	1
Extra	64	64	2	< 1	1
Well-off	90	95	6	< 1	1

*Note: Because of incomplete data, 8% of congregation members could not be categorized.

The previous tables describe membership among Jewish **households**. Among Jewish **adults**, 22% live in a household in which someone is a congregation member. Among all US Jews, 35% reside in a congregation-member household.

Membership in Jewish congregations can change over time; households join or leave congregations based on a life stage, financial situation, or change in interest. In addition to the 22% of Jewish adults who currently belong to a congregation, another 32% belonged to one during their adult lives (“former members”) (Table 4.3). The remaining 46% of Jewish adults never belonged to a congregation as an adult.

The Cultural and Holiday group include few current members and the largest shares of “former members.”

Among Jewish adults with a partner, 27% are current members of congregations (42% of couples with two Jewish partners are members of congregations compared to 11% of those with a non-Jewish partner). About one third of couples are former congregation members. This share is the same for those couples with two Jewish partners and those that include a non-Jewish partner.

Table 4.3. Current and past membership in Jewish congregations

	Current member (%)	Former member (%)	Never member (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish adults	22	32	46	100
Jewish engagement				
Occasional	0	21	79	100
Cultural	< 1	41	58	100
Holiday	6	46	48	100
Involved	39	35	26	100
Immersed	89	6	5	100
Region				
Central	29	26	45	100
North	24	32	44	100
Inland	23	27	50	100
South	16	39	46	100
Age				
18-34	13	21	67	100
35-49	28	27	45	100
50-64	33	30	38	100
65-74	23	42	35	100
75 +	29	38	33	100
Relationship status				
No couple	15	25	60	100
Couple	27	33	40	100
Jewish+Jewish	42	33	25	100
Jewish+non-Jewish	11	33	55	100
Minor child in household				
No minor children	20	31	49	100
Minor child in household	39	26	34	100
Financial situation				
Struggling	31	19	51	100
Enough	21	21	58	100
Extra	20	38	42	100
Well-off	27	43	30	100

Religious services

Congregational involvement exceeds membership. While 22% of Jewish adults currently belong to a congregation (see Table 4.3, above), 55% of Jewish adults attended a Jewish religious service at least once in the previous year, either in-person or online (Table 4.4). Thirteen percent of Jewish adults attended services at least once per month, and 36% attended services during the High Holidays in 2021.

While there were not regional differences in overall service attendance, larger shares of Jewish adults in the Central (45%) and North (44%) regions attended High Holiday services than Jews who live elsewhere in San Diego.

Nearly all congregation members attended a Jewish religious service at least once in the past year, as did 44% of adults who do not belong to a Jewish congregation. About one quarter of non-members attended a High Holiday service in 2021.

Table 4.4. Jewish worship services during past year

	Services during past year, ever (%)	Services during past year, monthly (%)	High Holidays, 2021 (%)
All Jewish adults	55	13	36
Jewish engagement			
Occasional	10	2	0
Cultural	13	< 1	0
Holiday	83	1	34
Involved	98	8	75
Immersed	100	71	98
Region			
Central	60	15	45
North	57	14	44
Inland	56	13	28
South	50	10	32
Age			
18-34	63	11	39
35-49	54	13	37
50-64	61	13	43
65-74	51	16	37
75 +	49	15	35
Congregation member			
No	44	5	24
Yes	98	43	89

Jews interested in attending a Jewish worship service have many options including those held at synagogues, Chabad, independent *minyans*, and through community organizations (such as Ken, Hillel, Moishe House). The most common venue for services is local synagogues (36%), but 18% of

Jewish adults participated in a service hosted by a synagogue outside of San Diego. Twelve percent of Jewish adults attended Chabad services.

Nearly all Jewish individuals in the Involved and Immersed groups participated in services the past year. However, the Immersed group was more likely to attend services at a San Diego synagogue and at Chabad compared to the Involved group

A larger share of younger Jewish adults (20%) attended organization-based services compared to older Jewish adults (between 3% and 9%).

Table 4.5. Location of Jewish worship services attended past year

	Attended services (%)	Location of service				
		Synagogue in San Diego (%)	Synagogue outside San Diego (%)	Chabad (%)	Community organization (%)	Minyan/ Chavurah (%)
All Jewish adults	55	36	18	12	8	6
Jewish engagement						
Occasional	10	1	4	2	1	2
Cultural	13	5	4	1	3	1
Holiday	83	38	37	16	3	2
Involved	98	66	39	17	20	13
Immersed	100	92	33	32	20	12
Region						
Central	60	43	23	13	8	6
North	57	41	22	14	17	4
Inland	56	32	18	10	4	8
South	50	27	19	10	9	5
Age						
18-34	63	33	26	16	20	7
35-49	54	38	22	18	9	7
50-64	61	43	23	10	9	8
65-74	51	37	18	6	2	3
75 +	49	36	11	8	3	5
Service attendance						
LT Monthly	100	60	41	18	16	10
Monthly or more	100	94	31	33	23	15
Congregation member						
No	44	20	16	11	8	4
Yes	98	93	23	15	7	14

Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive. Respondents could select multiple venues for services.

Even with the proliferation of live-streamed synagogue services in recent years, the preference continues to be for in-person services. Among Jewish adults who attended services, about half

prefer attending in-person only, 5% prefer online only, 33% prefer both, and 10% have no preference (Table 4.6). About three quarters of parents prefer in-person to online services, compared to about half of those without children at home.

Table 4.6. Preferred venue for Jewish worship services

	In-person services (%)	Online services (%)	Both (%)	No preference (%)	Total (%)
Jewish adults who attended services	52	5	33	10	100
Jewish engagement					
Occasional	--	--	--	--	100
Cultural	--	--	--	--	100
Holiday	41	6	36	17	100
Involved	55	7	35	4	100
Immersed	64	1	34	1	100
Region					
Central	55	5	29	12	100
North	66	4	23	6	100
Inland	43	3	46	9	100
South	51	2	43	4	100
Age					
18-34	63	4	31	2	100
35-49	63	0	31	6	100
50-64	49	7	33	11	100
65-74	38	5	40	17	100
75 +	46	11	30	13	100
Minor child in household					
No minor children	48	6	36	9	100
Minor child in household	76	< 1	19	5	100

Opportunities to participate in services at other congregations have expanded with the availability of live-streamed options. Among Jewish adults who attended services and are members of congregations, 87% attended a service at their own congregation and 33% attended at another congregation (Table 4.7). Individuals who attended services monthly or more were more likely to attend services in their own congregation (96%) as well as another congregation (36%) compared to those who attended less frequently.

Table 4.7. Participation in congregations aside from membership

	Attended at own congregation	Attended at another congregation
Jewish adults who attended services and are congregation members	87	33
Jewish engagement		
Occasional	0	0
Cultural	--	--
Holiday	--	--
Involved	87	19
Immersed	95	38
Region		
North Central	93	30
North Coastal	91	23
North Inland + East	93	26
Central + South	78	34
Age		
18-34	--	--
35-49	90	32
50-64	91	28
65-74	93	26
75 +	93	28
Relationship status		
No couple	85	16
Couple	92	32
Jewish+Jewish	93	34
Jewish+non-Jewish	88	26
Minor child in household		
Not parent	89	29
Parent	92	28
Financial situation		
Struggling	81	28
Enough	92	21
Extra	92	32
Well-off	93	35
Service attendance		
Less than monthly	89	24
Monthly or more	96	36

Rituals

Over half of Jewish adults marked Shabbat in some way during the previous year, with 26% marking Shabbat less than once per month, 9% at least monthly but less than weekly, and 19% marking Shabbat weekly or almost weekly (Table 4.8).

A smaller share of adults ages 18-34 (35%) never marked Shabbat in any way, compared to older adults ages 65 and older (52-56%). However, a similar share of younger adults ages 18-34 (23%) and adults ages 65 and over (19-20%) marked Shabbat weekly or almost every week.

Table 4.8. Frequency of marking Shabbat during past year

	Never (%)	Less than once a month (%)	Once a month, less than weekly (%)	Weekly or almost weekly (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish adults	46	26	9	19	100
Jewish engagement					
Occasional	95	5	0	0	100
Cultural	63	24	7	6	100
Holiday	42	40	12	6	100
Involved	10	46	20	25	100
Immersed	0	7	11	81	100
Region					
Central	42	24	12	22	100
North	42	28	10	20	100
Inland	50	24	9	18	100
South	44	25	9	22	100
Age					
18-34	35	36	6	23	100
35-49	40	21	15	24	100
50-64	42	25	16	17	100
65-74	56	17	8	19	100
75 +	52	20	8	20	100
Congregation member					
No	55	25	9	12	100
Yes	6	29	15	50	100

Jewish adults in San Diego mark Shabbat in a variety of ways (Figure 4.1, Tables 4.9a and 4.9b). The most common ways that Jewish adults mark Shabbat is by lighting candles (44%), spending time with family and friends (40%), or having a special meal (34%).

In addition to the practices listed here, 6% of Jewish adults listed other ways of marking Shabbat, such as baking challah or spending time in nature (not shown in table).

Figure 4.1. Ways of marking Shabbat (% of Jewish adults)

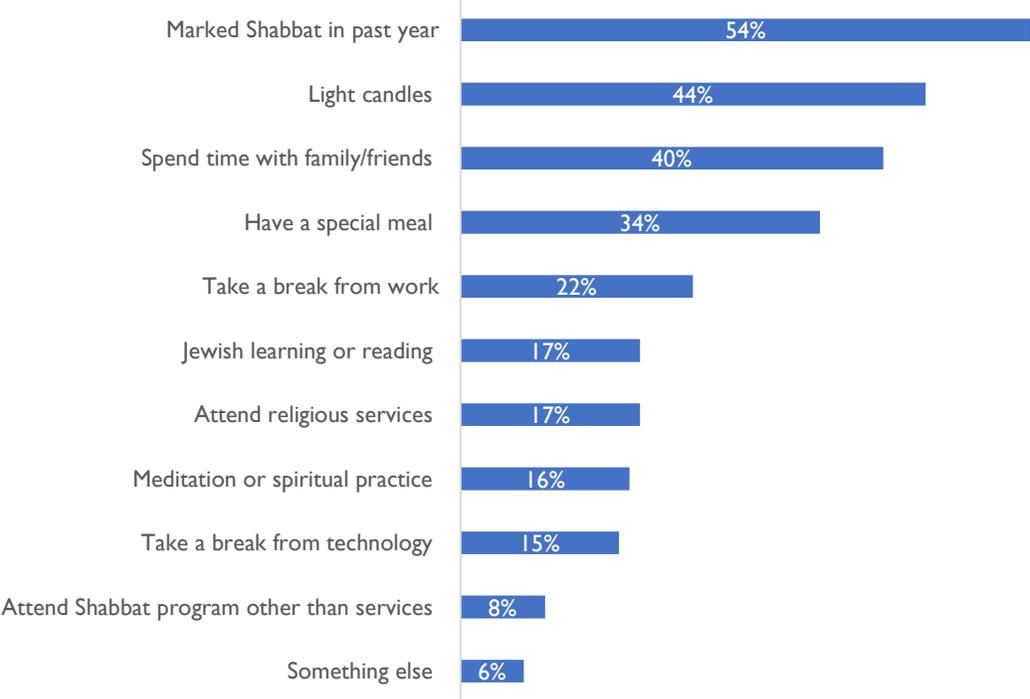


Table 4.9a. Ways of marking Shabbat

	Marked Shabbat in past year (%)	Light candles (%)	Spend time with family/friends (%)	Have a special meal (%)	Take a break from work (%)
All Jewish adults	54	44	40	34	22
Jewish engagement					
Occasional	5	3	3	3	2
Cultural	37	28	23	21	10
Holiday	58	49	32	19	5
Involved	90	74	68	61	33
Immersed	100	94	80	83	57
Region					
Central	58	44	39	41	15
North	58	48	44	39	25
Inland	50	45	37	26	20
South	56	39	42	35	27
Age					
18-34	65	56	51	44	29
35-49	60	52	48	45	29
50-64	58	50	42	39	20
65-74	44	36	27	26	10
75 +	48	34	24	21	12
Congregation member					
No	45	36	31	27	14
Yes	94	84	70	68	43

Table 4.9b. Ways of marking Shabbat

	Jewish learning or reading (%)	Attend religious services (%)	Meditation or spiritual practice (%)	Take a break from technology (%)	Attend Shabbat program other than services (%)
All Jewish adults	17	17	16	15	8
Jewish engagement					
Occasional	2	0	2	2	0
Cultural	11	1	10	7	1
Holiday	2	6	6	4	2
Involved	20	22	24	24	15
Immersed	55	72	38	40	36
Region					
Central	14	20	10	9	9
North	20	21	20	19	20
Inland	14	16	12	16	7
South	21	11	24	20	5
Age					
18-34	25	18	24	22	14
35-49	16	19	15	16	13
50-64	13	19	16	15	9
65-74	12	14	9	7	5
75 +	13	15	10	7	5
Congregation member					
No	7	3	12	8	4
Yes	39	55	33	33	27

About three quarters of Jewish adults lit Hanukkah candles in 2021, over half participated in a Passover seder in 2022, and 40% fasted on Yom Kippur in 2021 (Table 4.10). Ten percent of Jewish adults keep kosher at home.

Table 4.10. Holidays and rituals

	Hanukkah candles, 2021 (%)	Seder, 2022 (%)	Fasted on Yom Kippur, 2021* (%)	Keep kosher at home (%)
All Jewish adults	78	56	40	10
Jewish engagement				
Occasional	38	10	5	0
Cultural	73	45	23	2
Holiday	92	75	32	8
Involved	99	87	64	9
Immersed	99	99	85	40
Region				
Central	81	65	43	11
North	79	67	42	4
Inland	77	53	32	9
South	75	52	41	14
Age				
18-34	88	65	45	11
35-49	79	60	39	10
50-64	81	60	46	10
65-74	70	58	31	8
75 +	70	51	36	7

*An additional 6% of Jewish adults did not fast for medical reasons.

CHAPTER 5. JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS AND PHILANTHROPY

Chapter highlights

The San Diego Jewish community's offerings for engagement in Jewish life include a wide range of cultural, educational, religious, and social programs. There are also numerous options to volunteer for Jewish and non-Jewish causes, and Jewish households participate in these opportunities in large numbers.

This chapter describes the many ways in which Jews in San Diego connect to their community, congregations, and local organizations.

Memberships, program participation, and individual activities

- Almost one quarter of Jewish households belong to a Jewish organization or an informal Jewish group. Six percent of Jewish households belong to the Lawrence Family JCC.
- Half of Jewish adults participated in a program in the past year that is sponsored or organized by a Jewish organization.
- Half of Jewish adults in the Immersed group participated in a Jewish program at least 10 times in the past year.
- About one-in-five Jewish adults participated in a program sponsored by a congregation. Nine percent participated in a program sponsored by a local Chabad. Nine percent participated in a program sponsored by the Lawrence Family JCC.
- Most Jewish adults learn about Jewish programs happening in San Diego through the internet or social media.
- Nearly all Jewish adults engaged in individual Jewish activities over the past year; the most common activities included talking about Jewish topics (95%), eating traditional Jewish foods (86%), or consuming Jewish-focused media (86%).

Volunteering and philanthropy

- Half of Jewish adults volunteered for at least one organization or cause in the previous year, including 6% who volunteered only for Jewish organizations, 26% who volunteered only for non-Jewish organizations, and 18% who volunteered for both.
- More than four-in-five Jewish adults (82%) made a charitable contribution in the past year, and nearly half (48%) donated to both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations. Three percent of Jewish adults donated only to Jewish organizations and 31% donated only to non-Jewish organizations.
- Two thirds of Jewish adults said that human services are one of the most important causes to or for which they might donate or volunteer.

Organization membership and participation

Participating in, belonging to, and supporting Jewish organizations is an important way for many Jews to connect to Jewish life. Of Jewish households, 23% belong to at least one San Diego Jewish organization. Six percent of Jewish households are members of the Lawrence Family JCC, 9% are members of a local Jewish organization aside from a congregation or a JCC, and 12% are members of an informal or grassroots group in San Diego, (e.g., social *chavurah*, Jewish book club, pre-school parent group, online Jewish group) (Table 5.1).

Over half of households in the Immersed engagement group belong to any Jewish organization or group in San Diego, compared to more than one third of Involved households and about one quarter of Cultural households.

Table 5.1. Organization memberships in San Diego

	Any organization or group	Member of JCC	Member of Jewish organization	Belong to informal Jewish group
All Jewish households	23	6	9	12
Jewish engagement				
Occasional	5	5	0	< 1
Cultural	23	7	9	9
Holiday	12	2	4	6
Involved	37	7	14	21
Immersed	56	5	29	46
Region				
Central	24	8	8	13
North	20	3	9	10
Inland	23	4	11	16
South	16	4	8	6
Age				
18-34	31	8	15	12
35-49	23	4	8	16
50-64	19	5	5	12
65-74	20	6	11	8
75 +	13	4	5	6

“There is strength in the large number of people and also countless Jewish organizations. However, the community does not seem to come together well. Events conflict with each other in scheduling, and inter-communication is lacking.”

“I would definitely join the JCC if it were closer. It’s not conveniently located for me to regularly go.”

For this report, we define **programs** as events and initiatives that are sponsored or organized by a Jewish organization—whether they take place at an organization’s location, in a public space, at home, or online.

We define **activities** as actions and pursuits that individuals engage in; these activities might take place within the context of a program or might occur independent of organization involvement.

Program participation

In the year prior to the study, more than half of all Jewish adults in San Diego never participated in a Jewish program, while 30% of Jewish adults attended between one and four programs. Five percent of Jewish adults participated in a Jewish program between five and nine times, and 11% participated in a Jewish program 10 or more times in the previous year.

Frequency of program attendance varies by the type of Jewish engagement. Jewish adults in the Occasional group have the lowest rates of participation: 89% did not participate in a Jewish program over the last year. In the Immersed group, half of Jewish adults attended programs ten or more times.

Table 5.2. Frequency of Jewish program participation, past year

	Never	1-4 times	5-9 times	10 or more times	Total
All Jewish adults	53	30	5	11	100
Jewish engagement					
Occasional	89	11	< 1	0	100
Cultural	69	26	1	4	100
Holiday	59	35	2	4	100
Involved	29	47	13	11	100
Immersed	9	31	11	50	100
Region					
Central	56	26	6	12	100
North	54	22	8	16	100
Inland	43	36	7	14	100
South	52	38	3	7	100
Age					
18-34	40	39	6	15	100
35-49	55	28	8	9	100
50-64	53	32	5	10	100
65-74	57	27	5	11	100
75 +	65	17	3	15	100

The most commonly attended programs were religious programs (aside from services) and cultural programs.

Table 5.3. Frequency of program attendance by program type, past year, Jewish adults

	Never	1-4 times	5-9 times	10+ times	Total
Any program	53	30	5	11	100
Religious (aside from services)	72	21	5	2	100
Cultural (concert, theater, film, museum)	77	20	2	1	100
Social action (volunteering, fundraising)	78	18	2	3	100
Educational (class or lecture)	79	16	3	3	100
Social (bar night, party, dance)	89	9	1	1	100
Outdoors or active (sports league, hiking, surfing)	89	10	1	1	100
Political (rally or march)	95	4	< 1	< 1	100
Other	93	4	1	3	100

The preferred type of program participation varies by Jewish engagement group (Tables 5.4a, 5.4b). Jewish adults in the Holiday, Involved, and Immersed groups, attended religious programs more than other program types. Not surprisingly, for those in the Cultural group, cultural programs were most popular.

Table 5.4a. Type of Jewish program ever attended, past year

	Religious	Cultural	Social Action	Educational
All Jewish adults	28	23	22	21
Jewish engagement				
Occasional	< 1	2	8	1
Cultural	7	17	15	11
Holiday	24	9	8	10
Involved	46	36	32	30
Immersed	83	62	58	74
Region				
Central	30	25	22	25
North	32	32	28	22
Inland	38	18	25	24
South	20	21	21	20
Age				
18-34	36	21	33	22
35-49	35	25	25	19
50-64	28	29	21	26
65-74	25	27	20	28
75 +	19	20	14	20

Table 5.4b. Type of Jewish program ever attended, past year

	Social	Outdoors or active	Political	Other
All Jewish adults	11	11	5	7
Jewish engagement				
Occasional	0	< 1	< 1	1
Cultural	2	1	2	3
Holiday	5	2	2	7
Involved	15	17	10	13
Immersed	48	38	24	16
Region				
Central	16	11	10	8
North	16	20	5	6
Inland	10	8	4	6
South	5	4	6	8
Age				
18-34	17	15	6	9
35-49	18	15	4	8
50-64	10	11	11	6
65-74	7	5	7	7
75 +	8	4	5	5

One-in-five Jewish adults participated in a program sponsored by a local congregation (Table 5.5). Smaller shares of Jewish adults participated in programs sponsored by other organizations.

Table 5.5. Sponsors of Jewish programs, past year

	All Jewish adults ↓
A congregation or synagogue in San Diego	20
Jewish Family Service	9
A Chabad in San Diego	9
Jewish community center	8
Coastal Roots Farm	8
Leichtag Foundation/The Hive	7
Jewish Federation of San Diego	6
Israel advocacy (e.g., AIPAC, JNF, JStreet, FIDF)	5
Cultural groups (e.g., Ken, SAJAC, IAC)	2
Jewish Community Foundation	1
Other	9

San Diego Jewish adults receive their information on organizations and programs from a variety of sources but most commonly through the internet or social media (70%) or family or friends (56%) (Table 5.6).

Table 5.6. Sources of information for community or organizational programs and activities

	All Jewish adults ↓
Internet or social media	70
Family or friends	56
Synagogue or organization newsletter/email	37
Local Jewish periodical (e.g., <i>San Diego Jewish Journal</i> , <i>L’Chaim</i> , <i>San Diego Jewish World</i>)	21
Rabbi or other Jewish community leader	14

Jewish-focused activities

We define Jewish-focused activities to include actions and pursuits that individuals engage in within the context of formal programs and those that are independent of organization involvement. These activities may be secular, such as those related to culture and recreation, or include Jewish content, such as discussions of Jewish topics (Tables 5.7a and 5.7b). Jewish-focused activities might take place in a communal setting, with friends or family, or alone.

Nearly all Jewish adults (95%) in the San Diego Jewish community discussed Jewish topics during the past year, including about one third (30%) who did so often. A large majority of Jewish adults ate Jewish foods and took part in Jewish cultural activities during the past year (86% respectively), including 18% who ate Jewish foods or participated in Jewish culture often. Three quarters of Jewish adults (75%) read a Jewish publication at least once, and 20% did so often.

Jewish adults in the Immersed and Involved groups participate in all of these activities more often than the other engagement groups. However, participation in nearly all of these Jewish activities is significantly higher among the Cultural group than for the Holiday group. Participation in these types of activities is one of the distinguishing behaviors of the Cultural group.

Table 5.7a. Jewish-focused activities, past year

	Discuss Jewish topics		Eat Jewish foods		Partake in Jewish culture	
	Ever	Often	Ever	Often	Ever	Often
All Jewish adults	95	30	86	18	86	18
Jewish engagement						
Occasional	83	8	65	4	62	3
Cultural	98	24	98	14	100	16
Holiday	97	22	74	7	65	3
Involved	99	39	95	29	95	27
Immersed	100	69	100	59	100	43
Region						
Central	96	30	89	20	86	18
North	96	35	89	31	84	18
Inland	96	40	85	16	88	15
South	93	24	88	21	88	23
Age						
18-34	98	39	84	25	90	19
35-49	95	31	83	17	76	11
50-64	97	27	92	17	89	18
65-74	94	29	90	26	85	24
75 +	88	23	88	22	89	22

Table 5.7b. Jewish-focused activities, past year

	Read Jewish publications		Social media		Study or learn Jewish texts	
	Ever	Often	Ever	Often	Ever	Often
All Jewish adults	75	20	47	11	43	8
Jewish engagement						
Occasional	25	< 1	12	0	2	0
Cultural	98	18	58	9	43	2
Holiday	45	1	17	< 1	0	0
Involved	90	28	65	16	64	7
Immersed	100	53	79	26	91	40
Region						
Central	78	20	44	9	40	7
North	73	21	48	9	43	12
Inland	63	17	39	9	46	7
South	79	23	64	16	48	9
Age						
18-34	74	20	64	16	57	10
35-49	73	12	56	8	42	5
50-64	80	18	44	8	41	7
65-74	74	27	39	10	35	8
75 +	71	24	31	9	36	11

Volunteering and philanthropy

In the San Diego Jewish community, half of Jewish adults (50%) volunteered in the past year (Table 5.8). Eighteen percent volunteered for or with *both* Jewish and non-Jewish organizations, 6%

volunteered exclusively for or with Jewish organizations, and 26% volunteered exclusively for or with non-Jewish organizations.

Jewish engagement groups differ in the extent and types of volunteering in which they engage. Jewish adults in the Involved and Immersed groups have the highest shares of Jewish adults engaged in volunteering, including three quarters of those in the Immersed group and half of those in the Involved group. Members of the Immersed group also have the largest share who volunteered with exclusively Jewish causes (23%) and with both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations (42%). Members of the Occasional and Holiday groups have the largest shares who volunteered for exclusively non-Jewish organizations (38% and 35% respectively).

Table 5.8. Volunteering, past year

	Any volunteering	Jewish and non-Jewish	Jewish only	Non-Jewish only	Did not volunteer or don't know	Total
All Jewish adults	50	18	6	26	50	100
Jewish engagement						
Occasional	45	1	2	38	55	100
Cultural	44	16	3	26	56	100
Holiday	42	4	4	35	58	100
Involved	48	19	10	18	52	100
Immersed	74	42	23	9	26	100
Region						
Central	48	15	11	23	52	100
North	47	17	4	26	53	100
Inland	53	21	10	22	47	100
South	50	19	5	27	50	100
Age						
18-34	50	25	10	15	50	100
35-49	48	15	8	24	52	100
50-64	54	18	6	30	46	100
65-74	53	15	7	31	47	100
75 +	40	9	8	22	60	100
Financial situation						
Struggling	53	31	5	17	47	100
Enough	42	16	6	21	58	100
Extra	47	12	11	23	53	100
Well-off	61	20	8	32	39	100

Most Jewish households (82%) reported making a charitable contribution in the past year (Table 5.9). About half (48%) gave to both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations, 3% gave only to Jewish organizations, and 31% gave only to non-Jewish organizations. Nationally, 48% of US Jews donated to any Jewish charity or cause in the past 12 months.

Although nearly three quarters of households in the Occasional group made charitable donations, more than half (55%) donated only to non-Jewish organizations.

Nearly all (95%) of financially well-off households donate to charity, compared to 62% of struggling households. Over half of well-off households (58%) donated both to Jewish and non-Jewish organizations (58%), and one third (36%) donated only to non-Jewish organizations.

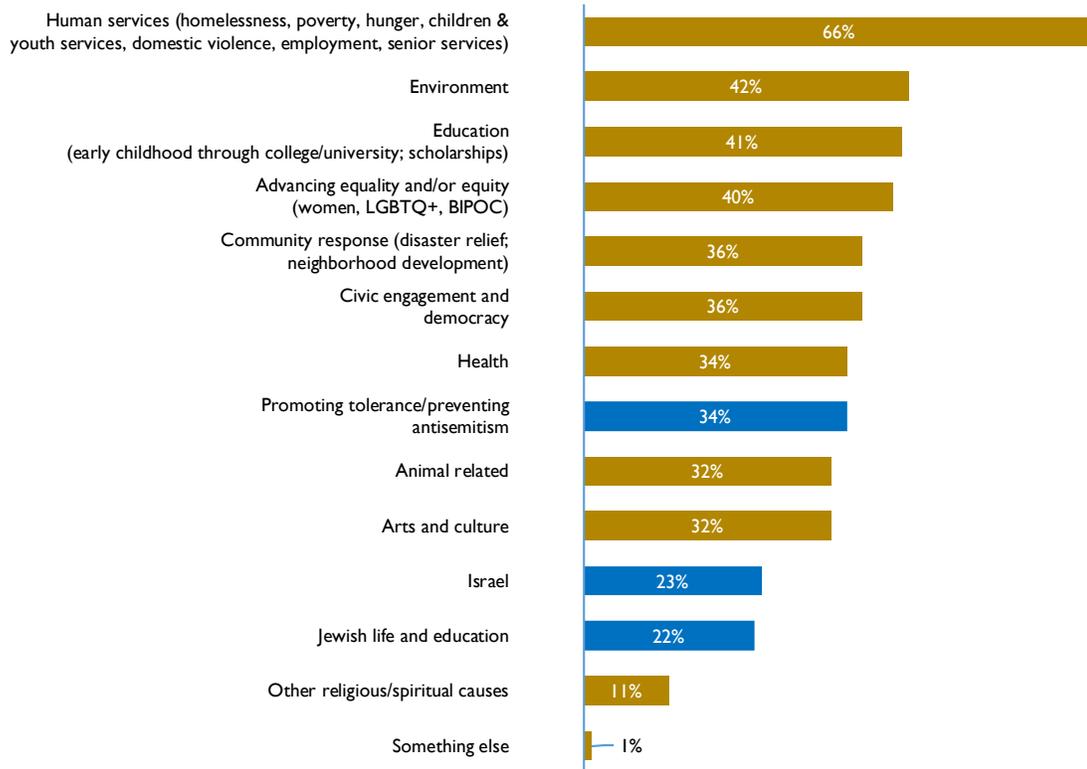
Three percent of Jewish households donated to the Jewish Federation of San Diego County (not in table). In the Immersed engagement group, 17% of households donated to Federation. Eight percent of financially well-off households donated to Federation.

Table 5.9. Donations, past year

	Any donating	Jewish and non-Jewish	Jewish only	Non-Jewish only	Did not donate or don't know	Total
All Jewish households	82	48	3	31	18	100
Jewish engagement						
Occasional	72	18	< 1	55	28	100
Cultural	88	53	4	31	12	100
Holiday	86	45	5	36	14	100
Involved	88	73	5	10	12	100
Immersed	96	85	10	< 1	4	100
Region						
Central	83	51	4	28	17	100
North	88	52	1	35	12	100
Inland	85	45	3	37	15	100
South	83	43	4	35	17	100
Age						
18-34	75	44	3	28	25	100
35-49	88	44	5	40	12	100
50-64	88	52	3	33	12	100
65-74	82	52	3	27	18	100
75 +	85	48	1	36	15	100
Financial situation						
Struggling	62	40	3	19	38	100
Enough	83	48	3	32	17	100
Extra	89	46	4	39	11	100
Well-off	95	58	1	36	5	100

With respect to the causes that Jewish adults consider most important for donations and volunteering, human services, the environment, and education are at the top of the list (Figure 5.1). Two thirds of San Diego Jewish adults (66%) consider human services to be the most important cause for donating or volunteering. For specifically Jewish causes (indicated in blue in the figure), 34% indicate promoting tolerance and preventing antisemitism as a most important cause, 23% rank Israel as most important, and 22% note Jewish life and education as most important.

Figure 5.1. Important causes for volunteering or donating (% of Jewish adults)



Causes related to human services rank highest for all engagement groups except the Immersed, which prioritizes causes related to Jewish life and education (69%) (Table 5.10).

“Your support for refugees regardless of religion is amazing. I am proud of this.”

“I love the work that JFS does, and have volunteered for them in the past and hope to continue to do so. My son participated in a GREAT middle school program with them; I wish there were more like it for my kids. I love the Jewish community!”

Table 5.10. Most important causes by engagement group

All Jewish adults	Human services (66%) Environment (42%) Education (41%) Advancing equality and/or equity (40%)
Occasional	Human services (64%) Environment (48%) Civic engagement and democracy (40%) Advancing equality and/or equity (34%)
Cultural	Human services (71%) Advancing equality and/or equity (52%) Promoting tolerance/preventing antisemitism (45%) Civic engagement and democracy (42%)
Holiday	Human services (62%) Environment (57%) Animal related (49%) Education (44%)
Involved	Human services (72%) Education (43%) Community response (39%) Advancing equality and/or equity (37%)
Immersed	Jewish life/education (69%) Human services (61%) Israel (59%) Promoting tolerance/preventing antisemitism (52%)

CHAPTER 6. COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Chapter highlights

Jews in the San Diego Jewish community express their connection to the community in a range of ways. Nearly all feel some sense of belonging to Jewish people worldwide, and many feel a sense of belonging to the San Diego Jewish community. Although many are satisfied with their current level of connection to the community, most report one or more barriers to participation and identify conditions that would help increase their participation.

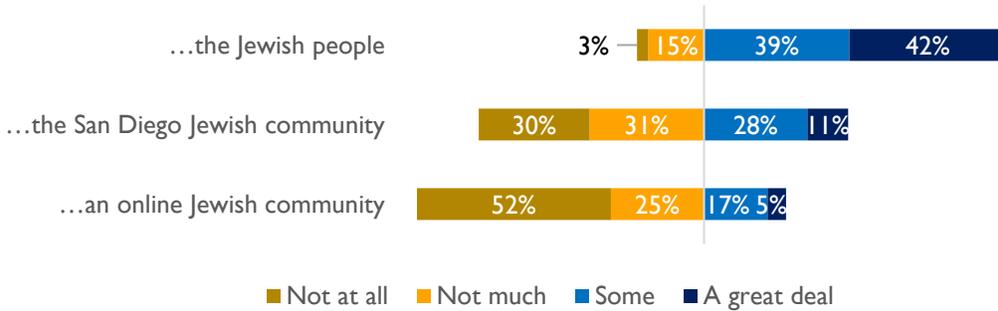
- Nearly all Jewish adults in San Diego feel at least some sense of belonging to the Jewish people, including 42% who feel a great deal of belonging.
- Seventy percent of Jewish adults feel some sense of belonging to the local San Diego Jewish community, including 11% who feel a great deal of belonging.
- Fifty-one percent of Jewish adults say that they have at least some close Jewish friends, including 19% who say most or all of their friends are Jewish. Older adults have significantly more Jewish friends than do younger adults.
- Close to two thirds (63%) of Jewish adults are at least somewhat satisfied with the level of their participation in the San Diego Jewish community, including 24% who are very satisfied. The remaining third of Jewish adults are not at all (12%) or not too satisfied (26%)—this is the group that may be seeking more connection.
- Satisfaction with their level of participation in the Jewish community is much higher among older adults than younger adults. About half of adults under age 34 are not satisfied with their current level of participation and may be looking for ways to increase their involvement.
- The four most common conditions that limit participation in the Jewish community cited by Jewish adults in San Diego are not knowing many people (43%), a lack of interesting activities (37%), lack of confidence in Jewish knowledge (20%), and the cost of participation (20%).
- The most common conditions that make people to feel welcome in the Jewish community are knowing other people (74%) and being personally invited (64%).
- About half of Jewish adults feel more welcome when people with diverse backgrounds participate in events, and this view is shared by Jewish adults of all ages.
- Seventy percent of Jewish adults are very concerned about antisemitism around the world, and 64% are very concerned about antisemitism in the United States.
- Thirteen percent of Jewish adults personally experienced antisemitism in the past year.

Feelings of belonging to the Jewish community

The share of Jewish adults who feel a sense of belonging to the Jewish people in general exceeds the share who feel a sense of belonging to the San Diego Jewish community in particular (Figure 6.1). Among all Jewish adults, 42% feel a great deal of belonging to the Jewish people, 11% to the San Diego Jewish community, and 5% to an online Jewish community.

Among all US Jews, 48% feel a great deal of belonging to the Jewish people and 37% feel some sense of belonging.

Figure 6.1 Sense of belonging to Jewish community (% of Jewish adults)



Feelings of belonging vary by Jewish engagement category, with 85% of the Immersed group feeling a great deal of belonging to the Jewish people, compared to 16% of the Occasional group. Nearly half (48%) of the Immersed group feels a great deal of belonging to the San Diego Jewish community, compared with 3% of the Occasional group.

Table 6.1. Feeling a sense of belonging to...

	... the Jewish people		...the San Diego Jewish community		...an online Jewish community	
	Some	A great deal	Some	A great deal	Some	A great deal
All Jewish adults	39	42	28	11	17	5
Jewish engagement						
Occasional	37	16	8	3	4	2
Cultural	42	40	30	3	14	2
Holiday	60	28	24	1	10	1
Involved	39	54	39	14	18	5
Immersed	13	85	25	48	39	17
Region						
Central	37	47	33	16	15	7
North	32	53	24	17	27	6
Inland	46	33	29	8	16	4
South	38	40	22	7	9	3
Age						
18-34	36	43	27	13	11	6
35-49	45	36	30	9	18	2
50-64	38	43	32	11	15	4
65-74	40	48	26	12	23	5
75 +	30	57	23	19	21	10
Relationship status						
Not couple	40	38	22	11	17	3
Couple	37	47	31	13	16	6
Jewish+Jewish	32	62	37	22	22	10
Jewish+non-Jewish	43	32	25	4	10	2

Jewish friends

About one-in-five Jewish adults say that most or all of their close friends are Jewish, and 10% say that none of their close friends are Jewish (Table 6.2). Although half of the Immersed groups say that most or all of their close friends are Jewish, adults in the other engagement groups have fewer Jewish friends.

Older adults have significantly more Jewish friends than do younger adults. Among Jewish adults ages 50 and older, about one quarter or more say that most of their close friends are Jewish; in comparison, 10% of those ages 34 and younger say that most of their close friends are Jewish.

Table 6.2. Close Jewish friends

	None of them	Hardly any of them	About half of them	Most or all of them	Total
All Jewish adults	10	39	32	19	100
Jewish engagement					
Occasional	16	48	27	9	100
Cultural	21	28	38	14	100
Holiday	6	58	26	10	100
Involved	2	36	40	23	100
Immersed	< 1	15	33	52	100
Region					
Central	7	27	34	32	100
North	6	28	46	20	100
Inland	10	57	20	13	100
South	17	40	34	9	100
Age					
18-34	8	43	39	10	100
35-49	16	40	27	18	100
50-64	7	30	40	23	100
65-74	4	34	37	26	100
75 +	7	34	21	38	100
Relationship status					
Not couple	9	33	45	13	100
Couple	10	37	28	24	100
Jewish+Jewish	5	28	26	41	100
Jewish+non-Jewish	16	46	31	7	100

Satisfaction with participation

The survey asked about overall satisfaction with current levels of participation in the San Diego Jewish community. For Jewish adults who are highly engaged with Jewish life, a high level of satisfaction indicates that they are finding the opportunities that interest them. For those who are less active in Jewish life, satisfaction may indicate that they are not looking for more opportunities to engage. In this context, dissatisfaction with participation can best be understood as an opportunity—a possible sign that community members are looking to do more. Close to two thirds of Jewish adults (63%) are at least somewhat satisfied with the level of their participation in the San Diego Jewish community, including 24% who are very satisfied (Table 6.3). The remaining third of Jewish adults are not at all (12%) or not too satisfied (26%)—this is the group that may be seeking more connection.

The vast majority of Jewish adults in the Immersed group are satisfied with their current level of participation in the community, as are the majority of those in the Occasional group. About half of the Jewish adults in the Cultural, Holiday, and Involved groups are not satisfied with their current participation, and may be looking to increase their involvement in the community.

Similarly, satisfaction with level of participation in the community is much higher among older adults than younger adults. About half of adults under age 34 are not satisfied with their current level of participation in the community and may be looking for ways to increase their involvement.



“The community doesn’t know about me, and I don’t know how to connect to the community. So I imagine I’m not the only person kind of waiting in the wings, wanting to reconnect with our Jewish roots but not knowing how to do so. Every Jewish leader I have spoken with is very kind, but I still haven’t had the ability to get over the hump and really put myself out there to connect. Partly because I don’t really know what to connect to, what’s available, whether I have standing to do so, etc. As the saying goes, ‘you don’t know what you don’t know.’”

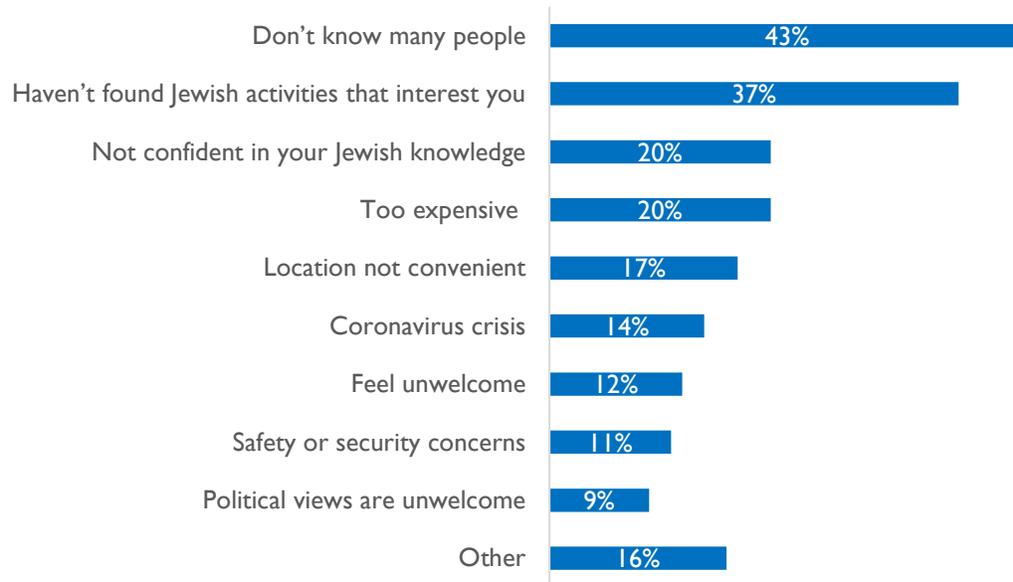
Table 6.3. Satisfaction with participation in San Diego Jewish community

	Not at all satisfied	Not too satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied	Total
All Jewish adults	12	26	39	24	100
Jewish engagement					
Occasional	7	17	26	51	100
Cultural	18	31	35	16	100
Holiday	22	28	40	9	100
Involved	8	42	40	10	100
Immersed	3	14	42	41	100
Region					
Central	10	23	40	27	100
North	11	28	35	26	100
Inland	13	25	41	21	100
South	13	38	27	21	100
Age					
18-34	11	38	37	14	100
35-49	16	27	41	16	100
50-64	9	27	36	27	100
65-74	10	22	34	34	100
75 +	12	19	30	39	100
Relationship status					
Not couple	14	22	41	23	100
Couple	11	27	37	25	100
Jewish+Jewish	12	21	43	23	100
Jewish+non-Jewish	9	37	27	27	100

Barriers: Limiting conditions

Figure 6.2 displays the extent to which certain conditions limit Jewish adults in San Diego from participating more in the community. The barriers that are most frequently cited are not knowing many people (43%) and not finding Jewish activities of interest (37%).

Figure 6.2. Conditions that limit participation



The other limiting conditions mentioned by respondents include personal or family health issues, childcare needs, and not having enough time.

Engagement groups identify different barriers to participation (Tables 6.4a, 6.4b). For example, about one third of Jewish adults in the Occasional group say that their participation is limited because they are not confident in their Jewish knowledge. Two thirds of those in the Holiday group have not found activities that interest them. This group is also more likely than others to have safety or security concerns.

Among Jewish adults in the Inland and South regions, about half say that not knowing people is a barrier, compared to about one third of Jewish adults in the Central and North regions. Compared to Jewish adults in Central, those in the other regions are more likely to cite location as a barrier. Jewish adults in Inland are more concerned about safety than those in other regions.

Jewish adults younger than age 50 are more likely to say that not knowing people and not having confidence with Jewish knowledge are barriers, compared to people ages 50 and older. Younger Jewish adults are also more concerned about safety or security than are those ages 50 and older.

Jews married/partnered with non-Jews are more likely than Jews married/partnered with other Jews to say that not knowing people and not having confidence in their Jewish knowledge are barriers. Singles are more likely than couples to say that feeling unwelcome is a barrier.

Table 6.4a. Limits to participation in the San Diego Jewish community

	Any limitation	Don't know many people	Haven't found Jewish activities that interest you	Not confident in your Jewish knowledge	Too expensive
All Jewish adults	78	43	37	20	20
Jewish engagement					
Occasional	69	38	40	36	19
Cultural	85	46	41	19	18
Holiday	91	58	62	19	28
Involved	82	48	28	13	21
Immersed	60	21	16	9	20
Region					
Central	75	36	35	17	19
North	71	36	34	15	21
Inland	81	51	39	25	22
South	87	54	38	21	21
Age					
18-34	87	62	43	26	24
35-49	87	50	39	28	24
50-64	74	29	36	14	17
65-74	68	31	30	12	19
75 +	68	33	29	10	15
Relationship status					
Not couple	83	43	43	23	22
Couple	76	43	33	17	20
Jewish+Jewish	73	36	32	10	17
Jewish+non-Jewish	79	50	34	24	23

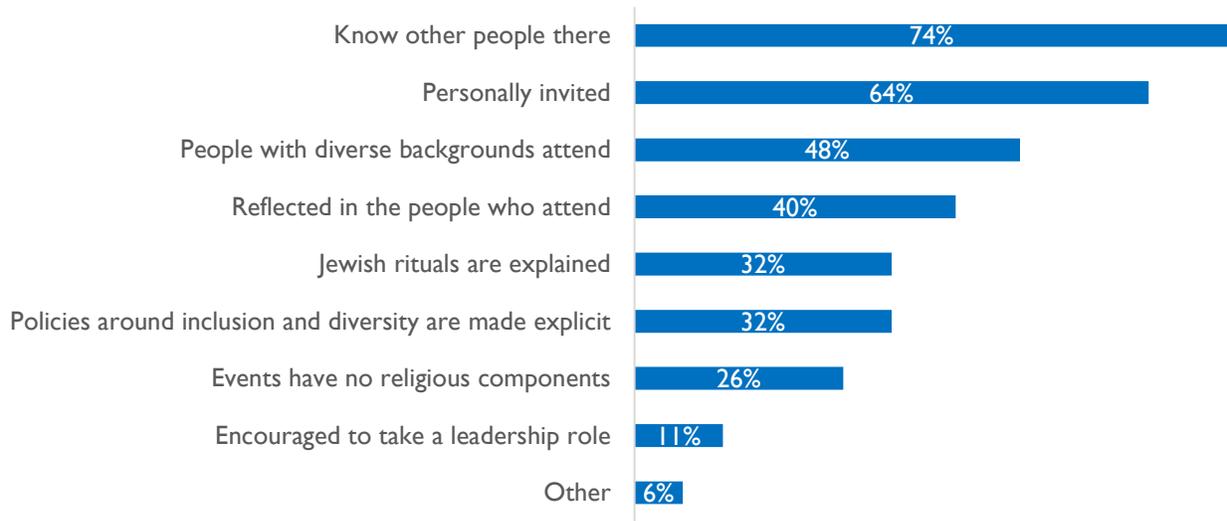
Table 6.4b. Limits to participation in the San Diego Jewish community

	Location not convenient	Coronavirus crisis	Feel unwelcome	Safety or security concerns	Political views are unwelcome	Other
All Jewish adults	17	14	12	11	9	16
Jewish engagement						
Occasional	8	10	13	3	5	17
Cultural	16	13	10	5	9	10
Holiday	23	18	4	20	6	11
Involved	23	18	21	14	8	24
Immersed	17	16	9	7	7	14
Region						
Central	9	16	6	5	9	17
North	22	12	14	7	8	13
Inland	27	14	19	26	7	15
South	18	16	16	11	10	18
Age						
18-34	20	11	17	21	4	13
35-49	20	19	13	9	10	20
50-64	14	11	14	7	9	19
65-74	15	19	8	8	7	13
75 +	16	19	5	3	10	16
Relationship status						
Not couple	17	13	19	12	7	18
Couple	18	16	9	10	9	15
Jewish+Jewish	18	16	8	10	6	14
Jewish+non-Jewish	17	15	11	11	8	17

Openings: Welcoming conditions

While barrier conditions restrict connections to Jewish life in San Diego, other conditions represent “openings” that help community members feel welcome and comfortable at Jewish events (Figure 6.3).

Figure 6.3. Welcoming conditions



The engagement groups differ regarding which welcoming conditions they consider most important (Tables 6.5a, 6.5b). The Immersed, Holiday, and Involved engagement groups are more likely to say that they feel welcome and comfortable at Jewish events when they know people there, compared with the Cultural and Occasional engagement groups. Members of the Immersed and Involved groups are more likely to say that they feel welcome and comfortable when someone personally invites them to a program. The Occasional and Holiday groups are more likely to say that they feel welcome and comfortable when events have no religious components.

Adults younger than 50 are more likely to say that they feel welcome and comfortable at Jewish events when they know other people there, compared to those ages 50 and older. Younger people are also more likely, compared with those ages 50 and older, to say that when policies around inclusion and diversity are made explicit, they feel welcome and comfortable at events. People ages 34 and younger are more likely than older Jews to feel welcome and comfortable at Jewish events when encouraged to take a leadership role.

Singles are more likely, compared with couples, to feel welcome and comfortable at Jewish events when people with diverse backgrounds attend and when they see themselves reflected in the people who attend.

Attending Jewish events with people of diverse backgrounds is important to about half of Jewish adults, regardless of Jewish engagement group and age.

Table 6.5a. Feeling welcome and comfortable at Jewish events

	Any condition	Know other people there	Personally invited	People with diverse backgrounds attend	Reflected in the people who attend
All Jewish adults	90	74	64	48	40
Jewish engagement					
Occasional	80	56	53	51	31
Cultural	87	71	60	42	35
Holiday	94	82	59	56	35
Involved	96	80	74	45	45
Immersed	99	91	78	51	59
Region					
Central	91	74	61	43	42
North	92	76	65	53	47
Inland	91	82	65	53	34
South	89	69	71	46	39
Age					
18-34	97	84	71	60	41
35-49	96	81	72	49	44
50-64	95	75	61	43	44
65-74	84	68	63	41	38
75 +	75	58	53	38	34
Relationship status					
Not couple	93	77	72	63	50
Couple	90	74	62	41	36
Jewish+Jewish	91	77	60	49	42
Jewish+non-Jewish	89	70	64	42	31

“I haven’t found a good fit for me at Jewish events I’ve attended when I attend on my own without friends. While I’ve volunteered at some, I haven’t felt very welcomed by others at the event, even though they do not know me.”

Table 6.5b. Feeling welcome and comfortable at Jewish events

	Jewish rituals are explained	Policies around inclusion and diversity are made explicit	Events have no religious components	Encouraged to take a leadership role	Other
All Jewish adults	32	32	26	11	6
Jewish engagement					
Occasional	26	30	44	2	4
Cultural	30	28	29	3	9
Holiday	24	27	40	3	5
Involved	37	33	13	19	6
Immersed	47	33	8	33	6
Region					
Central	34	23	24	9	4
North	38	33	23	15	5
Inland	24	35	29	8	4
South	34	37	28	16	13
Age					
18-34	43	43	28	22	6
35-49	38	33	31	10	9
50-64	30	25	19	7	9
65-74	22	20	28	5	6
75 +	22	23	20	11	2
Relationship status					
Not couple	38	38	26	14	9
Couple	31	27	26	11	5
Jewish+Jewish	26	22	23	13	5
Jewish+non-Jewish	35	32	29	8	6

Barriers/openings and current satisfaction

As indicated earlier in Table 6.3., close to two thirds of Jewish adults (63%) are at least somewhat satisfied with the level of their participation in the San Diego Jewish community. The remainder are not at all (12%) or not too satisfied (26%), and this is the group that may be seeking more connection. This section explores the barriers and openings for those who are not currently satisfied.

For those who are not at all or not too satisfied with their current participation, not knowing many people is the most cited barrier to participation (Tables 6.6a, 6.6b). In contrast, for those who are very satisfied, only 10% indicate that this is a barrier to participation.

Table 6.6a. Barriers and satisfaction with current participation

	Any limitation	Don't know many people	Haven't found Jewish activities of interest	Not confident in Jewish knowledge	Too expensive
All Jewish adults	78	43	37	20	20
Satisfaction with Jewish participation					
Not at all satisfied	94	55	44	15	39
Not too satisfied	96	65	45	27	29
Somewhat satisfied	84	44	36	21	18
Very satisfied	41	10	22	9	7

Table 6.6b. Barriers and satisfaction with current participation

	Location not convenient	Coronavirus crisis	Feel unwelcome	Safety or security concerns	Political views are unwelcome	Other
All Jewish adults	17	14	12	11	9	16
Satisfaction with Jewish participation						
Not at all satisfied	34	19	19	6	11	24
Not too satisfied	22	15	21	8	8	17
Somewhat satisfied	16	20	11	21	8	17
Very satisfied	6	4	2	2	5	9

Among those who are not too satisfied with their current participation, 81% say that a personal invitation would help them feel more welcome (Tables 6.7a, 6.7b). This is significantly higher than among those who are more or less satisfied.

Table 6.7a. Openings and satisfaction with current participation

	Any condition	Know other people there	Personal invitation	People with diverse backgrounds attend	Reflected in the people who attend
All Jewish adults	90	74	64	48	40
Satisfaction with Jewish participation					
Not at all satisfied	88	67	52	49	41
Not too satisfied	97	78	81	42	44
Somewhat satisfied	94	84	68	55	45
Very satisfied	83	63	51	45	32

Table 6.7b. Openings and satisfaction with current participation

	Jewish rituals are explained	Policies around inclusion and diversity are made explicit	Events have no religious components	Encouraged to take a leadership role	Other
All Jewish adults	32	32	26	11	6
Satisfaction with current participation					
Not at all satisfied	31	29	10	8	13
Not too satisfied	38	28	17	15	7
Somewhat satisfied	32	38	34	8	6
Very satisfied	31	24	30	15	5

Barriers/openings for newcomers

For relative newcomers to San Diego, lack of personal connections is a much greater barrier to participation than for longer term residents (Table 6.8). For those who have lived in San Diego for less than five years, 86% feel more welcome when they know other people at an event, and 85% appreciate a personal invitation.

Table 6.8. Barriers/openings by length of residence

	Barrier: Know few people	Opening: Know other people there	Opening: Personal invitation
All Jewish adults	43	74	64
Length of residence			
0-4 years	66	86	85
5-9 years	60	86	71
10-19 years	35	72	52
20+ years	33	69	62

Financial barriers

For financially struggling adults, some of these barriers are more pronounced (Table 6.9). Almost half of financially struggling individuals report that activities are too expensive. About one quarter of this group feels unwelcome at Jewish activities.

Table 6.9. Financial situation and limits to participation in the San Diego Jewish community

	Barrier: Too expensive	Barrier: Feel unwelcome
All Jewish adults	20	12
Financial situation		
Struggling	48	24
Enough	18	18
Extra	19	6
Well-off	10	4

Political views

As indicated earlier (Figure 6.2), 9% of Jewish adults feel limited in their communal involvement due to their concern that their political views are unwelcome. Among the 17% of Jewish adults who describe themselves as extremely liberal, 9% feel their political views are unwelcome (Table 6.10). Among the 8% of Jewish adults who describe themselves as conservative or extremely conservative, 35% feel their political views are unwelcome.

Table 6.10. Political views and limits to participation in the San Diego Jewish community

	Believes their political views are unwelcome
All Jewish adults	9
Political views	
Extremely liberal	9
Liberal	2
Slightly liberal	1
Moderate	10
Slightly conservative	12
Conservative or extremely conservative	35

Program accessibility and community inclusion

The survey examined the degree to which San Diego Jewish organizations are perceived as welcoming by groups that have reported feeling excluded from Jewish life, including People of Color, LGBTQ-identified individuals, those with disabilities or special needs, and families with one Jewish and one non-Jewish partner.

Two thirds of Jewish adults who share a household with someone with a disability or special need have no opinion on how welcoming organizations are to people with a disability or special need (Table 6.11). Another 27% of that group find community organizations to be very welcoming.

Table 6.11. Jewish organizational welcoming of people with disabilities or special needs

	Not at all welcoming	Not too welcoming	Somewhat welcoming	Very welcoming	No opinion	Total
All Jewish adults	1	2	13	38	46	100
Lives with someone with a disability or special need						
No	< 1	1	14	39	46	100
Yes	2	8	19	27	66	100

Over half of Jewish adults living with a Person of Color believe local organizations are somewhat (25%) or very (32%) welcoming to People of Color (Table 6.12). However, 13% believe organizations are not too welcoming.

Table 6.12. Jewish organizational welcoming of people of color

	Not at all welcoming	Not too welcoming	Somewhat welcoming	Very welcoming	No opinion	Total
All Jewish adults	1	6	17	30	46	100
Lives with a person of color						
No	1	5	17	29	48	100
Yes	1	13	25	32	29	100

Relatively few Jewish adults believe that San Diego Jewish organizations are not at all or not too welcoming to interfaith families (Table 6.13) and LGBTQ people (Table 6.14). There are no differences in perceptions of how welcoming Jewish organizations are to these families between those living in a Jewish/Jewish household and those living in a Jewish/non-Jewish household.

Table 6.13 Jewish organizational welcoming of interfaith families

	Not at all welcoming	Not too welcoming	Somewhat welcoming	Very welcoming	No opinion	Total
All Jewish adults	1	5	17	35	42	100
Lives in a Jewish+non-Jewish household						
No	2	4	21	30	43	100
Yes	1	5	18	37	38	100

Table 6.14. Jewish organizational welcoming of LGBTQ people

	Not at all welcoming	Not too welcoming	Somewhat welcoming	Very welcoming	No opinion	Total
All Jewish adults	1	3	15	35	46	100
Lives with a LGBTQ individual						
No	1	3	18	32	46	100
Yes	2	6	14	44	34	100

Concerns about and experiences with antisemitism

The majority of Jewish adults are very concerned about antisemitism around the world (70%) and in the United States (64%). Thirteen percent of Jewish adults personally experienced antisemitism in the previous year (Table 6.15).

Jewish adults in the Cultural, Involved, and Immersed engagement groups are most concerned about antisemitism around the world, and these groups are most likely to have experienced antisemitism personally. There is no significant difference across engagement groups in the degree of concern about US antisemitism.

Older Jews are generally more concerned about antisemitism globally or in the United States than are younger Jews. However, a larger share of younger Jews, those ages 18 to 34, reported experiencing antisemitism than did older Jews.

Nearly one quarter (23%) of those living in the South region reported experiencing antisemitism, compared to 9% living in the Central region.

Table 6.15. Antisemitism

	Around the world (very concerned)	In the United States (very concerned)	Experienced antisemitism
All Jewish adults	70	64	13
Jewish engagement			
Occasional	56	53	6
Cultural	79	71	13
Holiday	67	61	6
Involved	73	65	25
Immersed	82	68	13
Region			
Central	74	64	9
North	72	67	14
Inland	61	61	11
South	76	65	23
Age			
18-34	67	53	21
35-49	60	56	17
50-64	74	71	13
65-74	80	75	8
75 +	81	71	6

When asked to describe their personal experiences of antisemitism, 248 respondents provided related details (Table 6.16). These responses were classified based on the setting, severity, and content. These classifications appear below. Note that for write-in text responses, we do not report weighted percentages, but the actual number of responses. In the tables below, the number of codes does not total 248 because respondents could indicate multiple situations, and not all responses could be coded.

The majority (179) of respondents described being the direct target of antisemitism (“direct”). For 27 respondents, the antisemitism was not directed at them specifically (“indirect”) (Table 6.16).

Table 6.16. Personal experiences of antisemitism in the past year

	Number of responses	Examples
Direct Directly/personally experienced antisemitism (i.e., recipient of antisemitic harassment, violence, threats of violence, witness to antisemitic graffiti, text, or imagery.	179	"I was told by a potential employer that they would not hire a Jew for the role." "I was greeted with a Nazi salute."
Indirect Indirectly experienced antisemitism (i.e., overheard remarks oral or written, directed at someone else, or about Jews, in general), or saw vandalism on property one does not own.	27	"Not aware I am Jewish and say off color comments." "At a Rotary meeting, two men at my table snickered when a very Jewish name was announced, asking each other "have you ever heard a more Jewish name?"

About half of the experiences were categorized as mild in intensity and a similar number were categorized as moderate. Only eight experiences were categorized as intense, including physical violence or threats of violence (Table 6.17).

Table 6.17. Intensity of antisemitic experiences in the past year

	Number of responses	Examples
Mild intensity Offenses that could be described as microaggressions, stereotypes, slights, or "jokes"	99	"The coach of a sports team I'm on made antisemitic 'jokes' at practice." "A friend made an 'innocent' comment."
Moderate intensity Intended to harm, upsetting, but not intense or highly traumatic.	98	"I had a woman tell me to my face that 'big fat Jews are the problem in this world.'" "Verbal abuse, yelling Jewish ethnic slur."
Intense intensity Physical violence or threats	8	"The most aggressive was online verbal harassment including slurs and threats to sexually assault and murder me and my family."

Respondents reported experiencing antisemitism in a variety of settings, both public and private. Among the settings that could be classified, the most common was work or school, followed by other public places (Table 6.18).

Table 6.18. Setting of antisemitic experiences in the past year

	Number of responses	Examples
Work or school	45	"At my workplace I have experienced many microaggressions, and I have been the butt of jokes as well." "My children were exposed to antisemitic comments at school."
A public place (other than work or school)	43	"There was a truck with hate speech banners driving through the local community."
Online and social media	16	"An online hate screed on a dating site." "Our kids have both been the target of antisemitic slurs on social media."
Friends	13	"Non-Jewish friends jokingly referring to my desire for fairness in paying for things as being due to my Jewish background." "At dinner with friends... She commented on how the Jews are buying up all the properties in her town and making it impossible for people to afford to live there."
At or near home	12	"A new neighbor commented that the seller of her home was a typical Jew." "Swastika graffiti on telephone pole a block from our home."
Other or unspecified	81	

The content of the antisemitic experiences described by respondents varied widely. The largest number of cases could be categorized microaggressions or “jokes” (40), harassment (38), and stereotypes (30).

Table 6.19. Type of antisemitic experiences in the past year

	Number of responses	Examples
Microaggressions (e.g., A comment or action perceived to be antisemitic, that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudiced attitude; veiled insults or slights)	40	"Oh, you don't look or seem Jewish." "Being told someone was glad my son's name isn't 'too Jewish.'"
Harassment (e.g., Antisemitic words, insults, disparaging terms intentionally directed to respondent)	38	"I am a graduate student at [college] and have experienced antisemitism on campus from both students (apartheid wall, harassment from SJP, etc.) and professors (who send unwarranted emails about the Israel conflict, etc.). "Being yelled at while walking to synagogue."
Stereotypes (e.g., money and power)	30	"I work in the construction industry and at least one employee made a comment about Jews loving money." "I have had colleagues say antisemitic things to me about Jews controlling the media."
Israel-related Antisemitism tied to Israel, Zionism, accusations of dual loyalty	22	"Receiving threatening comments online for being a Zionist." "Called an Israeli spy. Questioned about caring more about Israel than US."
Holocaust or Hate groups (e.g., references to Holocaust, comments by hate groups such as Neo-Nazis)	21	"Specific comments about how Jews only care for their own and that this is the reason that the Holocaust happened." "A white supremacist yelled at a group of people (including myself) sitting outside... during our brief altercation he did the Nazi salute at me and said more of us should have died in the ovens."
Physical violence to persons or property (vandalism) or threats of violence	13	"While walking to shul, as cars drove by, the occupants inside shouted and threw bottles with liquid inside at me." "Mezuzah on my business was taken off and scroll torn up and thrown on ground"
Religious (e.g., religious or theologically-based antisemitism)	11	"I was called a Jesus killer." "A neighbor tried to proselytize me into being a Christian so I wouldn't go to hell."
Other or unspecified	51	

CHAPTER 7. CONNECTIONS TO ISRAEL

Chapter highlights

Israel plays an important role in the Jewish identity of many Jewish adults in San Diego. The proportion of San Diego Jewish adults who have traveled to Israel is higher than among the national Jewish community. Community members tend to follow news about Israel and hold diverse views about the country's character and its policies.

- The majority of Jewish adults are emotionally attached to Israel, with 28% feeling very attached and 37% feeling somewhat attached. Taken together, this proportion (65%) is higher than among all US Jewish adults (58%).
- About two thirds of Jewish adults in San Diego (65%) have been to Israel, including 12% who lived there. This share is larger than that of US Jews in general, of whom 45% have traveled to Israel.
- Over one third (38%) of age-eligible Jewish adults (ages 51 and younger) have been on a Birthright trip to Israel.
- More than half of Jewish adults follow news about Israel, 17% very closely and 41% somewhat closely.
- The majority of Jewish adults in San Diego strongly agree that Israel should exist as a refuge for the Jewish people, now and in the future (73%).
- More than half of Jewish adults disagreed with the statement: "I almost always agree with Israel's policies and actions."
- Attachment to Israel and views about Israel are highly correlated with overall political views.

Emotional attachment and caring

More than half of Jewish adults feel some level of emotional attachment to Israel, with 37% feeling somewhat attached and 28% feeling very attached (Table 7.1). Taken together, the proportion who are somewhat or very attached to Israel (65%) is slightly higher than among all US Jewish adults (58%). About one third (35%) of the Occasional group feel not at all attached, which is a significantly higher share than among the other engagement groups (1%-12%).

Table 7.1. Emotional attachment to Israel

	Not at all attached	Not too attached	Somewhat attached	Very attached	Total
All Jewish adults	13	22	37	28	100
Jewish engagement					
Occasional	35	31	27	7	100
Cultural	12	16	47	25	100
Holiday	12	42	29	17	100
Involved	5	18	39	38	100
Immersed	1	7	30	62	100
Region					
Central	11	17	40	33	100
North	8	27	33	31	100
Inland	17	29	28	26	100
South	19	17	38	26	100
Age					
18-34	7	27	36	30	100
35-49	17	22	36	26	100
50-64	18	18	36	27	100
65-74	14	23	32	32	100
75+	11	11	43	35	100

About three quarters of San Diego Jewish adults believes that caring about Israel is important (37%) or essential (40%) to what being Jewish means to them (Table 7.2). Nearly everyone in the Immersed engagement groups believe caring about Israel is important or essential to being Jewish. Notably, while adults of all ages feel similar levels of attachment to Israel (Table 7.1), a larger share of older adults consider caring about Israel as essential to being Jewish. (NOTE: See Chapter 2 for a discussion of other important and essential aspects of being Jewish).

Table 7.2. Importance of caring about Israel to being Jewish

	Not important	Important, not essential	Essential	Total
All Jewish adults	23	37	40	100
Jewish engagement				
Occasional	43	34	23	100
Cultural	23	44	33	100
Holiday	25	45	30	100
Involved	15	36	49	100
Immersed	3	35	62	100
Region				
Central	15	37	48	100
North	17	42	41	100
Inland	27	40	33	100
South	33	37	30	100
Age				
18-34	35	38	28	100
35-49	17	41	41	100
50-64	19	42	39	100
65-74	15	38	47	100
75+	12	33	55	100

Travel to Israel

Two thirds of San Diego’s Jewish adults have been to Israel: 28% have been there once, 25% have been there multiple times, and 12% have lived there (Table 7.3). The share of Jewish adults who have been to Israel at least once (64%) is larger than among US Jews in general, of whom 45% traveled to Israel.

Israel travel is associated with patterns of Jewish engagement. Among Jewish adults in the Immersed group, 86% have been to Israel, as have about three quarters of the Involved (75%) and Holiday (74%) engagement groups. The Occasional group has the lowest share of Israel travel, with two thirds never having been to Israel. There are no regional or age-related differences related to Israel travel.

There is a strong and expected connection between travel to Israel and emotional attachment. Three quarters (73%) of Jewish adults who are not all attached to Israel have never visited. In contrast, among those who are very attached to Israel, 38% have visited more than once and another 36% have lived in Israel.

Table 7.3. Travel to Israel

	Never	Once	More than once	Lived in Israel	Total
All Jewish adults	36	28	25	12	100
Jewish engagement					
Occasional	65	29	7	< 1	100
Cultural	42	22	21	14	100
Holiday	26	46	23	5	100
Involved	25	21	37	17	100
Immersed	15	16	39	31	100
Region					
Central	30	23	31	15	100
North	31	26	26	17	100
Inland	47	29	13	11	100
South	39	25	25	10	100
Age					
18-34	30	29	18	23	100
35-49	41	20	25	14	100
50-64	37	20	34	9	100
65-74	41	27	25	7	100
75+	33	29	28	10	100
Emotional attachment to Israel					
Not at all attached	73	14	13	< 1	100
Not too attached	48	40	10	2	100
Somewhat attached	34	31	29	6	100
Very attached	12	14	38	36	100

For San Diego’s Jewish adults, the most common types of Israel travel have been Birthright Israel trips (for those age-eligible), vacations, and visits to families and friends¹⁴ (Table 7.4). Half of Jewish adults ages 18-34 participated in a Birthright Israel trip.

¹⁴ Due to a programming error, the 2% of Jewish adults who were born in Israel were not asked questions about the types of trips they have made to Israel.

Table 7.4. Types of trips to Israel

	Birthright (age < 51)	Vacation	Visit friends or family	Educational program or volunteer trip	Long-term program	Sponsored by Jewish organization	Business trip
Jewish adults not born in Israel	38	33	26	16	14	14	5
Jewish engagement							
Occasional	--	9	6	4	4	5	1
Cultural	--	24	25	6	6	10	5
Holiday	--	35	26	6	7	13	2
Involved	41	42	31	29	25	20	6
Immersed	36	62	48	41	35	43	8
Region							
Central	35	39	30	19	16	21	6
North	--	42	33	30	22	27	4
Inland	30	21	19	7	11	7	3
South	--	27	20	11	11	10	4
Age							
18-34	50	30	27	21	24	13	2
35-49	23	30	24	15	14	17	5
50-64	--	39	29	21	17	19	7
65-74	n/a	33	27	14	7	17	3
75+	n/a	35	22	9	8	20	8

News about Israel

More than half (58%) of Jewish adults follow news about Israel somewhat (41%) or very (17%) closely (Table 7.5). Interest in Israel news is highest among Jewish adults in the Cultural, Involved, and Immersed groups, and relatively low in the Occasional and Holiday groups.

Following the news about Israel also varies by age, with those ages 65-75 and 75+ most likely to follow the news very closely (23% and 26% respectively). Jewish adults under age 50 are least likely to follow the news closely. This generational difference may be attributable to the interest in news in general by age or may be related to the interest in news about Israel in particular.

Table 7.5. News about Israel

	Not at all closely	Not too closely	Somewhat closely	Very closely	Total
All Jewish adults	9	34	41	17	100
Jewish engagement					
Occasional	21	51	23	5	100
Cultural	3	24	47	25	100
Holiday	17	40	36	7	100
Involved	4	28	48	20	100
Immersed	1	24	44	31	100
Region					
Central	8	31	47	14	100
North	7	34	38	22	100
Inland	15	29	43	13	100
South	6	38	30	26	100
Age					
18-34	14	36	29	21	100
35-49	13	38	40	9	100
50-64	4	33	51	12	100
65-74	5	30	42	23	100
75+	5	21	47	26	100

Not surprisingly, those who have traveled to Israel and those who feel more attached to Israel are more likely to follow Israel news closely (Table 7.6). Those who traveled to Israel more than once or lived there follow news very closely (26% and 31% respectively) compared to those who have never been or visited once (14% and 9% respectively). Forty-one percent of those who are very attached to Israel follow news about Israel very closely, compared to 4% to 5% of those who feel not too attached or not at all attached to Israel.

Table 7.6. News about Israel

	Not at all closely	Not too closely	Somewhat closely	Very closely	Total
All Jewish adults	9	34	41	17	100
Travel to Israel					
Never	15	39	32	14	100
Once	10	38	42	9	100
More than once	2	25	47	26	100
Lived in Israel	2	21	47	31	100
Emotional attachment to Israel					
Not at all attached	25	47	23	5	100
Not too attached	21	44	31	4	100
Somewhat attached	3	37	48	13	100
Very attached	< 1	13	46	41	100

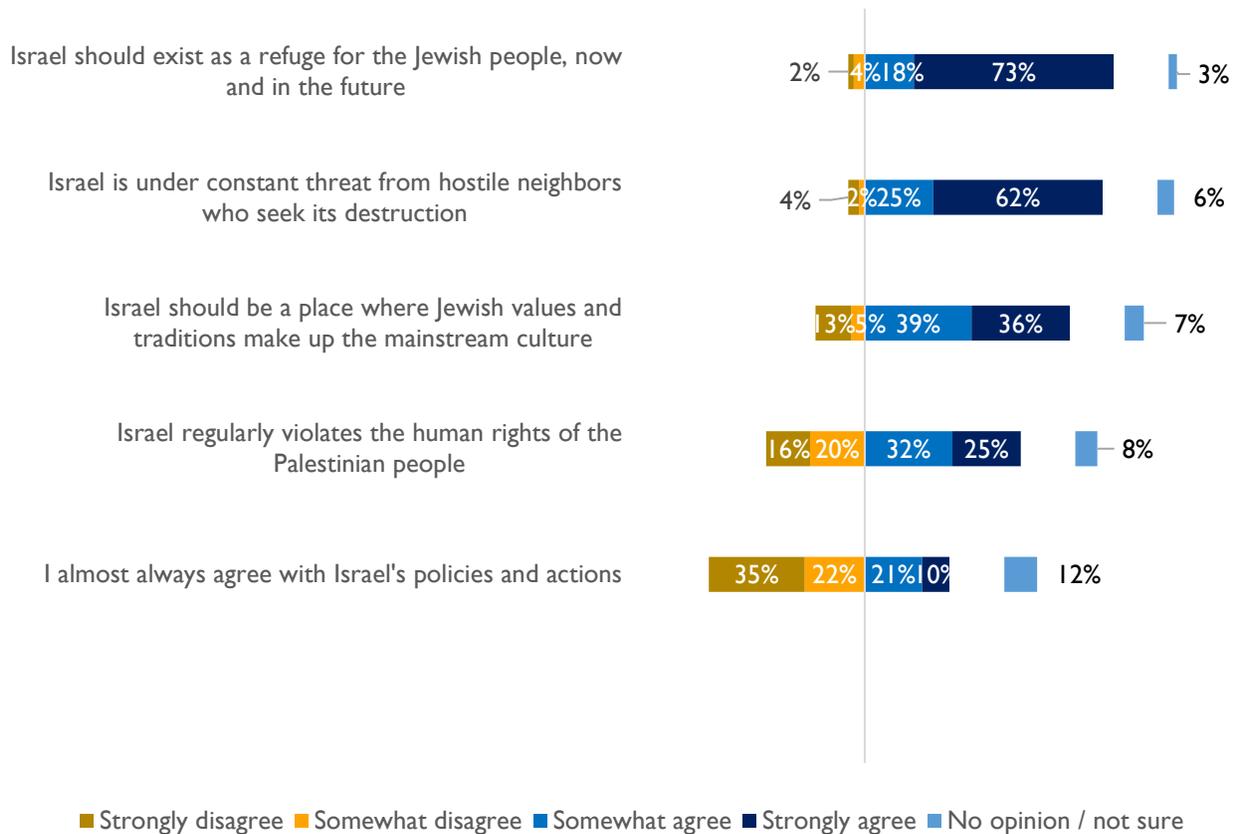
Views about Israel

The Jewish community of San Diego holds a wide variety of views about Israel. There are some areas of shared agreement among Jewish adults, while for other issues, there is less consensus (Figure 7.1). The highest level of agreement (91%) is that “Israel should exist as a refuge for the Jewish people, now and in the future,” with 18% somewhat agreeing and about three quarters (73%) strongly agreeing. There is also a strong agreement (87%) in response to “Israel is under constant threat from hostile neighbors who seek its destruction,” with 25% somewhat agreeing and 62% strongly agreeing.

There is fairly high agreement (75%) with “Israel should be a place where Jewish values and tradition make up the mainstream culture” (39% of San Diego’s Jewish adults somewhat agree, and 36% strongly agree) and less agreement (57%) that “Israel regularly violates the human rights of the Palestinian people” (32% somewhat agree and 25% strongly agree).

The most *disagreement* concerns the statement “I almost always agree with Israel’s policies and actions” (35% somewhat disagree and 22% strongly disagree).

Figure 7.1. Statements about Israel (% of Jewish adults)



There are significant differences by age and engagement group concerning certain views about Israel (Table 7.7). Slightly more than half (55%) of the Occasional engagement group strongly agree that Israel should exist as a refuge for the Jewish people, compared to 82% each of the Involved and Immersed groups. Views about Israel’s status as a refuge also varies by age, with 82% of those ages 75 and older strongly agreeing, compared with 62% of those ages 18-34.

The Immersed group also has a significantly higher share of those who strongly agree that Israel is under constant threat from hostile neighbors who seek its destruction compared to the Occasional group (84% and 46% respectively).

There is even less consensus as to whether Jewish values and traditions should make up Israel’s mainstream culture. Sixty-one percent of the Immersed group, compared with 15% of the Occasional group agree strongly with this view. Variation by age is also evident, with 20% of Jewish adults 18-34 strongly agreeing with this view, compared to about 40% or more of older adults.

Notably, across all engagement groups and ages, about one quarter strongly agree that Israel violates Palestinians’ human rights. A smaller share of Jewish adults, 10%, almost always agree with Israel’s policies and actions, and this proportion is similar across engagement groups and ages.

Table 7.7. Views about Israel, strongly agree

	Israel should exist as a refuge	Israel is under constant threat	Jewish values and traditions should make up Israel's mainstream culture	Israel regularly violates the human rights of the Palestinian people	I almost always agree with Israel's policies and actions
All Jewish adults	73	62	36	25	10
Jewish engagement					
Occasional	55	46	15	33	6
Cultural	72	59	34	31	11
Holiday	79	53	25	31	6
Involved	82	70	46	24	15
Immersed	82	84	61	10	13
Region					
Central	76	68	42	21	11
North	76	71	31	24	10
Inland	71	54	39	22	7
South	69	53	29	39	14
Age					
18-34	62	50	20	37	9
35-49	72	67	43	25	9
50-64	78	67	44	24	8
65-74	80	69	39	23	14
75+	82	69	49	17	16

While for some Jewish adults, attachment to Israel means that they should not criticize Israel, for others, criticism is one of the components of their attachment to the country (Table 7.8).¹⁵ Fourteen percent of the very attached strongly agree that Israel regularly violates Palestinians' human rights.

¹⁵ Graham Wright, Leonard Saxe, and Kenneth Wald, "Is Criticism Disloyal? American Jews' Attitudes toward Israel," *Politics and Religion* 15, no. 1 (2022): 34–60. Doi: 10.1017/S1755048320000693

Table 7.8. Views about Israel by attachment to Israel, strongly agree

	Israel should exist as a refuge	Israel is under constant threat	Jewish values and traditions should make up Israel's mainstream culture	Israel regularly violates the human rights of the Palestinian people	I almost always agree with Israel's policies and actions
All Jewish adults	73	62	36	25	10
Emotional attachment to Israel					
Not at all attached	40	34	10	46	4
Not too attached	59	41	20	33	3
Somewhat attached	83	67	40	25	5
Very attached	87	84	56	14	26

Political views and Israel attitudes

Emotional attachment to Israel has been shown to be correlated with political views¹⁶ (Table 7.9). Among San Diego Jews who are liberal (including extremely and slightly liberal), less than one quarter each are very attached to Israel. In contrast, among those who are conservative or extremely conservative, two thirds each are very attached to Israel.

Table 7.9. Attachment to Israel by political views

	Not at all attached	Not too attached	Somewhat attached	Very attached	Total
All Jewish adults	13	22	37	28	100
Attachment to Israel					
Extremely liberal	27	28	21	24	100
Liberal	7	25	45	22	100
Slightly liberal	11	28	37	24	100
Moderate	21	11	36	31	100
Slightly conservative	5	11	29	56	100
Conservative or extremely conservative	6	3	26	66	100

A similar pattern emerges when looking at agreement with a set of views about Israel. For all of these statements, political views are highly correlated (Table 7.10). There is the most consensus as to whether Israel should exist as a refuge for the Jewish people, now and in the future. Majorities of Jewish adults across the political spectrum strongly agree with this statement, from 60% of the extremely liberal to 91% of the conservative or extremely conservative.

As to whether Israel should be a place where Jewish values and traditions make up the mainstream culture, less than half of all liberals and moderates strongly agree. About three quarters of all conservatives, however, strongly agree.

¹⁶ Wright, Saxe, and Wald, "Is Criticism Disloyal? American Jews Attitude Toward Israel."

There is least consensus over whether Israel regularly violates the human rights of Palestinians. Virtually no conservatives strongly agree with this sentiment, compared to 18-59% of liberals.

Table 7.10. Views about Israel by political views, strongly agree

	Israel should exist as a refuge	Israel is under constant threat	Jewish values and traditions should make up Israel's mainstream culture	Israel regularly violates the human rights of the Palestinian people	I almost always agree with Israel's policies and actions
All Jewish adults	73	62	36	25	10
Jewish engagement					
Extremely liberal	60	48	19	59	2
Liberal	72	57	29	30	4
Slightly liberal	71	59	35	18	5
Moderate	80	77	45	7	19
Slightly conservative	91	85	76	0	34
Conservative or extremely conservative	91	85	77	2	40

CHAPTER 8. HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICE NEEDS

Chapter highlights

Jewish organizations in San Diego want to understand the health and social service needs of their members so that they can better position themselves to address those needs. Households that include a member with a chronic health issue, disability, mental health concern, or households with financial needs (discussed in the next chapter) may be looking for Jewish organizations to provide necessary services or connect them to services provided by others.

- One quarter of Jewish households include a member whose work, school, or activities are limited by a chronic health issue, special need, or disability. This includes 2% of households in which the person with the health issue is a child.
- Of Jewish households in which someone had a health issue, 84% needed at least one service in the past three months, and 11% needed no services.
- Forty-nine percent of Jewish households with a health issue received all of the services they needed, 35% received some, and 5% received none of the needed services.
- Fourteen percent of Jewish households with a member age 65 or older have at least one member who needs assistance with the daily activities.
- Nearly half of financially struggling households (46%) include an individual with a limiting health condition.
- Nine percent of Jewish adults reported that they often or always felt lonely in the previous week. And 56% of Jewish adults reported that in the last week, emotional or mental difficulties hurt their ability to live their day-to-day life.
- Financially struggling adults face more mental and emotional health challenges than do those who are better off. Among financially struggling adults, 22% felt lonely often or all the time in the previous week, 15% had emotional or mental health difficulties that harm their daily life in the previous week often or all the time, and 12% have no one in their support network.

Health and disability

One quarter (26%) of Jewish households in San Diego include at least one person who is limited in their work, school, or activities by a chronic health issue, special need, or disability (Table 8.1).

Nearly half of Jewish households ages 75 and older (44%) and households that are financially struggling (46%) include an individual with a limiting health condition.

Two percent of Jewish households have a child with a limiting health issue, equivalent to 8% of all households with children (not shown in table).

Table 8.1. Households with a limiting health issue

Household member has limiting health issue	
All Jewish households	26
Jewish engagement	
Occasional	33
Cultural	29
Holiday	17
Involved	29
Immersed	22
Region	
Central	24
North	34
Inland	31
South	24
Age	
18-34	17
35-49	21
50-64	26
65-74	31
75 +	44
Financial situation	
Struggling	46
Enough	27
Extra	22
Well-off	25

The health issues most commonly faced by Jewish households in San Diego are chronic illnesses (13%), physical disabilities (10%), and mental or emotional health issues (9%) (Table 8.2).

Table 8.2. Specific health issues

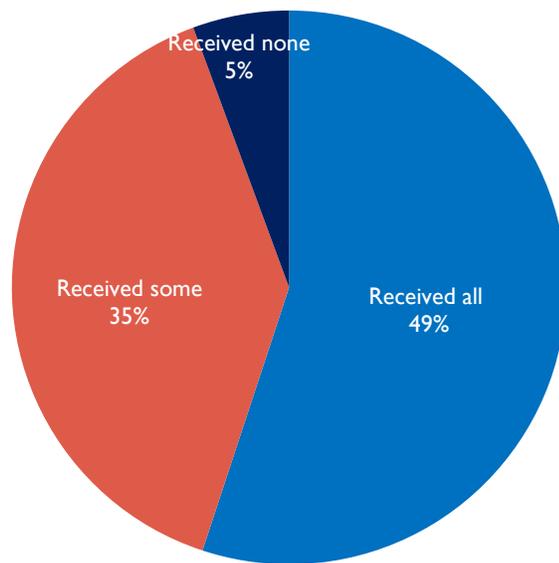
	All Jewish households	Jewish households with a limiting chronic health issue, disability, or special need
	↓	↓
Any health issue	26	100
Chronic illness	13	52
Physical disability	10	41
Mental or emotional health issues	9	37
Developmental or intellectual disability	4	16
Dementia	2	7
Complications related to COVID-19	1	5
Substance abuse or addiction	< 1	1
Other	1	5

Note: Total does not add to 100% because more than one issue may be present in some households.

Support services

Of Jewish households in which someone had a health issue, 84% needed at least one service in the past three months, and 11% needed no services. Of households in which a service was needed, Forty-nine percent of Jewish households with a health issue received all of the services they needed, 35% received some, and 5% received none of the needed services.

Figure 8.1. Receipt of health services (% of households that needed services)



In Jewish households with someone age 65 or older, 14% require assistance with daily tasks, such as preparing meals, housework, dressing or undressing, taking a bath or shower, or walking up and down stairs.

Of Jewish households in which someone required assistance with some daily activities, 27% do not receive care on a regular basis. For the remaining households, 29% received aid from a provider outside of the household, 24% from a relative in the household, 21% from someone else, and < 1% from a relative outside of the household.

Seven percent of Jewish households indicated that lack of transportation has kept someone from a medical appointment, meetings, work, or obtaining necessary items in the last three months. This group includes 2% of households that have transportation barriers all of the time and 7% with transportation barriers some of the time. Among Jewish households in which someone has a limiting health condition, 6% have incomplete access to transportation all of the time and 18% some of the time.

Five percent of Jewish adults ages 55 and over reside in an assisted living facility, nursing home, or an independent senior living building or community, and 9% who do not currently live in one are considering moving into such a facility within the next five years.

Regardless of current need for services, half of Jewish adults indicated that it is not at all important that services be provided by a Jewish organization. One quarter (27%) indicated that having services be provided by a Jewish organization is not too important, 20% that it is somewhat important, and 4% that it is very important.

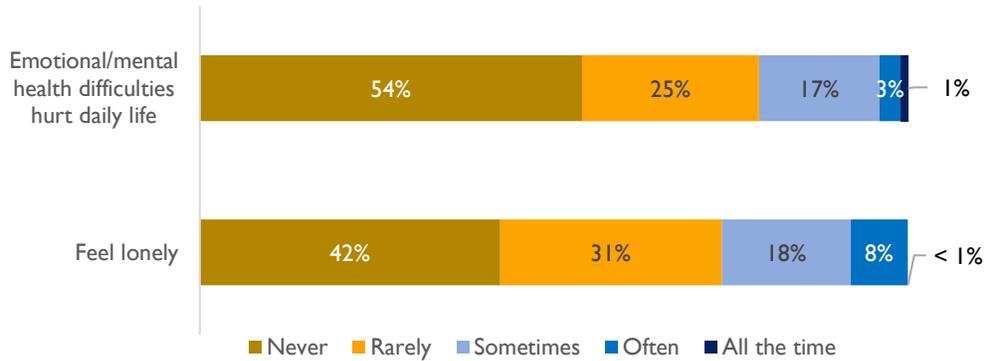
In the 23% of households in which someone speaks a language other than English, 4% reported that having services provided in their primary language it is very important, 9% somewhat important, 14% not too important, and 73% not at all important.

Mental and emotional health

As indicated above in Table 8.2, 9% of Jewish households include someone experiencing mental or emotional health issues that limit their daily life. As one measure of emotional health, the survey asked about acute experiences of loneliness and the frequency of emotional difficulties interfering with daily life.

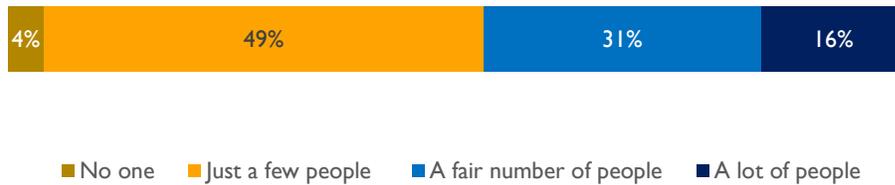
Four percent of Jewish adults reported that in the last week, emotional or mental difficulties often or always hurt their ability to live their day-to-day life (Figure 8.2). Nine percent of Jewish adults reported that they often or always felt lonely in the previous week.

Figure 8.2. Mental/emotional health difficulties and feelings of loneliness



Personal support networks—relatives and friends living nearby who you can rely on for help or support—can help to shield people from loneliness and other forms of emotional or mental health impacts (Figures 8.3). Four percent of Jewish adults said that they have no one in their personal support network, while 49% only have a few people in their personal network.

Figure 8.3. Size of local support network



Younger Jewish adults, ages 18-34, were more likely to report feeling lonely in the previous week (15%) than were older Jewish adults (5%-8%) (Table 8.3). There were, however, no age differences in the share of Jewish adults who have no support network or in relation to the frequency of emotional and mental health difficulties.

Financially struggling adults face more mental and emotional health challenges than do those who are better off. Among financially struggling adults, 22% felt lonely often or all the time in the previous week, 15% had emotional or mental health difficulties that harmed their daily life in the previous week often or all the time, and 12% have no one in their support network.

Table 8.3. Support networks, feelings of loneliness, and emotional or mental health difficulties

	Felt lonely in past week: Often or all the time	Emotional/mental health difficulties hurt daily life in past week: Often or all the time	Size of support network: No one
All Jewish adults	9	4	4
Age			
18-34	15	7	2
35-49	8	6	4
50-64	3	4	4
65-74	5	1	7
75 +	5	3	4
Relationship status			
Not couple	11	7	5
Couple	7	3	4
Financial situation			
Struggling	22	15	12
Enough	9	4	3
Extra	7	2	4
Well-off	2	2	2
Health issues			
Someone in household has health issue	18	11	7
No health issue in household	5	3	3

CHAPTER 9. FINANCIAL WELL-BEING

Chapter highlights

Like the overall Jewish community in the United States, the majority of Jewish adults in the San Diego Jewish community are highly educated and economically comfortable. Most Jewish households describe themselves as having enough money to meet their needs, including about half of households that say they “have extra money” or are “well-off.” Yet there are households with unmet financial and health needs, including some whose needs preclude their participation in Jewish life.

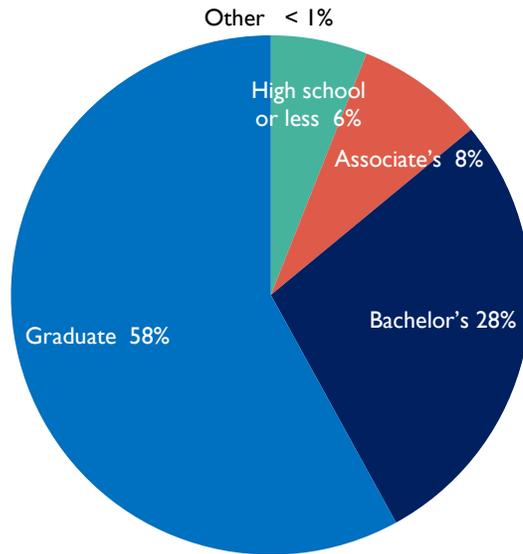
- Seventy-five percent of Jewish adults in San Diego have attained at least a bachelor’s degree, a larger share compared to the US Jewish population.
- Two thirds (66%) of Jewish adults not in high school are working, including 48% working full-time in one job or position, 13% working part-time in one job or position, and 5% working in multiple positions. Twenty-six percent of Jewish adults are retired.
- Fifteen percent of Jewish households say they cannot make ends meet (2%) or are just managing to make ends meet (13%).
- Nine percent of Jewish households earn below 250% of the federal poverty level. Less than 2% of Jewish households in San Diego earn below 100% federal poverty level.
- Approximately 19-22% of Jewish households earn under 80% of the Area Median Income, which is defined as low-income in San Diego County.
- When asked to compare their household financial situation with the beginning of 2020, about half of Jewish households (47%) said it was about the same as before, about a quarter said it was worse (27%), and another quarter stated it was better (26%) than before.
- Seven percent of all Jewish households in San Diego were unable to afford a basic necessity in the past year, and another 4% were unable to afford a necessity between one and three years ago. Among financially struggling households, nearly half were unable to afford at least one necessity, including 41% of households in the past year and another 7% of households between one and three years ago.
- Among all San Diego Jewish households, 6% said they are unable to pay in full an unexpected \$400 emergency expense. About one third (32%) of financially struggling households cannot afford a \$400 emergency expense.
- Nineteen percent of all Jewish households reported that their financial situation limited their participation in Jewish life.

Educational attainment and employment

The Jewish population of San Diego is more highly educated than the national Jewish population. Of Jewish adults ages 25 and older not enrolled in high school, 86% have at least a bachelor’s degree, including 28% with a bachelor’s degree and another 58% with a graduate degree (Figure 9.1). Among Jews ages 25 and older in the United States, 62% have a bachelor’s degree or higher. Among

all San Diego County residents ages 25 and older, 42% have at least a bachelor's degree, including 27% with a bachelor's degree and another 16% with a graduate or professional degree.¹⁷

Figure 9.1. Educational attainment, ages 25 and older



About two thirds of Jewish adults in San Diego who are not in high school are employed, either full-time (48%), part-time (13%), or in multiple positions (5%; Table 9.1). Twenty-six percent of Jewish adults are retired. Two percent are receiving unemployment benefits (not shown in table).

One percent of Jewish households include someone in the military, including 1% with a member of the reserves and 13% with a veteran (not shown in table).

¹⁷ Source: US Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.
<https://data.census.gov/table?q=san+diego+county+households+&tid=ACSDP1Y2021.DP02>

Table 9.1. Employment status

All Jewish adults not in high school	
	↓
Working	66
Full-time in one job	48
Part-time in one job	13
Working in multiple positions	5
Not working	34
Retired	26
Not working for pay	7
On temporary leave	1
Total	100

Financial situation and income

To assess financial well-being, the survey asked respondents to provide a subjective assessment of their household’s financial situation. Two percent of Jewish households reported they cannot make ends meet, and another 13% reported just managing to make ends meet (Table 9.2). These two groups are combined for purposes of this report into a single category referred to as “struggling” and constitute 15% of Jewish households. About one third of Jewish households (35%) reported having enough money, about one quarter (26%) reported having extra money, and 24% described themselves as well-off.

Table 9.2. Financial situation

Report category	Response option	Jewish households (%)
		↓
Struggling	Cannot make ends meet	2
	Just managing to make ends meet	13
Enough	Have enough money	35
Extra	Have extra money	26
Well-off	Well-off	24
Total		100

San Diego Jewish households were asked to evaluate their household’s current financial situation in relation to the beginning of 2020, before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (Table 9.3). About one quarter of Jewish households said their financial situation was worse than before (including 5% who said it was much worse and 21% who said it was somewhat worse). About half (47%) said their financial situation was about the same as before. Another quarter said it was better than before (including 17% who said it was somewhat better and 10% who said it was much better than before).

About two thirds (62%) of those Jewish households that are struggling said their household financial situation was worse than before the pandemic. Approximately half of those who described their current financial situations as enough, extra, and well-off felt their household’s financial situation was about the same as before (47%, 50%, and 54% respectively).

Table 9.3. Household financial situation, compared with the beginning of 2020

	Worse than before	About the same as before	Better than before	Total
All Jewish households	27	47	26	100
Financial situation				
Struggling	62	31	7	100
Enough	31	47	21	100
Extra	13	50	37	100
Well-off	12	54	33	100

In addition to the 15% of Jewish households that are currently financially struggling, an additional 9% of Jewish households could not make ends meet or were just managing to make ends meet at some point in past three years (not shown in the table). Of these households that were struggling in the past, 66% described their *current* financial situation as having enough money, 31% reported having extra money, and 3% reported being well-off.

Financial situation and income

Thirteen percent of Jewish households have income of less than \$50,000, and 21% of Jewish households earn \$200,000 or more (Table 9.4). Another 20% of households declined to provide income information.

Even when income information is provided, income levels do not provide a complete picture of financial well-being because it does not account for household size, savings, and financial obligations. About half of financially struggling households have incomes of less than \$50,000 and about 6% have incomes of \$100,000 or more. About 10% of well-off households have incomes of under \$100,000.

Table 9.4. Financial situation by income

	Less than \$50,000	\$50,000 to \$74,999	\$75,000 to \$99,999	\$100,000 to \$149,999	\$150,000 to \$199,999	\$200,000 or more	Don't know or prefer not to answer	Total
All Jewish households	13	6	12	16	12	21	20	100
Financial situation								
Struggling	54	20	11	3	2	< 1	10	100
Enough	11	11	12	21	16	7	24	100
Extra	5	4	11	20	18	26	16	100
Well-off	1	3	6	14	11	49	16	100

To account for income and household size, The US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) determines the federal poverty level (FPL) annually, using a formula based on household

income and household size.¹⁸ Using that formula, less than 2% of Jewish households in San Diego are below 100% FPL (Table 9.5). In all, 9% of Jewish households earn below 250% FPL.

Another measure of financial well-being accounts for cost of living in San Diego. Approximately 19-22%¹⁹ of Jewish households earn under 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI), which is defined as low income for San Diego County.²⁰

Table 9.5. Federal poverty level and Area Median Income (AMI)

	All Jewish households	Struggling	Enough	Extra	Well-off
	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
< 250% FPL	9	40	5	4	2
< 100% FPL	2	12	< 1	0	0
100-149% FPL	3	16	1	2	1
150-249% FPL	5	13	4	2	1
<80% AMI	19	74	19	10	5

Demographics and financial well-being

The financial situation of Jewish households varies significantly by Jewish engagement pattern (Table 9.6). Over one third (38%) of households in the Immersed group are struggling, compared to 13%-16% of households in the other engagement groups.

Jewish households that include a couple are financially stronger than single adult households. For example, 30% of Jewish households with a couple are well-off compared to 14% of households without a couple.

“What keeps me up at night is...having enough money to keep up with rising costs. San Diego is very expensive to live, but where I’ve always called home. Being able to cover the expenses and continue the comfortable lifestyle we have is increasingly complicated.”

¹⁸ See <https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines/prior-hhs-poverty-guidelines-federal-register-references/2021-poverty-guidelines#thresholds>

¹⁹ The study was not designed to estimate income in relation to AMI; as such, the 19-22% is an approximation based on the income ranges reported in Table 9.3. For this report, we use the lower end of the range.

²⁰ See <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/sdhcd/rental-assistance/income-limits-ami.html>

Table 9.6. Financial situation

	Struggling	Enough	Extra	Well-off	Total
All Jewish households	15	35	26	24	100
Jewish engagement					
Occasional	15	33	24	29	100
Cultural	13	39	30	18	100
Holiday	16	35	23	27	100
Involved	13	43	24	20	100
Immersed	38	24	17	21	100
Region					
Central	16	32	24	28	100
North	13	28	27	33	100
Inland	16	47	21	16	100
South	20	37	26	17	100
Age					
18-34	18	35	29	17	100
35-49	16	36	27	21	100
50-64	15	37	28	20	100
65-74	18	30	19	34	100
75 +	16	31	18	34	100
Relationship status					
Not couple	26	37	23	14	100
Couple	11	34	26	30	100
Minor child in household					
Not parent	15	35	24	27	100
Parent	22	35	27	16	100

Demographics of financially struggling households

There are multiple overlapping ways of considering of financial insecurity in the San Diego Jewish community (Table 9.7). Nearly one-in-four Jewish households in San Diego is either currently financially struggling or was financially struggling at some point in the previous three years. Up to 22% of households earned under 80% of the AMI (in this table, the higher end of the 19-22% range is used). Nine percent of Jewish households earned under 250% of the FPL.

Table 9.7. Financially insecure households

	Currently or formerly struggling	< 80% AMI	< 250% FPL
All Jewish households	23	22	9
Jewish engagement			
Occasional	24	29	13
Cultural	20	24	9
Holiday	22	21	9
Involved	29	20	6
Immersed	45	26	17
Region			
Central	26	22	8
North	25	28	10
Inland	23	24	9
South	28	28	11
Age			
18-34	31	30	10
35-49	32	22	6
50-64	26	21	4
65-74	20	26	16
75 +	18	30	16
Relationship status			
Not couple	38	43	19
Couple	19	16	4
Minor child in household			
Not parent	23	24	10
Parent	34	27	5
Financial situation			
Struggling	100	75	40
Enough	66	23	5
Extra	31	14	4
Well-off	3	5	2

Financial confidence

Another measure of financial well-being relates to the degree to which an individual is concerned about their future financial needs (Table 9.8). Three percent of adults ages 40 and younger are not at all confident that they will be able to afford their student loan payments, and 4% are not too confident. Seventeen percent of adults ages 41 and older are not at all (5%) or not too (12%) confident in their ability to afford retirement. Fourteen percent of all Jewish adults are not at all (4%) or not too (10%) confident that they will be able to keep their current savings and investments (Table 9.9).

Table 9.8. Financial confidence (% of Jewish adults)

	Not at all confident	Not too confident	Somewhat confident	Very confident	Does not apply	Total
Pay student loan debt in next 3 months (age <41)	3	4	12	32	48	100
Afford retirement (age >40)	5	12	29	52	2	100
Keep current savings/investments	4	10	19	65	3	100
Afford healthcare in next 3 months	1	1	11	85	3	100
Afford basic living expenses	1	1	9	88	2	100

It is not surprising that having confidence in one’s financial future is strongly associated with and individual’s current financial situation (Table 9.9). Of Jewish adults who are financially struggling, 72% are not confident that they can afford retirement and 62% are concerned about retaining current savings and expenses. Nineteen percent are concerned about covering basic living expenses and 15% are concerned about paying for healthcare.

Table 9.9. Not at all or not too confident in financial future

	Afford retirement (age >40)	Keep current savings/investments	Afford basic living expenses	Afford healthcare in next 3 months
All Jewish adults	17	14	2	2
Financial situation				
Struggling	72	62	19	15
Enough	21	16	< 1	1
Extra	7	3	0	0
Well-off	2	1	0	0

Paying for necessities and receiving public benefits

In total, 7% of Jewish households were unable to pay for at least one necessity within the past year, and another 4% between one and three years ago (Table 9.10). These necessities included rent or mortgage payments; medical care or medicine that was needed; food that was needed; and payments or utilities such as water, electricity, or heat.

Table 9.10. Unable to afford necessity (% of Jewish households)

	Within past year	Between 1-3 years ago
Any necessity	7	4
Rent	4	3
Healthcare	4	3
Food	3	3
Utilities	3	2

Among financially struggling households, nearly half were unable to afford at least one of these necessities, including 41% of households in the past year and another 7% between one and three years ago (Table 9.11).

Table 9.11. Inability to afford any necessity by financial situation

	Within past year	Between 1-3 years ago
All Jewish households	7	4
Financial situation		
Struggling	41	7
Enough	2	5
Extra	0	4
Well-off	0	< 1

Sixteen percent of all Jewish households received a public benefit in the past year. Ten percent received Medi-Cal or Children’s Health Insurance Program, 7% received Supplemental Security Income, or Social Security Disability Insurance benefits, and 6% received food assistance, subsidized housing, or home energy or utility assistance (Table 9.12).

Table 9.12. Public benefits

	All Jewish households ↓
Any public benefit	16
Medi-Cal or Children’s Health Insurance Program	10
Supplemental Security Income or Social Security Disability Insurance	7
Food assistance, subsidized housing, or home energy/utility assistance	6

One benchmark that is commonly used to assess financial vulnerability is the ability to cover emergency expenses in full. According to the US Federal Reserve, in 2022, 63% of US households are able to cover a \$400 emergency expense with cash, savings, or a credit card they could pay in full.²¹ In San Diego Jewish households, 94% are able to cover a \$400 emergency expense with available funds.

Among all San Diego Jewish households, 6% said they are *unable* to pay in full an unexpected \$400 emergency expense (Table 9.10). About one third (32%) of financially struggling households cannot afford a \$400 emergency expense. While 16% of all households received at least one public benefit, about half (47%) of financially struggling households received at least one public benefit.

Table 9.13. Economic insecurity

	Cannot afford unexpected \$400 expense	Receive at least one public benefit
All Jewish households	6	16
Financial situation		
Struggling	32	47
Enough	2	13
Extra	< 1	5
Well-off	< 1	0

²¹ <https://www.federalreserve.gov/publications/2023-economic-well-being-of-us-households-in-2022-expenses.htm>

Impact of finances on Jewish life

Nineteen percent of Jewish households had to limit or change their involvement in Jewish life due to their financial situation (Table 9.11). In the year prior to the survey, 20% of Jewish households with children did not enroll them in Jewish education, camp, or activities for financial reasons, and 11% required financial aid for Jewish education, camp, or activities. Twelve percent of Jewish households were unable to contribute to Jewish causes as much as they would have liked, and 10% were unable to participate in some Jewish activities due to financial constraints.

Table 9.14. Financial limitations to Jewish life

	All Jewish households ↓
Any limitation	19
Did not enroll children in Jewish education, camp, or activities (if Jewish child in household)	20
Required financial aid for Jewish education, camp, or activities (if Jewish child in household)	11
Unable to contribute to Jewish causes as much as would have liked	12
Unable to participate in some Jewish activities	10
Discontinued synagogue membership	< 1
Required financial assistance for synagogue membership	< 1
Something else	3

Experiencing a financial limitation to participation in Jewish life varies significantly by Jewish engagement pattern, age, whether there are minor children in the household, and financial situation (Table 9.12). Among the Immersed group, 45% said finances limited their Jewish participation, compared with 7% of the Occasional engagement group. Larger shares of those ages 18-34, compared with those ages 75 and older, said a financial situation limited their participation in Jewish life (30% versus 11%). Larger shares of parents, compared to those who are not parents (16%), also said a financial situation limited their participation in Jewish life (37% versus 16%). Finally, larger shares of those who are struggling, compared with those with enough and extra, said a financial situation limited their participation in Jewish life (58% versus 22% and 9% respectively).

Table 9.15. Any financial limitation to Jewish life

Financial limitation to Jewish life	
All Jewish households	19
Jewish engagement	
Occasional	7
Cultural	19
Holiday	14
Involved	32
Immersed	45
Region	
Central	17
North	19
Inland	25
South	24
Age	
18-34	30
35-49	24
50-64	24
65-74	12
75 +	11
Relationship status	
Not couple	25
Couple	18
Minor child in household	
Not parent	16
Parent	37
Financial situation	
Struggling	58
Enough	22
Extra	9
Well-off	1

CHAPTER 10. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The findings that are presented in this report provide a detailed portrait of the Jewish community of San Diego, including community members' demographic characteristics; participation in Jewish communal life as well as their private Jewish activities; and their attitudes about Judaism, Israel, and the local Jewish community. This chapter summarizes some of the themes emerging from the data that community organizations can use as their starting point for planning for the future.

Balance the needs of all age groups

The San Diego Jewish community is older than the general population of the area and of the US Jewish community. There are fewer children in the San Diego Jewish community, compared with the general San Diego population and the US Jewish community.

However, 24% of Jewish adults are ages 18 to 34; if they remain in San Diego, it is likely the number of children will grow in the coming decade. About three-in-five Jewish adults ages 18-34 have lived in San Diego for fewer than 10 years. Successfully involving this population in the local Jewish community could have enormous impact on Jewish landscape.

Another quarter of the Jewish population are ages 65 and older, which is a significantly larger share of older adults than in the general San Diego population. This age cohort includes adults who are looking to the Jewish community for opportunities to engage or reengage in Jewish life and those whose primary needs are social services and other support.

Support varieties of Jewish engagement

The study introduces a typology of five patterns of Jewish engagement with a broad set of ritual, communal, and cultural Jewish behaviors that go far beyond traditional measures such as synagogue membership. The Jewish behaviors across the five engagement patterns vary widely, but all patterns include at least some behaviors that represent a connection to Jewish life.

While the groups differ in their patterns of behavior, some Jewish values are shared across most of the San Diego Jewish population. Nearly all Jewish adults in San Diego agree that leading an ethical and moral life, remembering the Holocaust, working for justice and equality in society, and connecting to family and traditions are important or essential to being Jewish. When choosing causes to support through their philanthropy and volunteering, members of all engagement groups place a high value on causes such as human services, the environment, and advancing equality and/or equity.

Among Jewish adults who are least engaged in Jewish life (the Occasional group) and those who are most engaged (the Immersed group), satisfaction with their current level of participation in Jewish life is relatively high. The other engagement groups are less satisfied and may be looking for opportunities to enrich their Jewish engagement.

By understanding the patterns of Jewish engagement and the demographic profile of each engagement group, Jewish organizations will be better able to meet the needs of specific populations as well as design programs that bring diverse groups together over shared interests and concerns.

Reduce geographic barriers to participation

While 40% of Jewish households are concentrated in what this report has called the Central region, the remaining 60% of households are geographically dispersed. About one-in-five Jewish adults indicate that the location of programs and institutions is a barrier to Jewish participation.

Coupled with their distance from Jewish institutions and activities, the Jews of the North, Inland, and South regions have fewer Jewish friends than those in Central. One third of the Jews in North and about half in Inland and South say that not knowing many people is one of their top barriers to participation.

Jewish organizations should consider ways to provide programs and activities to Jews who live outside of the Central region. One of the goals of such programs should be not only to engage Jews with existing organizations, but to connect members of the community to one another.

Foster personal connections

Personal connections are one of the main drivers of participation in Jewish activities. Three quarters of Jewish adults say that they feel more comfortable at Jewish events when they know other people there, and two thirds appreciate a personal invitation.

The need for personal connections is particularly pronounced among Jewish adults under age 50. Younger Jews tend to have fewer Jewish friends than do older adults, and are less satisfied with their participation in Jewish life than are older adults. Nearly two thirds of this age group indicate that not knowing many people is a barrier to participation, and 84% say they feel more comfortable when they know people at events.

The need for personal connections goes beyond participation in Jewish life and extends to overall well-being. More than half of Jewish adults from all demographic groups say that they have at most a few people who they can call on for help if needed. Reaching out to individuals personally—whether to offer support or an invitation to participate in Jewish life—could deepen connections among community members.

Reduce financial barriers

One quarter of Jewish households describe their financial situations as well-off, and 15% say they cannot make ends meet or are just managing to make ends meet (referred to in this report as “struggling”).

Satisfaction with the level of one’s participation in the Jewish community is related to financial status. People who are financially struggling are least likely to be very satisfied (13%) with their level of participation in Jewish life, compared with those who are well-off (38%). While one-in-five Jewish adults say that they consider Jewish activities to be too expensive, half of financially struggling

Jewish adults report that cost is a barrier to their Jewish participation. Similarly, one-in-five children were not enrolled in Jewish schools because of the cost.

Nineteen percent of Jewish households had to limit or change their involvement in Jewish life due to their financial situation. In the year prior to the survey, 20% of Jewish households with children did not enroll them in Jewish education, camp, or activities for financial reasons, and 11% required financial aid for Jewish education, camp, or activities. Twelve percent of Jewish households were unable to contribute to Jewish causes as much as they would have liked, and 10% were unable to participate in some Jewish activities due to financial constraints.

Address social service needs

Jewish organizations look to provide for the health needs of its community members. More than one quarter of Jewish households include a member whose work, school, or activities are limited by a chronic health issue, special need, or disability. Among households that are financially struggling, nearly half include someone with a limiting health condition.

Financially struggling adults face more mental and emotional health challenges than do those who are better off. Among financially struggling adults, 22% felt lonely often or all of the time in the previous week, 15% had emotional or mental health difficulties that harmed their daily life in the previous week often or all the time, and 12% have no one in their support network.

Jewish communal organizations may wish to consider expanding the services they offer for these individuals or intensifying organizational outreach efforts to connect people to existing services.

Conclusion

These recommendations emerge from data collected systematically from more than 2100 Jewish households between June and September 2022. This study is part of a long tradition of using the tools of social science to assess the size, character, interests, needs, and concerns of a local Jewish community. The study measures participation in communal and individual Jewish practices, institutional engagement, unmet needs, and many other aspects of Jewish life in San Diego. We hope that this snapshot of the community will stimulate discussion about how best to enhance the lives of community members and strengthen the community as a whole.