

2024

NORTHEAST FLORIDA JEWISH COMMUNITY STUDY

FULL REPORT



**Jewish Federation
& Foundation**
of Northeast Florida

Brandeis

COHEN CENTER FOR
MODERN JEWISH STUDIES
STEINHARDT SOCIAL
RESEARCH INSTITUTE

THE 2024 NORTHEAST FLORIDA JEWISH COMMUNITY STUDY

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The Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (CMJS), founded in 1980, is dedicated to providing independent, high-quality research on issues related to contemporary Jewish life.

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FROM THE JEWISH FEDERATION & FOUNDATION OF NORTHEAST FLORIDA

We are honored to present the 2024 Northeast Florida Jewish Community Study, a vital resource to help guide the future of Jewish life in Northeast Florida. This report offers more than just data—it provides meaningful insight into the evolving fabric of our community and a foundation upon which we can continue to build a thriving future together.

In June 2023, our Board of Directors unanimously approved the initiation of a Community Study. This decision to engage Northeast Florida in a Community Study for the first time in over 20 years demonstrates a shared commitment to thoughtful, data-driven planning—and to ensure that our community continues to thrive for generations to come.

The study officially launched in October 2023 and reflects the voices of thousands of Jewish individuals across Northeast Florida—newcomers and lifelong residents, young families and seniors, those active in traditional Jewish spaces, and others connected in less formal but equally meaningful ways.

It is important to note that the survey portion of the study followed the events of October 7 and therefore offers a snapshot of this critical moment in time, when our lives as we once knew them forever changed.

We are proud that this study brings together the expertise of two of the country’s most respected research institutions: The Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (CMJS) at Brandeis University, and NORC at the University of Chicago.

Their work, paired with the dedication and support of our volunteer leaders, agency professionals, and community partners, has resulted in one of the most comprehensive and insightful portraits of Jewish life in our region to date.

We’d like to express our immense gratitude to the many professional and volunteer leaders who contributed to this important endeavor, including:

- The Community Study Committee: Debbie Banks (Chair), Alex Ackerman, David Bielski, Howard Borer, Theresa Freedman, Erica Jolles, Michael Korn, Christina Levine, Jonathan Richmond, and Rochelle Stoddard.
- Our Community Partners and Collaborators: The Jewish Community Alliance (JCA), River Garden Senior Services, The LJD Jewish Family & Community Services, our local Synagogues, Chabad centers, Day Schools, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), and Hadassah.

Lastly, we truly thank each of you who took the time to participate in the survey. Your voices—your experiences—shaped the findings of this report and will help light the path forward.

We now hold a clearer, deeper understanding of our community's composition, needs, and aspirations. With this knowledge, we are better equipped than ever to serve, support, and strengthen Jewish life in Northeast Florida.

With gratitude,

Haley Trager
Immediate Past Board Chair

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Chief Executive Officer

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Special Thanks

To the 846 respondents who completed the survey. Without their willingness to spend time answering questions about their lives, there could be no study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures and Tables	viii
Introduction.....	1
Methodology overview	2
How to read this report.....	2
How to read report tables	3
Interpretation of estimates and statistical significance.....	5
Reporting qualitative data	6
Comparisons across surveys	6
Limitations.....	7
Report overview	7
Additional study materials.....	8
Chapter 1. Demographic Snapshot	9
Chapter highlights	9
Jewish population estimate	9
Age, gender identity, and sexual orientation	10
Household composition.....	11
Inmarriage and intermarriage	12
Definitions: Inmarriage and Intermarriage.....	13
Jewish denominations	13
Subpopulations	14
Geographic distribution	15
Length of residence and local ties.....	18
Moving to Northeast Florida.....	19
Political views.....	19
Chapter 2. Patterns of Jewish Engagement	21
Chapter highlights	21
Index of Jewish Engagement.....	21
Jewish background and Jewish engagement.....	28
Attitudes about being Jewish.....	29
Chapter 3. Children and Jewish Education.....	31
Chapter highlights	31
Children in Jewish households	31
Jewish education.....	34
Summer camping.....	36
Young children and families	36
B’nai mitzvah	37
Chapter 4. Congregations and Ritual Life.....	38
Chapter highlights	38
Congregation membership.....	38
Congregation types.....	39
Religious services.....	41
Shabbat, holidays, and rituals.....	44
Chapter 5. Jewish Organizations, programs, and Philanthropy	49
Membership in Jewish organizations.....	50

Participation in Jewish-sponsored programs.....	51
Limits to participation	53
Program types and sponsorship.....	57
Outreach by Jewish organizations	62
Willingness to travel.....	65
Sources of information.....	66
Individual Jewish activities.....	66
Volunteering.....	70
Philanthropy.....	71
Causes of Interest.....	73
Chapter 6. Community Connections	77
Chapter highlights	77
Feelings of belonging to a Jewish community	77
Belonging to Jewish communities outside of Northeast Florida	79
Connections to local community and groups	81
Local Jewish community and groups	84
Interest in finding a Jewish community	87
Chapter 7. Connections to Israel and Concerns about Antisemitism.....	90
Chapter highlights	90
Emotional attachment to Israel.....	91
Travel to Israel.....	93
News about Israel.....	96
Views about Israel.....	98
Experiences of antisemitism.....	102
Concerns about antisemitism	105
Chapter 8. Financial Well-Being	108
Chapter highlights	108
Educational attainment and employment.....	109
Household finances.....	110
Debt and financial stress	114
Retirement planning.....	116
Economic insecurity	117
Financial hardships and services	119
Impact of finances on Jewish life.....	121
Chapter 9. Health Needs.....	124
Chapter highlights	124
Physical and mental health.....	125
Health and disability.....	126
Support services.....	128
Caregiving.....	130
Personal support network	133
Plans for the future	134
Chapter 10. in the words of community members	136
Community Characteristics.....	136
Diverse needs by age and life stage	139
Jewish organizations	139
Community concerns.....	143

Chapter 11. Future Directions	147
Reach out beyond the geographic core of the community	147
Balance the needs of newcomers and long-time residents.....	147
Foster community through organizations and individuals.....	148
Address human service needs.....	148
Conclusion.....	148
Notes.....	150

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1.1. Household composition.....	12
Figure 1.2. Geographic distribution of the Northeast Florida Jewish community	16
Figure 1.3. Political orientation of Northeast Florida Jewish adults	20
Figure 2.1. Northeast Florida Index of Jewish Engagement.....	24
Figure 2.2. Being Jewish is part of daily life	29
Figure 2.3. Feel a sense of belonging to the Jewish people	30
Figure 3.1 Parents of Jewish children	32
Figure 3.2. Jewish identity of children in inmarried households.....	33
Figure 3.3. Jewish identity of children in intermarried households.....	34
Figure 5.1. Interest in programs sponsored by Northeast Florida Jewish community	53
Figure 5.2. Sponsorship of programs or activities by type, past year.....	58
Figure 5.3. Causes of interest	74
Figure 6.1. Feel a sense of belonging to... ..	78
Figure 7.1. Views about Israel.....	99
Figure 7.2. Concerned about antisemitism... ..	106
Figure 8.1. Educational attainment	109
Figure 9.1. Physical and mental health.....	125
Figure 9.2. Concerns for the future.....	135

Table 1.1. Northeast Florida Jewish community population estimates, 2024	10
Table 1.2. Age of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida.....	11
Table 1.3. Age of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida.....	11
Table 1.4. Relationship status of Northeast Florida Jewish adults by age.....	12
Table 1.5. Denomination of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida and the United States	14
Table 1.6. Jewish ethnicity	14
Table 1.7. Race and ethnicity.....	15
Table 1.8. Demographical identities.....	15
Table 1.9. List of regions and ZIP codes	17
Table 1.10. Distribution of Jewish households and Jewish individuals across geographic regions.....	17
Table 1.11. Ages of Jewish adults by region	18
Table 1.12. Primarily raised in... ..	18
Table 1.13. Length of residence in Northeast Florida.....	18
Table 1.14. Length of residence in Northeast Florida by region.....	19
Table 1.15. Primary reasons for moving to Northeast Florida	19
Table 2.1. Jewish behaviors and engagement	25
Table 2.2. Jewish engagement by age.....	26
Table 2.3. Jewish engagement by region.....	26
Table 2.4. Jewish engagement by relationship status	27
Table 2.5. Jewish engagement by parental status	27
Table 2.6. Jewish engagement by length of residence in Northeast Florida	27
Table 2.7. Jewish engagement by denomination	28
Table 2.8. Jewish engagement by Jewish parentage	28
Table 2.9. Jewish engagement by childhood Jewish education	29

Table 3.1. Children in Jewish households	32
Table 3.2. Ages of Jewish children	34
Table 3.3. Type of K-12 school, 2023-24.....	35
Table 3.4. K-12 Jewish education, 2023-24 and summer 2024.....	35
Table 3.5. Reasons for not enrolling children in formal Jewish schooling.....	36
Table 3.6. Anticipated summer camp, 2024.....	36
Table 3.7. Early childhood enrollment and programs, 2023-24.....	37
Table 4.1. Membership in Jewish congregations.....	40
Table 4.2. Type of congregation membership.....	41
Table 4.3. Jewish worship services during past year.....	42
Table 4.4. Location of Jewish worship services attended, past year.....	44
Table 4.5. Frequency of marking Shabbat during past year.....	46
Table 4.6. Shabbat mark activities, past year.....	47
Table 4.7. Holidays and rituals.....	48
Table 5.1. Membership in Jewish organizations, aside from congregations	51
Table 5.2. Frequency of Jewish program participation, past year.....	52
Table 5.3a. Barriers to participation in programs sponsored by NEFL Jewish community	55
Table 5.3b. Barriers to participation in programs sponsored by NEFL Jewish community	56
Table 5.4. Financial barriers to participation in programs sponsored by NEFL Jewish community..	57
Table 5.5a. Types of programs or activities with a Jewish organization, past year	59
Table 5.5b. Types of programs or activities with a Jewish organization, past year	60
Table 5.6 Jewish program sponsorship by organization, past year.....	62
Table 5.7a. Outreach from Jewish organization, past year	64
Table 5.7b. Outreach from Jewish organization, past year.....	65
Table 5.8 Willingness to travel for Jewish program or activity, regular basis	66
Table 5.9. Sources of information about local Jewish activities, news, and events.....	66
Table 5.10a. Individual Jewish activities, past year.....	67
Table 5.10b. Individual Jewish activities, past year.....	68
Table 5.11. Jewish social media use, past year	69
Table 5.12. Volunteer activities, past year	71
Table 5.13. Charitable giving, past year	72
Table 5.14 Charitable donation by organization or type, past year	73
Table 5.15. Jewish causes of interest.....	75
Table 5.16. Secular causes of interest.....	76
Table 6.1. Feel a sense of belonging to... ..	79
Table 6.2. Other Jewish communities.....	80
Table 6.3. Feel part of a community in Northeast Florida	82
Table 6.4. Groups where Jewish adults find community (% Jewish adults)	83
Table 6.5. Groups where Jewish adults find community (% Jewish adults)	84
Table 6.6. Part of community with Jewish organization or group in Northeast Florida	85
Table 6.7. About how many members of the community you are closest to are Jewish?.....	86
Table 6.8. Categories of Jewish community belonging in Northeast Florida	87
Table 6.9. Interest in finding a Jewish community in Northeast Florida	88
Table 6.10. Reasons for not finding a Jewish community in Northeast Florida	88
Table 7.1. Emotional attachment to Israel.....	92
Table 7.2. Travel to Israel.....	94
Table 7.3a. Types of trips to Israel.....	95
Table 7.3b. Types of trips to Israel.....	96

Table 7.4a. Seek news about Israel in past month	97
Table 7.4b. Seek news about Israel in past month.....	98
Table 7.5. Views about Israel, strongly agree.....	100
Table 7.6. Views about Israel, strongly agree.....	101
Table 7.8. Targeted by antisemitic incidents.....	103
Table 7.9. Avoided activities out of fear of antisemitism	104
Table 7.10. Avoided activities out of a fear of antisemitism	105
Table 7.11. Very concerned about antisemitism.....	107
Table 8.1. Employment status.....	110
Table 8.2. Financial situation.....	110
Table 8.3. Financial situation.....	111
Table 8.4. Household income and Federal Poverty Level.....	112
Table 8.5a. Household income by financial situation.....	112
Table 8.5b. Household income.....	113
Table 8.6. Household debt	115
Table 8.7. Debt-related stress.....	116
Table 8.8. Retirement savings plan on track.....	116
Table 8.9. Confidence in having enough money for retirement by financial situation.....	117
Table 8.10. Receipt of public benefits.....	117
Table 8.11. Economic insecurity	118
Table 8.12. Financial hardships, past three years	119
Table 8.13. Timeframe of financial hardships	120
Table 8.14. Receive services from JFCS.....	121
Table 8.15. Services were adequate	121
Table 8.16. Limits on participation in Jewish life.....	122
Table 8.17. Limits on participation in Jewish life.....	123
Table 9.1. Health is fair or poor.....	126
Table 9.2. Chronic health issue, disability, or health need	127
Table 9.3. Specific health issues.....	128
Table 9.4. Importance of receiving services from a Jewish organization	129
Table 9.5. Manage or provide care to close relatives or friends on regular basis	131
Table 9.6. Household member typically need help with daily activities	132
Table 9.7. Personal support network	133
Table 9.8. Future plans.....	134

INTRODUCTION

The 2024 Northeast Florida 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. This project was commissioned by the Jewish Federation and Foundation of Northeast Florida, in partnership with local Jewish organizations and congregations. The study employed 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 2013 *A Portrait of Jewish Americans*, 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.¹ A more recent Pew report, *Jewish Americans in 2020*² reinforced many of the findings of the original Pew study and contributed new insights about the state and character of the American Jewish community. With the Pew studies and the related national discourse as a backdrop, the *2024 Northeast Florida 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 Northeast Florida 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:

- Provide information, at household and individual levels, on a wide range of demographic, geographic, and socio-economic characteristics
- Provide information about current Jewish connections, attitudes, engagement, barriers to participation, community opportunities, and ideas for new programs and communication methods
- Understand the multifaceted cultural, communal, and religious expressions of Judaism that constitute Jewish engagement
- Understand the diversity of the community in terms of age, religious identity, financial needs, race and ethnicity, LGBTQ+, local ties, and more
- Gauge current and potential need for human services, particularly for community members who are struggling financially

The *2024 Northeast Florida Jewish Community Study* provides a snapshot of the current Jewish population in Northeast Florida and considers trends and developments in Jewish life and engagement. In interpreting the data, it is important to bear in mind that the study represents the characteristics and views of community members at the time of the survey. Notably, the data were collected during the Israel-Hamas war that began in October 2023, and during a period of rising antisemitism in the United States. It is likely that attitudes about Israel, concerns about antisemitism, and other markers of Jewish identity were influenced by these events.

Methodology overview

This study is based on an analysis of a rich set of data collected from 846 eligible households between March and June 2024. Invited households were contacted by mail, email, and telephone and invited to complete the survey online or by telephone.

The study design integrated households from a combined set of Jewish organizational lists (the list sample) with another set of households randomly selected from all remaining mailing addresses in the study geographic area (the Address-Based Sample or ABS). The study area included Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, and St. John's counties, FL (see Figure 1.2 for a map).

More than 200,000 households in the study area received invitations by mail, phone, and email to take the survey, including 12,179 drawn from organization lists and 189,833 from the ABS non-list sample. For those households from the organization lists and the ABS frame for which only email addresses were available (892 households) a supplemental sample was created. In addition, an innovative “open-access survey” enabled wider participation in the survey for those who did not receive a direct invitation, while still retaining the scientific validity of the survey sample. In all, 592 completed surveys were achieved from the list sample, 47 from the ABS sample, 23 from the email-only supplemental sample, and 184 from the open access survey.

The survey of Jewish households was designed to represent the views of an entire community based on responses from a randomly selected sample of households from the community. When analyzing survey data, we are interested not only 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 from which it was collected.

Despite the careful methodological approaches employed in this study, bias in estimates is inevitable. Assigning weights is a way to reduce such bias. The study uses survey weights to provide accurate estimates of the population. Survey weights account for the survey design, nonresponse, and adjustments based on external data for the Jewish and total Northeast Florida populations; they are based on data from the American Community Survey,³ American Jewish Population Project,⁴ and data on enrollment and membership in local organizations and programs.

Details of survey methods, weighting, and analysis are provided in Appendix A.

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 Northeast Florida.
- Throughout this report, the terms “couples,” “inmarried,” and “intermarried” refer both to those who are legally married and to 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

Numeric data in this report are most often presented in tables, although bar graphs and pie charts are used in some cases to illustrate or amplify selected data. To interpret tables correctly, the title and/or first row of each table will indicate the denominator for any reported numbers. Some tables report a percentage of Jewish households, some a percentage of Jewish adults, and some report on a subset for whom the questions are relevant.

Some tables and figures that present proportions do not add up to 100%. In some cases, this was a result of respondents having the option to select more than one response to a question; in such cases, the text of the report indicates that multiple responses were possible. In most cases, however, the appearance that proportional estimates do not add up to 100% is a result of rounding.

Most tables in this report are “row tables.” These tables are read horizontally by row. Example Table 1 illustrates a typical “row table,” which shows that of all Jewish households, 24% are members of a congregation, and of households between ages 22 and 44, 33% are congregation members.

Example Table 1, row table

From report Table 4.1 Membership in Jewish congregations

	Congregation member (%)
All Jewish households	24
Age	
22-44	33
44-59	20
60-74	22
75+	30

Less frequently, we include “column tables,” which tables appear primarily in Chapter 1 and 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. Example Table 2 tells us that of Northeast Florida Jewish adults, 2% identify as Orthodox.

Example Table 2, column table

From report Table I.4. Denomination of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida

Northeast Florida 2024 (%)	
	↓
Orthodox	2
Conservative	14
Reform	22
Chabad	12
Other denomination	4
No denomination	46
Total	100

Row and column totals

When a table shows all possible values and those values are mutually exclusive, the table 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 (i.e., we display the “yes” response but not the “no” response). In other 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 some cases when the total of 100 is shown, the numbers may not add up exactly to 100 due to rounding.

Examples:

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

Example Table 2, above, shows the age distribution of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida. Since each individual belongs in only one age category, and all age categories are shown, the bottom of the column displays the total of 100.

Multiple part tables

To save space and facilitate comparisons, some tables include multiple characteristics. 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 it refers to an overall category, and the remaining columns are subsets.

Example Table 3 shows types of debt held by Jewish households. The first column of numbers, with the heading “Any debt,” shows that 42% of all Jewish households carry at least one type of debt. The rest of the table shows specific types of debt households carry: for example, 26% of Jewish households have credit card debt. Among those that are ages 22 to 44, 62% have at least one type of debt. Respondents could select multiple forms of debt, so each column should be read separately.

There are no totals shown here because each column shows the percentage of Jewish households who have each type of debt, but does not show the percentage who do not have debt.

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

Example Table 3

From Table 8.6. Household debt

	Any debt (%)	Credit card (%)	Student loan (%)	Medical care (%)
All Jewish households	42	26	24	12
Age				
22-44	62	43	32	15
44-59	47	20	40	16
60-74	27	17	9	12
75+	20	20	1	7

Interpretation of estimates and statistical significance

For most tables in this report, data are compared across a consistent set of subgroups that have been defined for purposes of this study. The structure of the table varies based on the content. This information is always provided in the first row of the table.

As indicated previously, numbers and percentages should not be understood as exact measurements, but as the most likely value we would expect to find if we had surveyed the entire population of Northeast Florida Jewish households. This value is also known as a point estimate. It is particularly important to keep this in mind when comparing subgroups. Small differences between subgroups might be the result of random variation in the survey responses rather than actual differences in the population.

When there is a statistically significant difference among subgroups, we are 95% confident that at least some of the differences in estimates reflect actual differences and are not just the result of random chance. Statistical significance is a way to assess whether differences between estimates reflect true differences between different segments of the population or are simply 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, if we collected data from the entire population, we would find differences between those population segments on the characteristic in question.

In the tables in this report, we designate these differences by shading them **light gray**. Findings that are not statistically significant are not shaded. Even in cases where there are statistically significant differences in a full set of responses, it is unlikely that there are statistically significant differences between every pair of numbers.

When there is a statistically significant difference among subgroups represented in a figure, we designate these differences by adding an asterisk (*) to the figure title. Where the differences between groups represented in a figure are not statistically significant, no asterisk will be added.

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 3 above, we measure the share of Jewish households who have debt. The first row indicates that 42% of all Jewish households have at least one type of debt. Because this is a single estimate and not a comparison, statistical significance is not relevant, and this row is never shaded gray.

The bottom portion of the table tells us that some differences among Jewish households regarding debt are statistically significant by age. Although the table does not tell us which specific differences are statistically significant, in this case, it is reasonable to assume that the difference in the estimate for the youngest age group (62%) compared to that for the oldest age group (20%) is significantly significant. In turn, it is unlikely that the 60-74 and 75+ age groups are significantly different from each other because the difference between them is smaller than 10 percentage points.

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.

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*,⁵ are used to show how the Northeast Florida Jewish community is similar to or different from the United States Jewish community. All references to the US Jewish community in this report are drawn from the 2020 Pew study.

Additional references are also made to CMJS' Combined Dataset (CDS) of 29 local Jewish community studies conducted between 2015-2024, with data from nearly 60,000 respondents.⁶ At the time of publication, the CDS represents a population of more than 2,600,000 Jewish adults and over 1,400,000 Jewish households, which is more than one third of the national Jewish adult population. Communities represented in the CDS conducted a community study with CMJS and, consequently, the population described by this dataset does not represent the entire US Jewish community, but only the Jewish populations in these communities.

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 Northeast Florida, 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 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.

Report overview

This report presents key findings about the Northeast Florida 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 Jewish community.

Chapter 2. Patterns of Jewish Engagement

This chapter describes the multifaceted ways in which the Jewish adults 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.

Chapter 3. Jewish Children and Jewish Education

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 participation in Jewish ritual life.

Chapter 5. Jewish Organizations, Activities, and Philanthropy

This chapter discusses membership and involvement in organizational, social, and personal Jewish life, and the barriers that limit involvement with Jewish organizations. It also examines the volunteering and philanthropic behaviors of the Jewish community.

Chapter 6. Community Connections

This chapter explores where Jewish adults find community in general, as well as their connections to the Jewish community.

Chapter 7. Connections to Israel and Concerns about Antisemitism

This chapter describes the frequency and types of travel to Israel and other markers of Israel connection. It also discusses Jewish adults' experiences of, and concerns about, antisemitism.

Chapter 8. Financial Well-Being

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

Chapter 9. Health Needs

This chapter examines the health and social service concerns of Jewish households.

Chapter 10. In the Words of Community Members

This chapter summarizes survey respondents' answers to two open-ended questions at the end of the survey.

Chapter 11. Future Directions

This Chapter highlights key themes and questions that emerge from the study.

Additional study materials

All study documents and data are available for download from the study website:
<https://www.brandeis.edu/cmjs/community-studies/northeast-florida-report.html>.

Executive Summary

Summary of the study key findings.

Methodological Overview

Overview of the study methodology in greater detail than the brief introduction to the main report.

Technical Appendices

Details of methodology, data collection, analysis, full survey instrument and codebook, and study documentation.

Comparison Charts

Detailed cross-tabulations of all survey data for key subgroups of the population, provided in excel format.

Public Use Dataset

Dataset in Stata format for additional analysis by researchers. Any responses that identify individuals have been removed from the public use version.

CHAPTER 1. DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT

Chapter highlights

- There are approximately 22,900 Jewish households in Northeast Florida. These Jewish households, representing 1.3% of all households in Northeast Florida, include 47,500 individuals, of whom 35,400 are Jewish.
- The adult Jewish population of Northeast Florida trends older than the general population of the area, as well as that of the national Jewish population.
- Overall, the Northeast Florida Jewish population (adults and children) is 49% male, 50% female, and < 1% non-binary/gender non-conforming.
- Eight percent of Jewish adults identify as LGBTQ+.
- The individual intermarriage rate (i.e., the proportion of Jewish adults with a non-Jewish spouse) is 55%, higher than the national average (42%).
- In Northeast Florida, 46% of Jewish adults do not identify as having a specific denomination. This share is higher than in the national community.
- While 10% of Jewish individuals in Northeast Florida identify with a racial identity other than white (i.e., Black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or another racial origin) or as Hispanic, only 4% identify as a Person of Color.
- About one quarter each of Jewish households in Northeast Florida reside in the South Duval and North St. John's (25%), Mandarin (22%), and Northern and Western Jacksonville (22%) regions. The remaining Jewish households live in the Urban Core (17%) and Beach Communities (13%) regions.
- A little over one quarter of Jewish adults (27%) in Northeast Florida were raised primarily locally, and the remainder moved into the area as adults.
- One quarter of Jewish adults have lived in the area for fewer than five years, while 12% have lived in Northeast Florida for their entire lives.
- About one third of Jewish adults (35%) describe their political viewpoints as “moderate.” Another third of Jewish adults describe themselves as liberal (23%) or very liberal (11%). The remaining third of Jewish adults describe themselves as conservative (22%) or very conservative (9%).

Jewish population estimate

There are approximately 22,900 Jewish households in Northeast Florida (Table 1.1). These Jewish households, representing 1.3% of all households in Northeast Florida, include 47,500 individuals, of whom 35,400 are Jewish.⁷

In addition to 22,400 Jewish adults and 5,100 Jewish children, Northeast Florida Jewish households include 11,000 non-Jewish adults and 1,100 non-Jewish children.

Table 1.1. Northeast Florida Jewish community population estimates, 2024

Total Jewish households	22,900
Total people in Jewish households	47,500
Total Jews	35,400
Adults (ages 18+)	41,300
Jewish	30,400
Non-Jewish or unknown	11,000
Children (under age 18)	6,100
Jewish	5,100
Non-Jewish or unknown religion	1,100

Note: Discrepancies in totals due to rounding

Study definitions

For the purposes of this study, estimates of the size of the Jewish community rest on a few definitional questions about the respondent's Jewish background. 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?

For the purposes of this study and to ensure that the Northeast Florida Jewish community can be compared to the national Jewish population, Jewish households are defined as including at least one Jewish adult. Jewish adults are those whose religion is Judaism, or who consider themselves Jewish aside from religion, so long as they also have at least one Jewish parent, were otherwise raised Jewish, or converted. Jewish children are considered by their parents to be Jewish exclusively or in combination with another religion.

Age, gender identity, and sexual orientation

Tables 1.2 and 1.3 display the age distribution of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida. The adult Jewish population of Northeast Florida trends older than the general population of the area, as well as that of the national Jewish population.

The mean age of Jewish adults is 54, and the median age is 58 (not shown in tables). In comparison, the national mean and median age of Jewish adults is both 49.⁸ Including children in the analysis lowers the mean and median ages. The mean age of all Jews in Northeast Florida Jewish households is 47, and the median age is 53.

Table 1.2. Age of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida

	Jewish Northeast Florida (%)	Northeast Florida (ACS 2023; %)	US Jews (Pew 2020; %)
	↓	↓	↓
18-34	24	28	28
35-49	15	25	23
50-64	25	25	20
65-74	20	13	17
75+	16	8	13
Total	100	100	100

NOTE: Undergraduate students in Northeast Florida are not considered permanent community members. As such, those undergraduates ages 18 to 21, who are reflected in Table 1.2 and Table 1.3, are excluded from age-based analyses in the remainder of the report. All other analyses not explicitly about age do include the 18 to 21-year-old population.

Table 1.3. Age of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida

	Jewish adults (%)
	↓
18-21	11
22-44	23
45-59	20
60-74	30
75+	16
Total	100

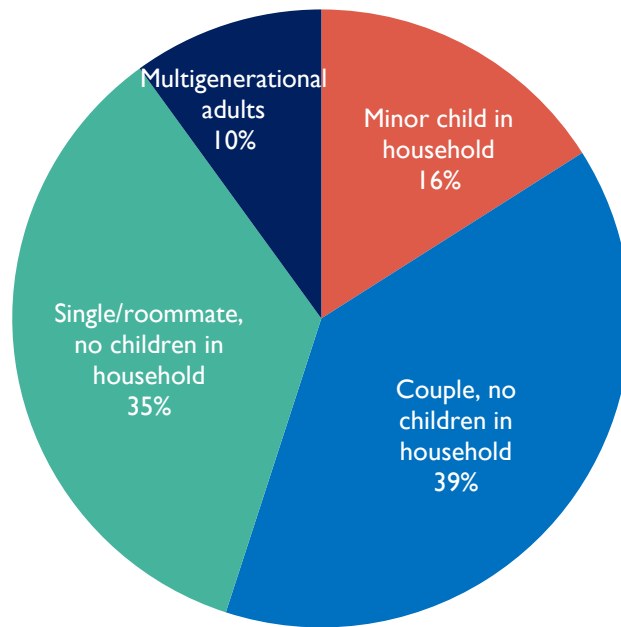
Overall, the Northeast Florida Jewish population (adults and children) is 49% male, 50% female, and < 1% non-binary/gender non-conforming. Eight percent of Jewish adults identify as LGBTQ+.

Household composition

Households with children under age 18 (including single-parent, two-parent, or multigenerational households) make up 16% of Jewish households in Northeast Florida (Figure 1.1). Couples without children constitute 39% of households. People living alone, or with unrelated roommates, comprise 35% of households.

Multigenerational households, defined as parents and adult children of any age living together, constitute 10% of Jewish households. This category includes both older parents who live with their middle-aged children, and middle-aged parents who live with their young-adult children.

Figure I.1. Household composition (% of Jewish households)



Inmarriage and intermarriage

Among all Jewish households in Northeast Florida, 55% include a couple who is married, engaged, or partnered. Of these couples, 30% are inmarried, and 70% are intermarried.

The individual intermarriage rate (i.e., the proportion of Jewish adults with a non-Jewish spouse or partner) is 55%, higher than the national average (42%; Table 1.4).⁹

Table I.4. Relationship status of Northeast Florida Jewish adults by age

	All Jewish adults (%)	Ages 22-44 (%)	Ages 45-59 (%)	Ages 60-74 (%)	Ages 75+ (%)
Married/partnered	63	62	53	68	64
Religious composition among couples					
Inmarried	45	45	40	36	47
Intermarried	55	55	60	64	53
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Definitions: Inmarriage and Inter marriage

“Couples” and “marriages” include married and cohabitating couples. “Spouse” refers to marital spouses and partners.

Inmarried: two partners who are currently Jewish (JBR, JNR, JMR), regardless of whether they were born Jewish or converted

Intermarried: one partner currently Jewish and one partner not Jewish

Household intermarriage rate: percentage of couples that include a Jewish and non-Jewish partner

Individual intermarriage rate: percentage of married/partnered Jewish adults with a partner who is not Jewish

Understanding Inter marriage Rates Example

Jewish household 1: Inter married



▶ **Household intermarriage rate is 50%**
because half of the couples (1 out of 2)
are inter married

Jewish household 2: In married



▶ **Individual intermarriage rate is 33%**
because one of the three Jewish
individuals is inter married

Jewish denominations

Denominational affiliation has historically been one of the primary indicators of Jewish identity and practice. In Northeast Florida, 46% of Jewish adults do not identify as having a specific denomination (Table 1.5). This share is higher than in the national Jewish community.¹⁰ Among the remaining Jewish adults who do hold a denominational identity, the largest share is Reform (22%), although this is lower than the national Jewish population. Another 14% of Jewish adults identify as Conservative, similar to the national Jewish population. Two percent of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida identify as Orthodox. There are also 12% of Jewish adults whose personal denomination is Chabad, which is not typically considered to be a denomination, as its affiliates’ ritual practices run a wide range of ritual observance.

Table 1.5. Denomination of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida and the United States

	Northeast Florida 2024 (%)	US Jews 2020 (%)
	↓	↓
Orthodox	2	9
Conservative	14	17
Reform	22	37
Chabad	12	n/a
Other denomination	4	4
No denomination	46	32
Total	100	100

Subpopulations

Seventy-nine percent of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida identify as Ashkenazi (i.e., predominantly of Eastern or Central European descent; Table 1.6). Six percent of Jewish adults have Sephardi heritage (i.e., descended from Spanish or Portuguese Jews), and 3% identify as Mizrahi (i.e., of Middle Eastern Jewish ancestry, such as Persian, Iraqi, or Yemenite Jews). One percent of Jewish adults identify with some other ancestry, while 8% identify with no particular Jewish ethnicity. The remaining Jewish adults do not know their Jewish ethnicity (6%) or Jewish ethnicity does not apply to them (3%), for example Jews by choice.

Table 1.6. Jewish ethnicity

	Jewish adults (%)	Jewish households that include someone with this ethnicity (%)
Ashkenazi	79	70
Sephardi	6	6
Mizrahi	3	2
Other	1	1
None, no particular heritage	8	10
This does not apply to me	3	6
Don't know	6	10

Note: Total exceeds 100 because respondents could select more than one option.

Ninety percent of Jewish individuals in Northeast Florida identify solely as white and non-Hispanic (Table 1.7). However, while the remaining 10% identify with a racial identity other than white (i.e., Black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or another racial origin) or as Hispanic, only 4% identify as a Person of Color. Notably, the proportion of Jews who identify with a racial identity other than white is slightly higher among children than adults, indicating that the Jewish community may be becoming more diverse racially.

Table 1.7. Race and ethnicity

	Jewish individuals (%) ↓	Jewish adults (%) ↓	Jewish children (%) ↓	All individuals in Jewish households (%) ↓	Jewish households with at least one person holding this identity (%) ↓
Self-identifying Person of Color	4	4	< 1	4	7
Combined race and ethnicity					
Single-race, non-Hispanic white	90	91	86	88	92
Single-race, Hispanic white	5	5	6	6	8
Any non-white racial identity, including multiracial, non-Hispanic	4	4	8	5	6
Any non-white racial identity, including multiracial, Hispanic	< 1	< 1	< 1	< 1	1
Total	100	100	100	100	*

*Note: Household could include people with different racial and ethnic identities.

Ten percent of adults in Northeast Florida were raised in a Russian-speaking home, but not necessarily in Russia or the former Soviet Union (Table 1.8). Additionally, 5% of Jewish adults are Israeli citizens, and 27% are descendants of someone who was a Holocaust victim or survivor or World War II refugee.

Table 1.8. Demographical identities

	All Jewish adults (%) ↓
Israeli citizens	5
Russian-speaking Jews	10
Descendent of a Holocaust victim or survivor or World War II refugee	27

Geographic distribution

The Jewish community of Northeast Florida can be divided into regions based on ZIP code (Figure 1.2; Table 1.9). Mandarin consists of the Mandarin neighborhood of Jacksonville and its immediate surrounding areas. The South Duval and North St. John's region is the southeastern tip of Duval County and most of St. John's County. The Beach Communities region consists of the coastal towns of Atlantic Beach down to Palm Valley, plus Amelia Island. The Urban Core region is the areas of Jacksonville bounded by the St. John's River and I-295. Northern and Western Jacksonville consists of the remainder of Northeast Florida, including all of Clay and Baker counties and portions of Duval and Nassau Counties.

Figure I.2. Geographic distribution of the Northeast Florida Jewish community

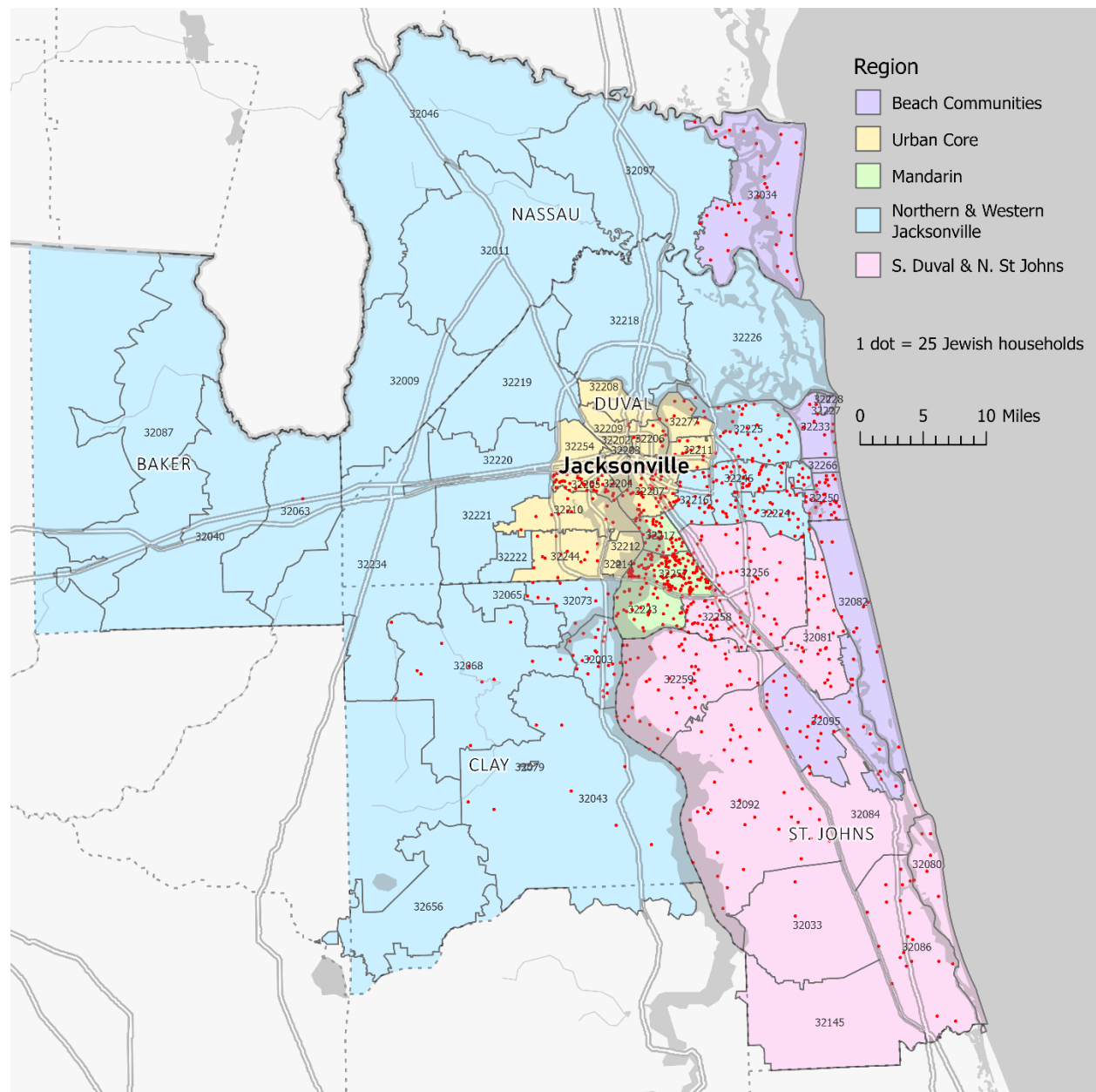


Table I.9. List of regions and ZIP codes

Region	Included ZIP codes
Mandarin	32217, 32223, 32241, 32257
S. Duval & N. St. John's	32033, 32080, 32081, 32084, 32085, 32086, 32092, 32145, 32256, 32258, 32259, 32260
Beach Communities	32004, 32034, 32035, 32082, 32095, 32227, 32228, 32233, 32240, 32250, 32266
Urban Core	32201, 32202, 32203, 32204, 32205, 32206, 32207, 32208, 32209, 32210, 32211, 32212, 32214, 32231, 32232, 32236, 32238, 32239, 32244, 32247, 32254, 32277
N. & W. Jacksonville	32003, 32006, 32009, 32011, 32030, 32040, 32041, 32043, 32046, 32050, 32063, 32065, 32067, 32068, 32073, 32079, 32087, 32097, 32099, 32160, 32216, 32218, 32219, 32220, 32221, 32222, 32224, 32225, 32226, 32229, 32234, 32235, 32245, 32246, 32255, 32656

About one quarter of Jewish households in Northeast Florida each reside in the South Duval and North St. John's (25%), Mandarin (22%), and Northern and Western Jacksonville (22%) regions (Table 1.10). The remaining Jewish households live in the Urban Core (17%) and Beach Communities (13%) regions. Jewish children are more concentrated in the Urban Core region than the population as a whole, with 28% living there, compared to 19% of all Jews.

Table I.10. Distribution of Jewish households and Jewish individuals across geographic regions

	Jewish households (%)	All Jewish individuals (%)	Jewish children (%)
	↓	↓	↓
Mandarin	22	23	23
S. Duval & N. St. John's	25	23	16
Beach Communities	13	11	9
Urban Core	17	19	28
N. & W. Jacksonville	22	24	23
Total	100	100	100

There are differences in the geographic distribution of the Jewish population by age (Table 1.11). Just 9% of Jewish adults ages 22-49 live in the Mandarin region, compared to 26-39% of older age groups. About one quarter each of Jews in the two age groups younger than 60 live in Northern and Western Jacksonville, compared to 12-17% of Jews ages 60 and older.

Table 1.11. Ages of Jewish adults by region

	All Jewish adults (%)	Ages 22-44 (%)	Ages 45-59 (%)	Ages 60-74 (%)	Ages 75+ (%)
	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Mandarin	22	9	26	30	39
S. Duval & N. St. John's	23	20	30	22	28
Beach Communities	13	21	12	10	10
Urban Core	18	25	7	26	6
N. & W. Jacksonville	23	25	25	12	17
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Length of residence and local ties

A little over one quarter of Jewish adults (27%) in Northeast Florida were primarily raised locally, and the remainder moved into the area as adults (Table 1.12). The largest share of Jewish adults (68%) living in Northeast Florida were primarily raised elsewhere in the United States, while 6% were raised in another country.

Table 1.12. Primarily raised in...

	All Jewish adults (%)
	↓
Northeast Florida	27
Elsewhere in the United States	68
Another country	6
Total	100

The Jewish community of Northeast Florida has seen large and recent in-migration, with one quarter of Jewish adults having lived in the area for fewer than five years (Table 1.13). Another 18% have been living in Northeast Florida for five to nine years. Just 12% of Jewish adults have lived in Northeast Florida for their whole lives (apart from college or graduate school; not shown in table).

Table 1.13. Length of residence in Northeast Florida

	All Jewish adults (%)
	↓
0-4 years	25
5-9 years	18
10-19 years	16
20-29 years	18
30-39 years	11
40-49 years	6
50-59 years	1
60+ years	5
Total	100

There are noticeable differences in where people live based on their length of residence in Northeast Florida (Table 1.14). Only 2% of Jewish adults who have lived in Northeast Florida for 20 years or longer live in the Beach Communities. The longtime residents primarily live in the Mandarin region (36%) or Northern and Western Jacksonville (30%). Newcomers are slightly less likely to live in Northern and Western Jacksonville (14%) as compared to the population as a whole (23%).

Table I.14. Length of residence in Northeast Florida by region

	All Jewish adults (%)	0-4 years (%)	5-19 years (%)	20+ years (%)
	↓	↓	↓	↓
Mandarin	22	19	12	36
S. Duval & N. St. John's	23	28	28	16
Beach Communities	13	12	27	2
Urban Core	18	26	13	17
N. & W. Jacksonville	23	14	21	30
Total	100	100	100	100

Moving to Northeast Florida

There are a variety of reasons why the 43% of Jewish adults who moved to Northeast Florida in the past decade have done so (Table 1.15). The most common reason was for a job, career, or college (44%). Similar shares of the newcomer population cite being close to family (23%), retirement (20%), the cost of living (20%), the quality of the community (19%), and the political climate (19%) as reasons for moving to the area. Few newcomers cited the quality of Jewish life (2%). Fourteen percent moved for some other reason.

Table I.15. Primary reasons for moving to Northeast Florida

	Jewish adults living in Northeast Florida fewer than 10 years (%)
	↓
Job, career, or college	44
To be close to family	23
Cost of living	20
Retirement	20
Quality of the overall community	19
Political climate	19
Quality of Jewish life	2
Other	14

Note: Total exceeds 100 because respondents could select more than one option.

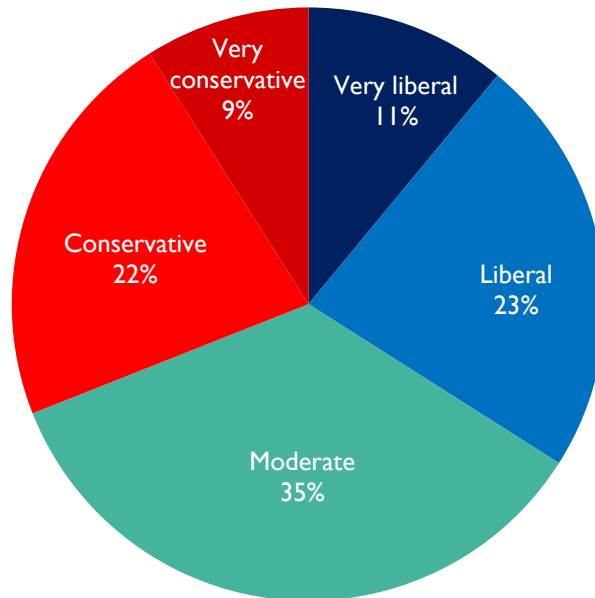
Over one third of Jewish adults (37%) living in the area for less than one decade moved to Northeast Florida from another location in Florida (not shown in table). Over half of newcomer Jewish adults (59%) moved from somewhere else in the United States outside of Florida, and the remaining 4% moved directly from another country.

Political views

The Jewish community in Northeast Florida is fairly split politically. About one third of Jewish adults (35%) describe their political viewpoints as “moderate” (Figure 1.3). Another third of Jewish adults describe themselves as liberal (23%) or very liberal (11%). The remaining third of Jewish adults describe themselves as conservative (22%) or very conservative (9%).

In the CDS, representing 29 communities whose studies were conducted between 2015-24, 23% of Jewish adults identify as “very liberal,” 43% as “liberal,” 11% as “moderate,” 20% as “conservative,” and 3% as “very conservative” (not shown in figure).

Figure 1.3. Political orientation of Northeast Florida Jewish adults



CHAPTER 2. PATTERNS OF JEWISH ENGAGEMENT

Chapter highlights

- The Index of Jewish Engagement focuses on Jewish behaviors—the ways in which individuals occupy and involve themselves in Jewish life Northeast Florida.
- There are four distinct patterns of Jewish engagement found among Jewish adults in Northeast Florida: Lower Engagement (46% of Jewish adults), Moderate Engagement (28% of Jewish adults), High Engagement (11% of Jewish adults), and Immersed (15% of Jewish adults). These names reflect the distinguishing characteristics of each pattern.
- The Index can be used to identify opportunities to improve communal planning based on people's different needs and interests.
- More than half of the Immersed engagement group (61%) lives in the Mandarin region, compared to 15-18% of the other groups.
- A far smaller share of the Lower Engagement group (26%) is not married, as compared to 38% of the overall Northeast Florida Jewish community. Of those Jewish adults in the Lower Engagement group who are married or partnered, however, 70% are married or partnered to someone who is not Jewish. By contrast, the intermarriage rates for the High Engagement (15%) and Immersed (25%) groups are far lower.
- The majority of the Lower Engagement group (69%) do not have a personal denomination. A similar share of the Immersed group (68%) identify their denomination as Chabad.
- While 23% of all Jewish adults in Northeast Florida have one Jewish parent, 32% of the Lower Engagement group, and 1% of the Immersed engagement group, are children of intermarriage.
- About one third of Jews in Northeast Florida (34%) feel being Jewish is very much part of their lives. While among the Immersed group nearly everyone (99%) feels that being Jewish is very much part of their daily lives, relatively few (12%) of the Lower Engagement group feel the same.

Index of Jewish Engagement

Jewish life is complex and multidimensional, including cultural and religious behaviors that are practiced at home, with friends and family, as well as those observed with formal and informal organizations and institutions. Jewish engagement is also associated with attitudes, such as feelings of attachment to the Jewish people. 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 no longer the primary indicators of involvement with Jewish life.

While Jewish engagement may include ritual activities, it can also be 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. In the *2024 Northeast Florida Jewish Community 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 in the Jewish community based on their current behaviors. Which Jewish adults tend to be engaged in ritual activities, and which prefer cultural activities? Who largely connects with other Jews through organizations and institutions, and who practices their Jewish life on their own, at home, or primarily with friends and family?

A typology of Jewish engagement was created for this study by using a statistical tool, latent class analysis (LCA), to examine levels of participation among Jewish adults in Northeast Florida across 17 different Jewish behaviors, including ritual and communal behaviors and Jewish-focused activities. 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 four unique patterns of Jewish engagement. Each Jewish adult in the community was classified into one of the four engagement groups according to the pattern that most closely matched the individual's participation in different types of Jewish behaviors.

The Index of Jewish Engagement helps identify engagement opportunities for groups with particular needs and interests.¹¹ 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 a 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:

- **Holidays:** attending a Passover seder in a typical year; lighting Hanukkah candles in 2023; fasting on Yom Kippur 2023
- **Rituals:** marking Shabbat in some way; participating in Jewish religious services; High Holiday services in 2023; keeping any kosher rules
- **Organizations:** belonging to a Jewish congregation; belonging to an organization aside from a congregation or the JCA; belonging to or regularly participating with an informal group; participating in a Jewish program; volunteering for a Jewish organization; donating to a Jewish organization
- **Individual:** seeking out news about Israel; reading Jewish publications; reading books, watching TV or movies, or listening to music that is Jewish focused

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 Index of Jewish Engagement presented below, including the classifications and the group names, is derived directly from data collected for this study and is specific to the Jewish community in Northeast Florida.

Patterns of Jewish engagement

For each pattern of Jewish engagement among Jewish adults in Northeast Florida, 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 Table 2.1, the Jewish behaviors across the four 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 largest share of Jewish adults (46%) is in the **“Lower Engagement”** group. They tend to engage in very few Jewish behaviors, with the most common behaviors among this group— seeking news about Israel (76%), engaging with Jewish culture (65%), lighting Hanukkah candles (59%), and reading Jewish publications (53%)—requiring no connection to an organized Jewish community. Even with these behaviors, however, few members of this engagement group participate frequently, and members of the three other engagement groups participate at higher rates.

Twenty-eight percent of Jewish adults are in the **“Moderate Engagement”** group. The most common dimensions of these adults’ involvement in Jewish life are holiday and individual activities, which can be completed outside of any organizational framework. Most members of the Moderate Engagement group light Hanukkah candles (87%) and attend or host a seder (85%). Nearly all members of this group engage with Jewish culture (99%), read Jewish publications (95%), and seek news about Israel (92%).

Eleven percent of Jewish adults are in the **“High Engagement”** group. This group is primarily involved in Jewish life through holiday and ritual activities, including lighting candles during Hanukkah, attending or hosting a seder, and attending services. In fact, all members of this group attended services in the previous year, and 99% marked Shabbat in some way at least once. Members of this group also participate in other dimensions of Jewish life. Nearly everyone in this group attended a Jewish program at least once (92%), although only 6% did so often. Despite their high and frequent engagement in Jewish life, members of at least one other group participate to a greater extent in nearly all other behaviors.

The remaining 15% of Jewish adults are in the **“Immersed”** group. This group has the highest levels of engagement across holiday, ritual, and most individual behaviors. Everyone in this group are members of a congregation, and nearly everyone attended services at least monthly during the year (98%) and for the High Holidays (93%). All members attended at least one Jewish-sponsored program, with 85% doing so often. The Immersed group participates with highest frequency in each of the individual behaviors, such as engaging with Jewish culture (64%).

The patterns of Jewish engagement found among Jewish adults in Northeast Florida are summarized in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1. Northeast Florida Index of Jewish Engagement

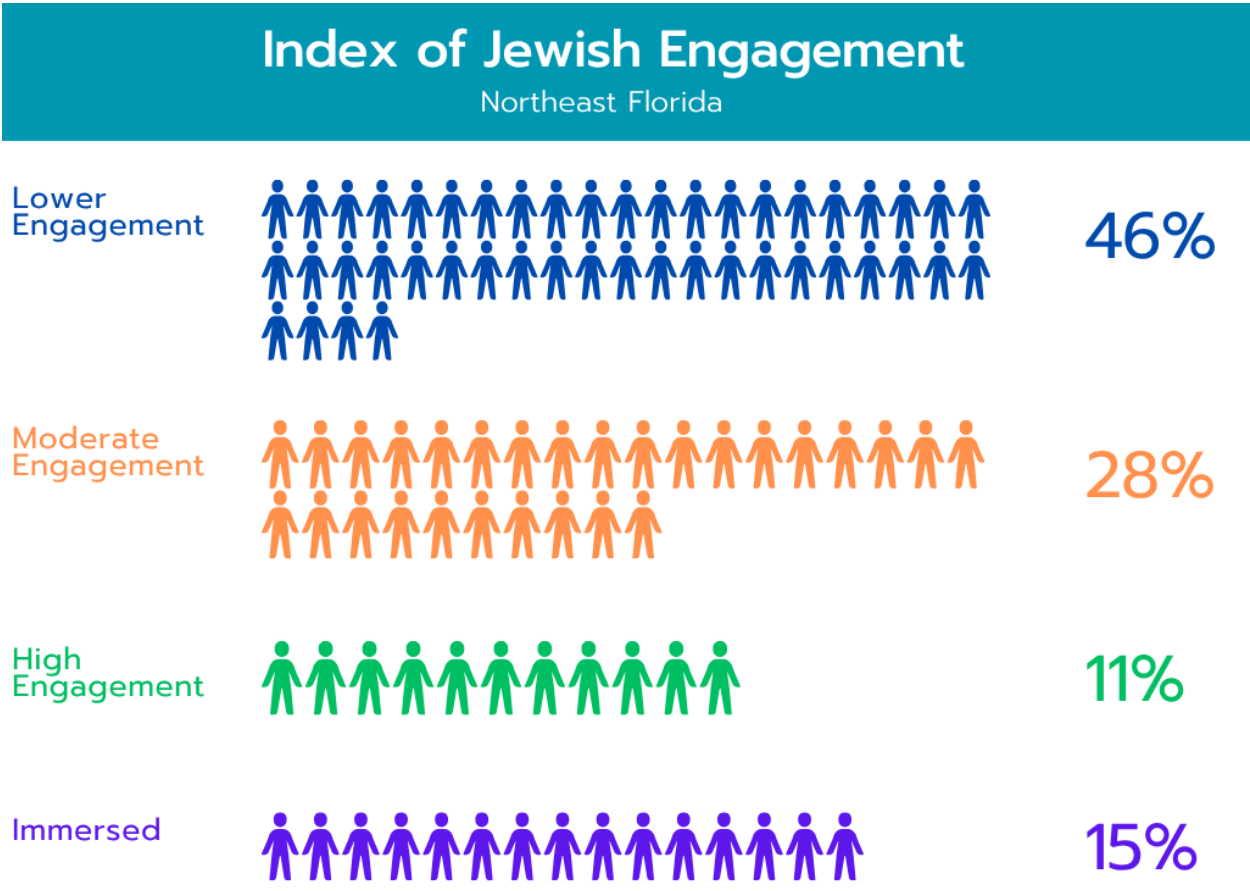


Table 2.1. Jewish behaviors and engagement

	All Jewish adults (%)	Lower Engagement (%)	Moderate Engagement (%)	High Engagement (%)	Immersed (%)
	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Holiday Behaviors					
Hanukkah candles, 2023	78	59	87	96	100
Seder, typical year	68	44	85	95	93
Fast on Yom Kippur, 2023	41	11	41	99	100
Ritual Behaviors (past year)					
Mark Shabbat, ever	57	25	65	99	100
(Almost) every week	24	0	11	65	99
Services, ever	53	2	94	100	100
Monthly or more	20	0	2	61	98
High Holiday services, 2023	37	0	45	100	93
Kosher, follow any rules	39	10	39	82	98
Organization Behaviors					
Congregation member	30	0	16	100	100
Organization member	13	0	20	18	33
Informal group member	13	0	7	20	62
Participate in program, ever	57	22	77	92	100
Often	13	0	1	6	85
Volunteer for Jewish org.	20	1	13	43	71
Donated to Jewish org.	36	3	29	96	92
Individual Behaviors (past year)					
Seek news about Israel at least weekly (past month)	86	76	92	88	100
Read Jewish publication, ever	74	53	95	85	100
Often	32	8	42	21	99
Engage with Jewish culture, ever	83	65	99	95	100
Often	25	9	31	20	64
Study Jewish text, ever	25	4	21	27	99
Often	15	0	1	5	97

Legend	0-19%	20-39%	40-59%	60-79%	80-100%
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Demographics and Jewish engagement

The patterns of Jewish engagement are associated with some, but not all, demographic characteristics. Tables 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, and 2.6 show the distribution of selected demographic characteristics within the Jewish engagement categories (row totals) in comparison to the overall Jewish population (first row). To best understand demographic patterns, it is useful to compare the distribution of each of the engagement groups to that of the overall adult Jewish population, shown in the top row of each table. This comparison allows one to observe how, if at all, each engagement group differs from the overall population.

See Appendix B for the distribution of the engagement groups within each of the demographic categories.

There are no significant age differences between the engagement groups (Table 2.2).

Table 2.2. Jewish engagement by age

	22-44 (%)	44-59 (%)	60-74 (%)	75+ (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish adults	31	20	32	17	100
Jewish engagement					
Lower Engagement	34	13	35	18	100
Moderate Engagement	25	28	25	22	100
High Engagement	28	7	46	19	100
Immersed	23	34	35	8	100

More than half of the Immersed engagement group (61%) lives in the Mandarin region, compared to 15-18% of the other groups (Table 2.3). Most of the remainder of the Immersed group (29%) lives in the Northern and Western Jacksonville region. Members of the other engagement groups live across the different regions of Northeast Florida in similar shares to that of the community as a whole.

Table 2.3. Jewish engagement by region

	Mandarin (%)	S. Duval & N. St. John's (%)	Beach Communities (%)	Urban Core (%)	N. & W. Jacksonville (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish adults	22	23	13	18	23	100
Jewish engagement						
Lower Engagement	15	30	15	22	19	100
Moderate Engagement	16	26	17	16	25	100
High Engagement	18	17	8	26	30	100
Immersed	61	2	6	3	29	100

A far smaller share of the Lower Engagement group (26%) is not married, as compared to the remainder of the Northeast Florida Jewish community (Table 2.4). Among those Jewish adults in the Lower Engagement group who are married or partnered, however, 70% are married or partnered to someone who is not Jewish (i.e., the intermarriage rate). The Moderate Engagement group has a similar intermarriage rate of 67%, although about half of the Moderate Engagement group are not married, compared to one quarter of the Lower Engagement group. By contrast, the intermarriage rates for the High Engagement (15%) and Immersed (25%) groups are far lower than those of the other two groups.

Table 2.4. Jewish engagement by relationship status

	Inmarried (%)	Intermarried (%)	Not married (%)	Total (%)	Intermarriage rate (%)
All Jewish adults	28	35	38	100	55
Jewish engagement					
Lower Engagement	22	52	26	100	70
Moderate Engagement	17	35	48	100	67
High Engagement	38	7	56	100	15
Immersed	40	13	47	100	25

There are no significant differences between the engagement groups when it comes to parental status (Table 2.5) or length of residence in Northeast Florida (Table 2.6).

Table 2.5. Jewish engagement by parental status

	Not parent (%)	Parent (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish adults	86	14	100
Jewish engagement			
Lower Engagement	85	15	100
Moderate Engagement	91	9	100
High Engagement	86	14	100
Immersed	92	8	100

Table 2.6. Jewish engagement by length of residence in Northeast Florida

	0-4 years (%)	5-19 years (%)	20+ years (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish adults	25	34	41	100
Jewish engagement				
Lower Engagement	17	43	41	100
Moderate Engagement	32	26	42	100
High Engagement	37	33	31	100
Immersed	30	28	42	100

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 meanings vary from one individual to another. In addition, an increasing number of Jews do not affiliate with a particular denomination—including nearly half of adult Jews (46%) in Northeast Florida. Thus, denominational labels are limited in their ability to convey behavior and attitudes.

A majority of the Lower Engagement group (68%) does not have a personal denomination (Table 2.7). A similar share of the Immersed group (69%) identify their denomination as Chabad.

Table 2.7. Jewish engagement by denomination

	Orthodox (%)	Conservative (%)	Reform (%)	Chabad (%)	Other denom. (%)	No denom. (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish adults	2	14	22	12	4	46	100
Jewish engagement							
Lower Engagement	1	6	22	0	2	68	100
Moderate Engagement	2	22	30	< 1	5	41	100
High Engagement	3	30	16	21	< 1	30	100
Immersed	5	8	16	69	< 1	2	100

While 23% of all Jewish adults in Northeast Florida have one Jewish parent, 32% of the Lower Engagement group and 1% of the Immersed engagement group are children of intermarriage (Table 2.8). Notably, 22% of the Immersed group have no Jewish parents, i.e., are Jews by choice.

Table 2.8. Jewish engagement by Jewish parentage

	Neither parent Jewish (%)	One parent Jewish (%)	Both parents Jewish (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish adults	9	23	67	100
Jewish engagement				
Lower Engagement	8	32	60	100
Moderate Engagement	7	28	65	100
High Engagement	3	5	92	100
Immersed	22	1	77	100

Large majorities of the High Engagement (85%) and Immersed (80%) groups attended a Jewish full- or part-time school, or summer camp, as children (Table 2.9). These rates are far higher than the general population, of whom just over half (56%) attended Jewish schools or summer camp as a child.

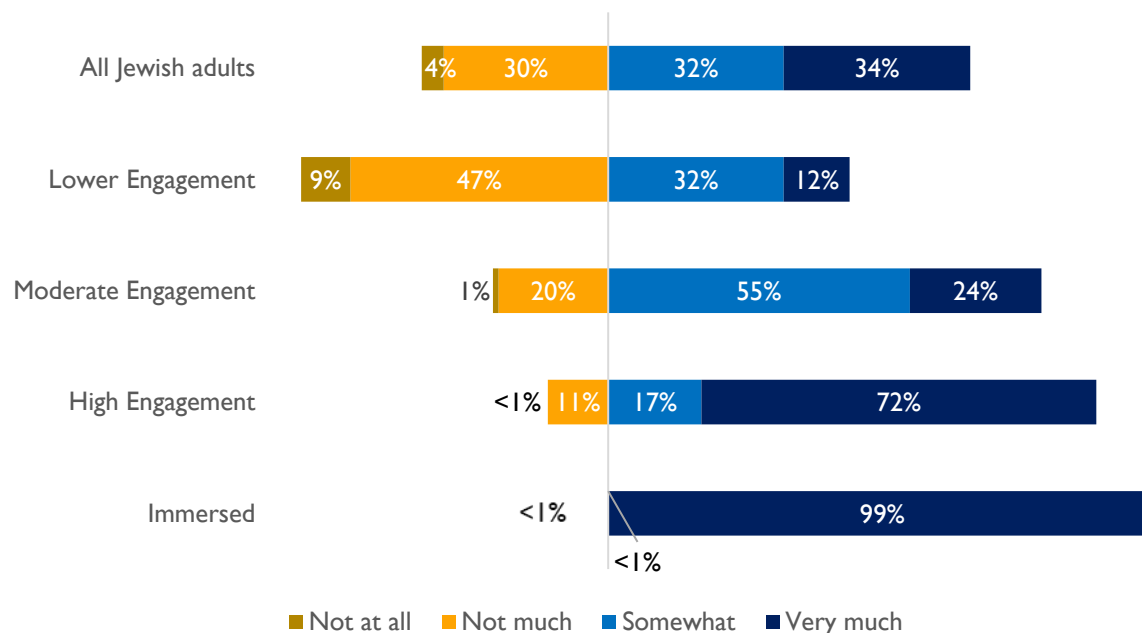
Table 2.9. Jewish engagement by childhood Jewish education

	No (%)	Yes (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish adults	44	56	100
Jewish engagement			
Lower Engagement	58	42	100
Moderate Engagement	42	58	100
High Engagement	15	85	100
Immersed	20	80	100

Attitudes about being Jewish

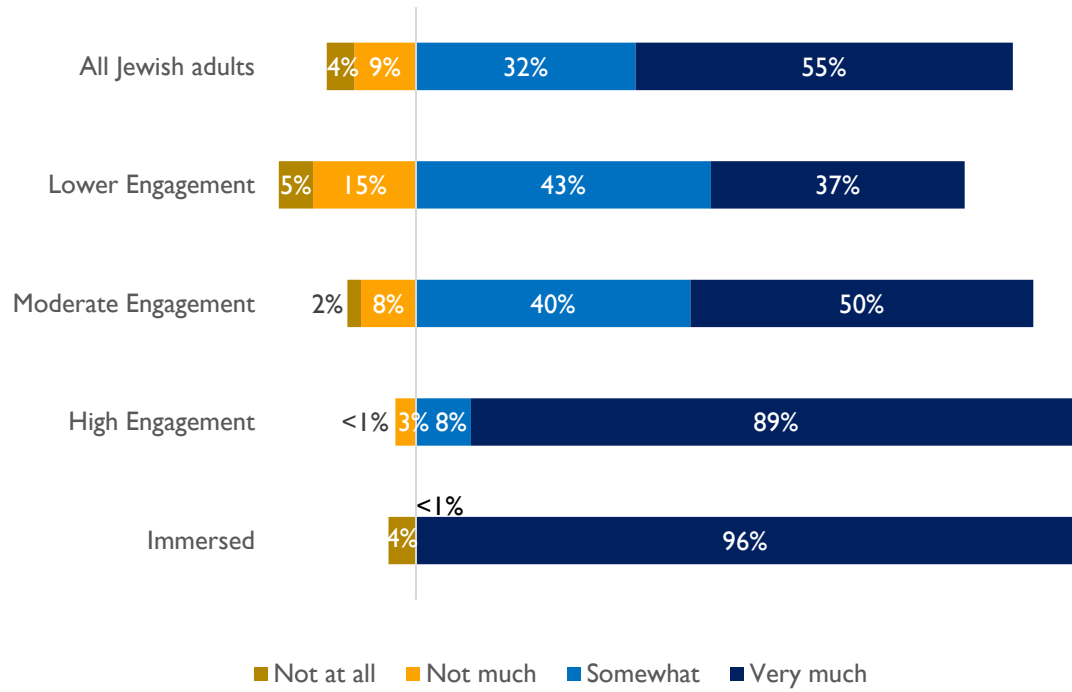
Comparing the attitudes about being Jewish across the engagement groups helps highlight differences and identify commonalities. About one third of Jews in Northeast Florida (32%) feel that being Jewish is somewhat part of their daily life, and another third (34%) feel it is very much part of their lives (Figure 2.2). The extent to which this view is held, however, varies greatly between the engagement groups. While among the Immersed group nearly everyone (99%) feels that being Jewish is very much part of their daily lives, relatively few (12%) of the Lower Engagement group feel the same.

Figure 2.2. Being Jewish is part of daily life*



Slightly over half of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida (55%) very much feel a sense of belonging to the Jewish people (Figure 2.3). Large majorities of those in the High Engagement (89%) and Immersed (96%) groups very much feel a sense of belonging to the Jewish people. In comparison, 37% of the Lower Engagement group feel the same. However, in contrast to feeling that being Jewish is part of their Jewish life (see Figure 2.2), far more members of the Lower Engagement group do feel some level of belonging to the Jewish people.

Figure 2.3. Feel a sense of belonging to the Jewish people*



CHAPTER 3. CHILDREN AND JEWISH EDUCATION

Chapter highlights

- Of the 6,100 children who reside in Jewish households in the Northeast Florida, 5,100 (84% of all children) are considered Jewish by their parents. More than half of children in Jewish households are considered Jewish exclusively (3,600, or 59% of all children). One quarter of children in Jewish households (1,500, or 25% of all children) are considered Jewish and another religion.
- Of the remaining children living in Jewish households who are not considered Jewish, nearly all are considered to have no religious identity (1,000, or 16% of all children).
- Over one third of Jewish children (38%) are being raised by inmarried parents, while a slightly larger percentage of Jewish children (45%) are being raised by intermarried parents. The remaining 13% of Jewish children are being raised by single parents.
- More than one quarter of the children of intermarried parents (28%) are considered Jewish alone. A larger share of children of intermarried parents (42%) are considered to be Jewish and something else, and 30% are being raised with no religious identity.
- Less than half of Jewish students (40%) in grades K-12 during the 2023-24 school year were enrolled in some form of Jewish education. This share includes 12% who attended some form of Jewish school, either part-time (6%) or a full-time Jewish day school or yeshiva (6%).
- Over half of Jewish students (58%) in grades K-12 expected to attend some type of summer camp in 2024, either as a camper or staff member. This share includes 36% of Jewish students who expected to attend a Jewish camp.
- In the 2023-24 school year, 25% of Jewish children in the Northeast Florida area not yet in kindergarten were enrolled in an early childhood program run by a Jewish organization.
- Thirty-eight percent of age-eligible Jewish children in Northeast Florida have had a bar mitzvah, bat mitzvah, or b-mitzvah ceremony, and an additional 4% plan to have one in the future.

Children in Jewish households

To assess the identities of children in Jewish households, parents were asked if they considered their children to be Jewish. Of the 6,100 children who reside in Jewish households in Northeast Florida, 5,100 (84% of all children) are considered Jewish by their parents (Table 3.1). More than half of children in Jewish households are considered Jewish exclusively (3,600, or 59% of all children). One quarter of children in Jewish households (1,500, or 25% of all children) are considered Jewish and another religion. Of the remaining children living in Jewish households who are not considered Jewish, nearly all are considered to have no religious identity (1,000, or 16% of all children).

The remaining children who are not considered Jewish by their parents are either being raised exclusively in another religion (< 1% of all children), their parents have not determined yet how they will be raised (< 1%), or the response was not provided.

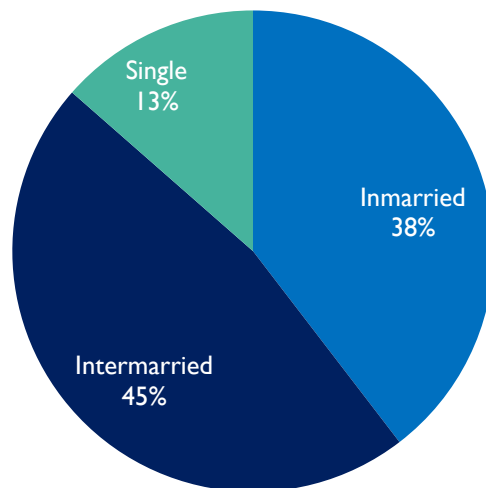
Table 3.1. Children in Jewish households

	Number	All children (%) ↓
Jewish children	5,100	84%
Jewish	3,600	59%
Jewish and another religion	1,500	25%
Not Jewish	1,100	16%
No religion	1,000	16%
Another religion	< 100	< 1%
Undetermined*	< 100	< 1%
Total	6,100	100%

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

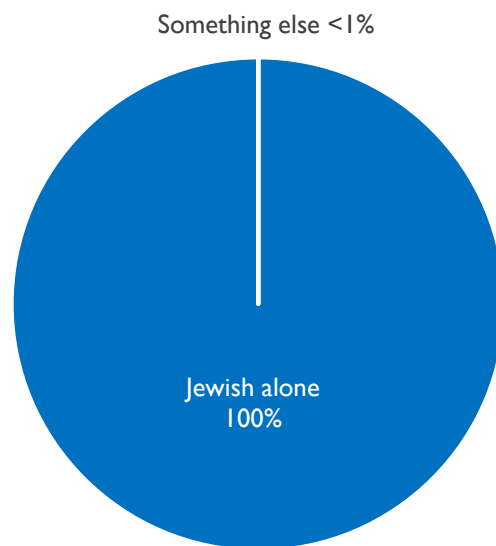
Over one third of Jewish children (38%) are being raised by inmarried parents, while a slightly larger percentage (45%) are being raised by intermarried parents. The remaining 13% of Jewish children are being raised by single parents (Figure 3.1).

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



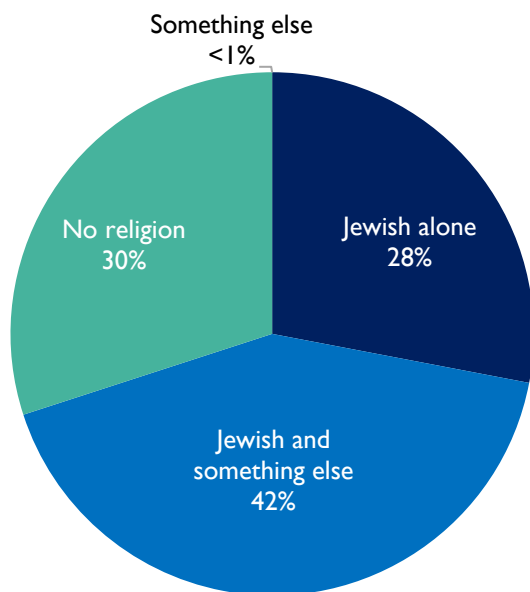
Virtually all children in inmarried Jewish households are considered Jewish alone (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2. Jewish identity of children in inmarried households (% of children)



More than one quarter of the children of intermarried parents (28%) are considered Jewish alone (Figure 3.3). A larger share of the children of intermarried parents (42%) are considered to be Jewish and something else. In all, 70% of the children of intermarried parents are considered Jewish in some way. While < 1% of the children of intermarried parents have exclusively another religion, 30% are being raised with no religious identity.

Figure 3.3. Jewish identity of children in intermarried households (% of children)



About half of Jewish children (52%) in Northeast Florida are ages 13-17 (Table 3.2). Nearly one third of Jewish children (30%) are ages 6-12, and the remainder (18%) are ages 0-5.

Table 3.2. Ages of Jewish children

	Number	All Jewish children (%)
0-5	900	18%
6-12	1,500	30%
13-17	2,600	52%
Total	5,100	100

Jewish education

Jewish education occurs in Jewish preschools, formal classroom settings such as day schools and part-time supplementary schools, as well as in informal settings, including camps, youth groups, and peer trips to Israel. Note that for the remainder of the chapter, K-12 Jewish students includes adults—those ages 18 to 19—who are still in high school.

The vast majority of Jewish students (80%) in grades K-12 during the 2023-24 school year were enrolled in public school (Table 3.3). Other Jewish students were enrolled in a Jewish day school or yeshiva (6%), were homeschooled (6%), or they were enrolled in a non-Jewish private school (2%). The remaining 7% were enrolled in some other type of school.

Table 3.3. Type of K-12 school, 2023-24

	Jewish students in K-12 (%)
	↓
Public school	80
Jewish day school or yeshiva	6
Home school	6
Non-Jewish private school	2
Other type of school	7
Total	100

Less than half of Jewish students (40%) in grades K-12 during the 2023-24 school year were enrolled in some form of Jewish education (Table 3.4). Twelve percent attended some form of Jewish school, either part-time (6%) or a full-time Jewish day school or yeshiva (6%). Twenty percent of Jewish students were enrolled in other Jewish programs, such as youth groups or teen programs (14%) or tutoring and private classes (13%). Additionally, over one third of Jewish students (36%) expected to attend a Jewish camp in summer 2024, either as a camper or staff member.

In the CDS, representing 29 communities whose studies were conducted between 2015-24, 27% of age-eligible Jewish students were enrolled in a formal Jewish educational program, either full- or part-time (not shown in table).

Table 3.4. K-12 Jewish education, 2023-24 and summer 2024

	Jewish students in K-12 (%)
Any Jewish education	40
Formal Jewish school	12
Part-time Jewish school	6
Jewish day school or yeshiva	6
Other Jewish programs	20
Jewish youth group or teen program	14
Tutoring or private classes	13
Any Jewish camp	36
Jewish day camp	32
Jewish overnight camp	5

Note: Students could be enrolled in more than one type of school or program.

A small share of Jewish students ages 12 and older (7%) had previously been involved in a peer travel program to Israel. (Not shown in table).

Parents of K-12 students whose children were not enrolled in formal Jewish schooling were asked about the reasons for this decision (Table 3.5). Feeling formal Jewish schooling was unimportant was the most common reason for not enrolling their children in a Jewish day school (45%). The lack of a nearby Jewish school or adequate transportation was cited by 38% of parents whose children did not participate in Jewish school. Thirty-five percent indicated cost as a reason for not enrolling their age-eligible children. One quarter of parents (25%) identified inconvenient schedules as a reason for not enrolling their children, and others (18%) could not find a good academic fit for their children. Smaller proportions cited the quality of general education (12%), a lack of age-appropriate options (12%), and not finding a good religious fit (12%) as reasons for not enrolling their children in a Jewish school. Another 7% did not find a good social fit.

Table 3.5. Reasons for not enrolling children in formal Jewish schooling

Households without age-eligible Jewish children in Jewish schooling (%)	
Not important to parents	45
Location	38
Cost	35
Schedule	25
No good academic fit	18
Quality of education offered	12
No age-appropriate options	12
No good religious fit	12
No good social fit	7
Another reason	32

Note: Parents could select multiple reasons.

Summer camping

With data collection taking place during spring 2024, parents were asked whether they expected their child to participate in summer camp later that summer. Over half of Jewish students (58%) in grades K-12 were expected to attend some type of summer camp in 2024, either as a camper or staff member (Table 3.6). Thirty-six percent were expected to attend a Jewish camp, and 29% planned to attend a non-Jewish camp in either a day or an overnight program.

Table 3.6. Anticipated summer camp, 2024

Jewish students in K-12 (%)	
Any camp	58
Any Jewish camp	36
Jewish day camp	32
Jewish overnight camp	5
Any non-Jewish camp	29
Non-Jewish day camp	12
Non-Jewish overnight camp	17

Note: Students could have attended more than one type of camp.

Young children and families

In the 2023-24 school year, 25% of Jewish children in the Northeast Florida area not yet in kindergarten were enrolled in an early childhood program run by a Jewish organization (Table 3.7). Another 59% of age-eligible children were enrolled in a program run by a private non-Jewish or secular organization. Less than one percent attended a daycare at a person's home and less than one percent were enrolled in a public preschool or daycare. Fifteen percent of Jewish children not yet in kindergarten were not enrolled in any of these programs.

In the CDS, 21% of age-eligible Jewish children were enrolled in a Jewish early childhood program (not shown in table).

Table 3.7. Early childhood enrollment and programs, 2023-24

	Jewish children not yet in kindergarten (%)
Program run by a Jewish organization	25
Program run by a private non-Jewish or secular organization	59
Daycare at a person's home	< 1
Public preschool or daycare	< 1
None of these	15

Other Jewish-sponsored programming, outside of early childhood programs and schools, is available to families with younger children in Northeast Florida. Nearly half of families with children younger than age 13 (77%) participated in a Tot Shabbat, synagogue-based playgroup, or community family holiday program.

PJ Library and PJ Our Way are programs that send free Jewish children's books to families with children younger than age 13. About one third of young families (34%) receive books from the program. Of the remaining households that do not receive books, 5% were not aware of the program, and 62% were aware but did not receive books.

B'nai mitzvah

Thirty-eight percent of age-eligible Jewish children in Northeast Florida have had a bar mitzvah, bat mitzvah, or b-mitzvah ceremony, and an additional 4% plan to have one in the future.

CHAPTER 4. CONGREGATIONS AND RITUAL LIFE

Chapter highlights

- Nearly one quarter of Northeast Florida Jewish households (24%) belong to some type of Jewish congregation. This category includes synagogues, an independent *minyan* or *chavurah*, Chabad, and other worship communities.
- All households in the High Engagement and Immersed groups belong to at least one congregation. By contrast, 15% of households in the Moderate Engagement group and less than 1% of households in the Lower Engagement group belong to any type of congregation.
- Fifteen percent of all Northeast Florida Jewish households belong to a local Chabad, 5% belong to a synagogue and pay membership dues, and 2% belong to a synagogue and do not pay dues.
- A larger share of Northeast Florida Jewish adults attend services than belong to congregations. About half of Jewish adults (53%) attended at least one Jewish worship service in the previous year. More than one third of Jewish adults (37%) attended High Holiday services in 2023.
- Nearly all congregation members (99%) attended services at least once in the past year, but notably, so did 36% of Jewish adults who are not members of a congregation. Seventeen percent of non-members attended a High Holiday service in 2023.
- The most common venues for attending Jewish worship services are local Chabads (26% of Jewish adults) and synagogues (25%).
- One quarter of Jewish adults (24%) marked Shabbat every week or almost every week.
- The three most common ways that Northeast Florida Jewish adults marked Shabbat included lighting candles (40%), eating a special meal (39%), and spending time with family and friends (38%).
- Seventy-eight percent of Jewish adults lit Hanukkah candles in 2023, 68% attend or host a Passover seder in a typical year, and 41% fasted on Yom Kippur in 2023.

Congregation membership

In Northeast Florida, nearly one quarter of Jewish households (24%) belong to some type of Jewish congregation (Table 4.1). This category includes synagogues, an independent *minyan* or *chavurah*, Chabad, and other worship communities.

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. This report uses the language of “membership” and “belonging” for Chabad despite it not always being an appropriate fit.

All households in the High Engagement and Immersed groups belong to at least one congregation. By contrast, 15% of households in the Moderate Engagement group and less than 1% of households in the Lower Engagement group belong to any type of congregation. Congregational membership also differs by relationship status. Half of inmarried households belong to a congregation (52%), compared to 10% of intermarried households and one third of single households (32%).

Notably, there are not significant differences by age in congregation membership.

For a national comparison, among Jewish **adults** in Northeast Florida, 30% live in a household in which someone is a congregation member, a slightly lower share than among all US Jews (35%).¹²

Table 4.1. Membership in Jewish congregations

Belongs to any congregation (%)	
All Jewish households	24
Jewish engagement	
Lower Engagement	< 1
Moderate Engagement	15
High Engagement	100
Immersed	100
Region	
Mandarin	39
S. Duval & N. St. John's	15
Beach Communities	21
Urban Core	16
N. & W. Jacksonville	33
Age	
22-44	33
44-59	20
60-74	22
75+	30
Relationship status	
Inmarried	52
Intermarried	10
Not married	32
Parent of minor child	
No	26
Yes	20
Length of residence	
0-4 years	30
5-19 years	25
20+ years	24

Nearly all Jewish households with membership to a Jewish congregation belong to a local congregation in Northeast Florida (23% of all Jewish households, 98% of member households) (Table 4.2). Fifteen percent of all Northeast Florida Jewish households belong to a local Chabad, 5% belong to a synagogue and pay membership dues, and 2% belong to a synagogue and do not pay dues.

Table 4.2. Type of congregation membership

	All households (%)	Congregation-member households (%)
Any congregation	24	100
Any local congregation	23	98
Chabad	15	61
Synagogue, pays dues	5	20
Synagogue, no dues	2	7
Independent <i>minyan</i> or <i>chavurah</i>	< 1	< 1

Note: Total does not yield 100 because some respondents did not provide names of their local memberships.

Religious services

Congregational membership is not a pre-requisite for attending services. In fact, a larger share of Northeast Florida Jewish adults attend services than belong to congregations. Although, as noted above, 30% of Jewish adults reside in a congregation-member household, 53% attended at least one Jewish worship service in the previous year (Table 4.3). Twenty-four percent of Jewish adults attended services at least once a month, and over one third (37%) attended High Holiday services in 2023.

While all members of the High Engagement and Immersed groups attended services at least once in the previous year, the frequency of attendance differed between the engagement groups. While 99% of the Immersed group and 73% of the High Engagement group attended a Jewish service at least once per month, only 9% of the Moderate Engagement group did so.

Service attendance among inmarried and single Jewish adults was similar. About two thirds of each attended services in the past year (62% and 67%, respectively), and about one third did so at least monthly (34% and 38%, respectively). Attendance at 2023 High Holiday services was similar among inmarried (52%) and single adults (50%). By contrast, 35% of intermarried Jewish adults attended services in the past year, 7% attended services at least once a month, and 17% attended High Holidays services in 2023.

Nearly all congregation members (99%) attended services at least once in the past year, but notably, so did 36% of Jewish adults who are not members of a congregation. Seventeen percent of non-members attended a High Holiday service in 2023.

Table 4.3. Jewish worship services during past year

	Services during past year, ever (%)	Services during past year, monthly or more (%)	High Holidays, 2023 (%)
All Jewish adults	53	24	37
Jewish engagement			
Lower Engagement	2	0	0
Moderate Engagement	94	9	45
High Engagement	100	73	100
Immersed	100	99	93
Region			
Mandarin	71	49	62
S. Duval & N. St. John's Beach Communities	41	11	22
Urban Core	50	20	35
N. & W. Jacksonville	50	17	25
	59	28	43
Age			
22-44	46	22	35
44-59	69	24	41
60-74	52	29	36
75+	46	13	31
Relationship status			
Inmarried	62	34	52
Intermarried	35	7	17
Not married	67	38	50
Parent of minor child			
No	55	26	37
Yes	49	16	39
Length of residence			
0-4 years	69	39	47
5-19 years	41	17	31
20+ years	56	23	37
Congregation member			
No	36	4	17
Yes	99	75	87

Jewish adults interested in attending a Jewish worship service have many options in Northeast Florida including those held at synagogues, Chabad, independent *minyans*, and through community organizations such as River Garden Senior Services and Hillel. The most common venues for services are local Chabads (26%) and synagogues (25%) (Table 4.4).

Members of the Immersed (69%) and High Engagement (57%) groups attended services at Chabad in larger shares than did the Moderate Engagement (35%) and Lower Engagement (0%) groups. On the other hand, larger shares of the Moderate Engagement group attended services at a Jewish community organization (18%) or a synagogue outside Northeast Florida (22%) compared to the other groups.

About one quarter of Jewish adults in the Beach Communities attended services at a Jewish community organization (27%), compared to 1-5% of those living in other regions.

Table 4.4. Location of Jewish worship services attended, past year

	Chabad in NEFL (%)	Synagogue in NEFL (%)	Synagogue outside NEFL (%)	Jewish community organization (%)	Independent minyan or chavurah (%)
All Jewish adults	26	25	8	7	3
Jewish engagement					
Lower Engagement	0	< 1	2	0	0
Moderate Engagement	35	46	22	18	7
High Engagement	57	56	4	7	6
Immersed	69	43	3	3	1
Region					
Mandarin	34	45	8	5	1
S. Duval & N. St. John's	12	20	3	5	1
Beach Communities	20	26	12	27	4
Urban Core	28	18	5	2	< 1
N. & W. Jacksonville	35	20	13	1	< 1
Age					
22-44	31	25	4	8	7
44-59	29	29	13	7	1
60-74	25	27	8	4	< 1
75+	5	28	7	10	3
Relationship status					
Inmarried	29	39	8	4	3
Intermarried	17	7	7	1	< 1
Not married	35	35	5	12	5
Parent of minor child					
No	28	26	7	7	3
Yes	19	25	16	1	2
Length of residence					
0-4 years	39	35	9	12	7
5-19 years	16	20	8	3	2
20+ years	28	26	6	6	1
Congregation member					
No	13	15	10	7	3
Yes	56	51	3	6	3

Shabbat, holidays, and rituals

In the past year, more than half of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida marked Shabbat in some way at least once (Table 4.5). One quarter of Jewish adults (25%) marked Shabbat occasionally, and 7%

did so at least monthly, but less than every week. Another 24% marked Shabbat every week or almost every week.

Shabbat is more commonly marked weekly by adults in the Immersed engagement group (99%), compared to those in the High Engagement (65%) and the Moderate Engagement (11%) groups.

In Mandarin, 49% of Jewish adults marked Shabbat every week or almost every week, compared to 32% of Northern and Western Jacksonville and 23% of Urban Core adults. Relatively few in South Duval and North St. John's (8%) and the Beach Communities (6%) marked Shabbat weekly.

Larger shares of adults in congregation-member households marked Shabbat weekly (72%) than did non-members (4%). Still, 30% of non-members marked Shabbat occasionally.

Table 4.5. Frequency of marking Shabbat during past year

	Never (%)	Occasionally (%)	At least once a month (%)	Every week or almost every week (%)	Total
All Jewish adults	43	25	7	24	100
Jewish engagement					
Lower Engagement	75	21	4	< 1	100
Moderate Engagement	35	43	11	11	100
High Engagement	1	15	19	65	100
Immersed	< 1	< 1	1	99	100
Region					
Mandarin	30	16	4	49	100
S. Duval & N. St. John's	58	21	13	8	100
Beach Communities	30	63	2	6	100
Urban Core	51	16	10	23	100
N. & W. Jacksonville	44	18	6	32	100
Age					
22-44	36	33	16	16	100
44-59	40	24	3	33	100
60-74	46	21	4	29	100
75+	66	18	5	11	100
Relationship status					
Inmarried	42	21	5	32	100
Intermarried	61	25	7	7	100
Not married	29	24	10	37	100
Parent of minor child					
No	43	24	8	26	100
Yes	52	25	5	17	100
Length of residence					
0-4 years	32	24	8	36	100
5-19 years	46	30	5	18	100
20+ years	49	18	9	24	100
Congregation member					
No	58	30	7	4	100
Yes	11	10	8	72	100

Adults identified multiple ways that they marked Shabbat in person or online, including ritual, communal, and educational activities (Table 4.6). The three most common ways that Northeast Florida Jewish adults marked Shabbat included lighting candles (40% of all Jewish adults), eating a special meal (39% of all Jewish adults), and spending time with family and friends (38% of all Jewish adults).

Table 4.6. Shabbat mark activities, past year

	All Jewish adults (%)	Jewish adults that marked Shabbat (%)
Marked Shabbat	57	100
Light Shabbat candles	40	70
Eat special meal	39	69
Spend time with family or friends	38	67
Take a break from work or technology	25	44
Jewish learning or reading	21	37
Meditation or spiritual practice	19	33
Spend time outdoors or in nature	14	24
Other	3	6

Note: Total exceeds 100 because respondents could select more than one option.

Most Jewish adults in the Northeast Florida area observe at least one Jewish holiday or ritual (Table 4.7). Seventy-eight percent lit Hanukkah candles in 2023, 68% attend or host a Passover seder in a typical year, and 41% fasted on Yom Kippur in 2023. Over one third of Jewish adults (39%) follow any of the kosher rules.

Members of the Immersed and High Engagement groups fasted on Yom Kippur in 2023 (98% and 88%) and follow kosher rules (98% and 82%) in significantly larger shares than those in the other engagement groups.

Jewish adults in living in the Mandarin and Northern and Western Jacksonville regions fasted on Yom Kippur (60% and 52%, respectively), and followed any kosher rules (52% and 45%, respectively), in larger shares than the rest of the Northeast Florida Jewish community.

While smaller shares of intermarried Jews engage in the holiday and ritual behaviors, more than half did light Hannukah candles (61%) and typically attend a seder (56%).

Despite not belonging to a congregation, over two thirds of non-members (70%) lit Hanukkah candles, over half (59%) typically participate in a Passover seder, and nearly one quarter (22%) fasted for at least part of Yom Kippur.

Table 4.7. Holidays and rituals

	Hanukkah candles, 2023 (%)	Seder, typical year (%)	Fasted on Yom Kippur 2023* (%)	Follow any kosher rules (%)
All Jewish adults	78	68	41	39
Jewish engagement				
Lower Engagement	59	44	11	10
Moderate Engagement	87	85	37	39
High Engagement	96	95	88	82
Immersed	100	93	98	98
Region				
Mandarin	84	79	60	52
S. Duval & N. St. John's	61	60	29	33
Beach Communities	88	84	35	23
Urban Core	79	64	21	37
N. & W. Jacksonville	82	63	52	45
Age				
22-44	92	72	28	37
44-59	74	80	52	47
60-74	77	72	43	41
75+	50	45	30	23
Relationship status				
Inmarried	83	69	50	37
Intermarried	61	56	18	21
Not married	89	81	56	59
Parent of minor child				
No	76	68	41	40
Yes	87	69	36	36
Length of residence				
0-4 years	77	81	62	53
5-19 years	77	66	30	36
20+ years	78	62	35	34
Congregation member				
No	70	59	22	21
Yes	96	90	82	82

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

CHAPTER 5. JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS, PROGRAMS, AND PHILANTHROPY

Chapter highlights

- In all, 21% of Jewish households belong to at least one Jewish organization or informal group in Northeast Florida aside from a congregation. This includes 12% of Jewish households that belong to a Jewish organization or club, 9% that belong to an informal or grassroots Jewish group, and 6% that belong to the Jewish Community Alliance.
- Membership in the JCA is highest in Mandarin (14%) and the Urban Core (9%), the areas closest to the building's location.
- In the past year, slightly more than half of Jewish adults participated in at least one Jewish-sponsored program, including 26% who participated rarely, 18% who participated sometimes, and 13% who participated often.
- Among the 43% of Jewish adults who did not participate in a Jewish-sponsored program, about one third were "somewhat" interested, while another 6% were "very much" interested in doing so.
- Among the 88% of Jewish adults who either already participate or are interested in participating in Jewish programs, 75% cite at least one condition that limits their participation. The most common barriers to Jewish participation are not knowing many people (38%), not having found programs of interest (36%), and inconvenient locations (34%).
- About one third of financially struggling Jewish adults (34%) cite affordability as a barrier to participation in Jewish programs, significantly higher than financially comfortable Jewish adults.
- Cultural programs are the most attended types of programs, with 42% of Jewish adults participating in cultural programs of any sort. Forty-one percent of Jewish adults participate in religious or spiritual programs, and 40% of Jewish adults participate in educational programs. Of those who participated in cultural programs, most attended programs outside of Jewish organizations, while most who attended religious and educational programs did so through Jewish organizations.
- More than half of Jewish adults (57%) received some form of personal outreach from a Jewish organization in the past year. Invitations to participate in a program or activity (46%) and being asked for a financial donation (32%) were the most common types of outreach.
- About one quarter of inmarried Jewish adults (28%) were asked to serve in a leadership role in a Jewish organization, compared to just 7-9% of single and intermarried Jews.
- Forty-one percent of Jewish adults would be willing to travel for over 40 minutes on a regular basis to attend a Jewish program, but only 2% of Jewish adults would travel over one hour for a Jewish program on a regular basis.
- Notably, there are not significance differences by region when it comes to how far Jewish adults are willing to travel for a Jewish program or activity on a regular basis.

- In the Northeast Florida Jewish community, 41% of Jewish adults volunteered somewhere in the past year. This share includes 19% who volunteered for or with Jewish organizations.
- Within the Northeast Florida Jewish community, 65% of households made a charitable contribution in the past year, including 31% who gave to at least one Jewish organization.
- Combatting antisemitism and Holocaust awareness and education (42%) is the most popular cause of interest for people's volunteering or philanthropy.

Membership in Jewish organizations

Jewish households in the Northeast Florida Jewish community belong to a wide range of Jewish organizations and groups. In all, 21% belong to at least one Jewish organization or informal group in Northeast Florida aside from a congregation (Table 5.1). This includes 12% of Jewish households that belong to a Jewish organization or club, 9% that belong to an informal or grassroots Jewish group, and 6% that belong to the Jewish Community Alliance (JCA; Northeast Florida's Jewish Community Center).

The Immersed engagement group includes the highest share of households that belong to any Jewish organization (52%) or to an informal Jewish group (56%). There are no differences by engagement group with respect to membership in the JCA.

Membership in an informal or grassroots Jewish organization is highest in the Mandarin area (22%), and in Northern and Western Jacksonville (16%). Membership in the JCA is highest in Mandarin (14%) and the Urban Core (9%), the areas closest to the building's location.

Thirty-four percent of inmarried households belong to an informal Jewish group, compared to less than 1% of intermarried households.

Table 5.1. Membership in Jewish organizations, aside from congregations

	Any Jewish organization in Northeast Florida (%)	Jewish organization or club in Northeast Florida (%)	Informal or grassroots Jewish group in Northeast Florida (%)	Jewish Community Alliance (%)
All Jewish households	21	12	9	6
Jewish engagement				
Lower Engagement	5	0	1	4
Moderate Engagement	26	17	5	9
High Engagement	36	23	19	6
Immersed	52	23	56	5
Region				
Mandarin	34	10	22	14
S. Duval & N. St. John's	8	4	3	4
Beach Communities	17	14	3	2
Urban Core	15	7	2	9
N. & W. Jacksonville	30	24	16	< 1
Age				
22-44	25	10	11	8
44-59	11	4	5	4
60-74	20	10	8	6
75+	27	20	11	6
Relationship status				
Inmarried	47	21	34	11
Intermarried	7	4	< 1	4
Not married	22	13	11	6
Minor child in household				
No	22	12	11	5
Yes	15	7	4	11
Length of residence				
0-4 years	19	11	9	3
5-19 years	21	10	6	8
20+ years	22	13	12	5

Participation in Jewish-sponsored programs

In the past year, slightly more than half of Jewish adults participated in at least one Jewish-sponsored program, including 26% who participated rarely, 18% who participated sometimes, and 13% who participated often (Table 5.2). The remaining 43% of Jewish adults did not participate in any Jewish program.

Nearly all members of the Immersed and High Engagement groups participated in at least one Jewish program. About three quarters of the Lower Engagement group (78%) never participated in a Jewish program.

Significantly greater shares of Jewish adults in Mandarin (45%) and Northern and Western Jacksonville (22%) participated in programs often, compared to Jewish adults in other regions.

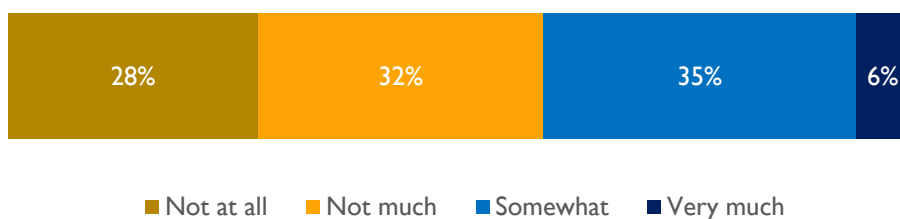
Table 5.2. Frequency of Jewish program participation, past year

	Never (%)	Rarely (%)	Sometimes (%)	Often (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish adults	43	26	18	13	100
Jewish engagement					
Lower Engagement	78	18	4	< 1	100
Moderate Engagement	23	53	24	1	100
High Engagement	8	23	64	6	100
Immersed	< 1	8	6	85	100
Region					
Mandarin	10	30	15	45	100
S. Duval & N. St. John's	61	26	12	2	100
Beach Communities	55	17	27	1	100
Urban Core	37	36	25	1	100
N. & W. Jacksonville	41	24	14	22	100
Age					
22-44	43	29	16	12	100
44-59	41	42	4	12	100
60-74	44	20	25	11	100
75+	45	25	27	3	100
Relationship status					
Inmarried	42	22	13	23	100
Intermarried	61	27	7	6	100
Not married	23	31	29	17	100
Minor child in household					
No	42	26	18	13	100
Yes	47	29	12	12	100
Length of residence					
0-4 years	36	21	26	17	100
5-19 years	46	27	14	13	100
20+ years	40	31	14	15	100

Among the 43% of Jewish adults who did not participate in a Jewish-sponsored program, about one third are “somewhat” interested, while another 6% are “very much” interested in doing so (Figure 5.1). The 28% of non-participants who are not at all interested in Jewish programs represent 12% of

the entire adult Jewish community in Northeast Florida; that is, 88% of Jewish adults either already participate or are at least a little interested in doing so.

Figure 5.1. Interest in programs sponsored by Northeast Florida Jewish community (% Jewish adults who never participated in Jewish program)



Limits to participation

For this section of the report focusing on the limits to desired participation in Jewish life, the analysis focuses on those who already participated in a Jewish program, or who did not but are interested in doing so. In Northeast Florida, 88% of all Jewish adults meet these criteria. Among this population, 75% cite at least one condition that limits their participation (Table 5.3a and 5.3b). The most common barriers to Jewish participation are not knowing many people (38%), not having found programs of interest (36%), and inconvenient locations (34%). Ten percent do not feel confident enough in their Jewish knowledge to participate, 9% have security concerns, 7% can't afford programs, 6% feel unwelcome, 5% feel their political views are unwelcome, and 3% encountered a lack of accessibility for people with disabilities and/or other needs.

Nine percent of Jewish adults who participate or are interested in participating in Jewish programs cite some other barrier to participation. Examples of these barriers include health issues and existing commitments to non-Jewish activities.

For the 6% who feel unwelcome in Jewish spaces, they cite as reasons their perception of cliquishness, lack of organizational follow-up, and the sense that diversity of ritual observance is not appreciated.

Only 21% of the Immersed group cite any limitation to participation, compared to 75% of the overall community. The most frequently cited limitation for the Immersed group is not knowing many people (14%). All other limitations are cited by no more than 3% of the group.

For the Lower Engagement group, the three most frequently cited limitations include not having found interesting programs (45%), not knowing many people (38%), and inconvenient locations (27%).

The Moderate Engagement group cites as barriers to participation inconvenient locations (56%), not knowing many people (53%), and not finding Jewish programs of interest (48%). Nearly half of the

High Engagement group cites inconvenient locations (46%) as a barrier to participation, a far higher share than those who cite not knowing many people (21%) and not finding interesting programs (16%).

Compared to 75% of the overall population, 41% of Jewish adults living in the Mandarin region cite at least one limitation to their desired participation in Jewish life. Twenty percent of Jewish adults in South Duval and North St. John's cite safety or security concerns as a barrier to participate, more than any other region.

Larger shares of Jewish adults ages 22-44 (61%) and ages 75 and older (50%) cite a lack of interesting programs as a barrier to participation, compared to middle aged Jewish adults. Those Jewish adults ages 75 or older also cite feeling that their political views are unwelcome (25%) and a lack of accessibility (18%) as barriers to participation in larger shares compared with younger age groups.

For the most part, there are no differences in perceiving barriers to participation between those who do participate in Jewish-sponsored programs, and those who do not but are interested.

Table 5.3a. Barriers to participation in programs sponsored by Northeast Florida Jewish community

	Any barrier (%)	You don't know many people (%)	You haven't found Jewish programs that interest you (%)	Location not convenient (%)	You are not confident in your Jewish knowledge (%)
Participating or interested Jewish adults	75	38	36	34	10
Jewish engagement					
Lower Engagement	85	38	45	27	17
Moderate Engagement	87	53	48	56	13
High Engagement	80	21	16	46	4
Immersed	21	14	3	3	< 1
Region					
Mandarin	41	13	21	8	8
S. Duval & N. St. John's	93	40	38	39	3
Beach Communities	78	38	57	41	11
Urban Core	82	39	29	47	11
N. & W. Jacksonville	75	53	34	42	21
Age					
22-44	86	51	61	35	15
44-59	78	45	21	39	14
60-74	66	23	19	35	2
75+	82	30	50	40	24
Relationship status					
Inmarried	68	35	33	23	15
Intermarried	76	21	42	38	6
Not married	74	51	30	39	12
Minor child in household					
No	73	36	37	33	9
Yes	81	38	30	50	22
Length of residence					
0-4 years	75	50	36	45	5
5-19 years	76	27	35	27	14
20+ years	69	33	33	35	12
Participated in program, past year					
No, but interested	86	46	45	28	13
Yes	67	32	30	38	10

Table 5.3b. Barriers to participation in programs sponsored by Northeast Florida Jewish community

	Safety or security concerns (%)	Can't afford it (%)	You feel unwelcome (%)	Your political views are unwelcome (%)	Lack of accessibility for people with disabilities and/or other needs (%)	Other (%)
Participating or interested Jewish adults	9	7	6	5	3	9
Jewish engagement						
Lower Engagement	15	6	5	9	9	9
Moderate Engagement	6	12	10	1	1	13
High Engagement	7	9	8	12	1	8
Immersed	< 1	1	< 1	1	1	1
Region						
Mandarin	7	7	8	4	1	5
S. Duval & N. St. John's Beach	20	14	1	4	2	9
Communities	< 1	8	6	3	< 1	11
Urban Core	< 1	3	12	3	6	6
N. & W. Jacksonville	11	5	4	11	8	13
Age						
22-44	8	2	2	3	< 1	3
44-59	5	8	15	1	2	20
60-74	5	11	6	4	3	6
75+	28	16	4	25	18	15
Relationship status						
Inmarried	13	2	3	9	8	9
Intermarried	6	5	3	3	1	10
Not married	7	11	11	5	3	7
Minor child in household						
No	8	7	7	6	4	9
Yes	10	10	1	2	0	3
Length of residence						
0-4 years	6	8	6	2	1	5
5-19 years	15	5	7	9	7	13
20+ years	5	9	5	5	3	6
Participated in program, past year						
No, but interested	10	3	5	5	1	1
Yes	8	10	7	6	5	12

About one third of financially struggling Jewish adults (34%) cite affordability as a barrier to participation in Jewish programs, significantly higher than financially comfortable Jewish adults (Table 5.4).

Table 5.4. Financial barriers to participation in programs sponsored by Northeast Florida Jewish community

Can't afford it (%)	
Participating or interested Jewish adults	
Financial situation	
Struggling	34
Enough	4
Extra	< 1
Well-off	< 1

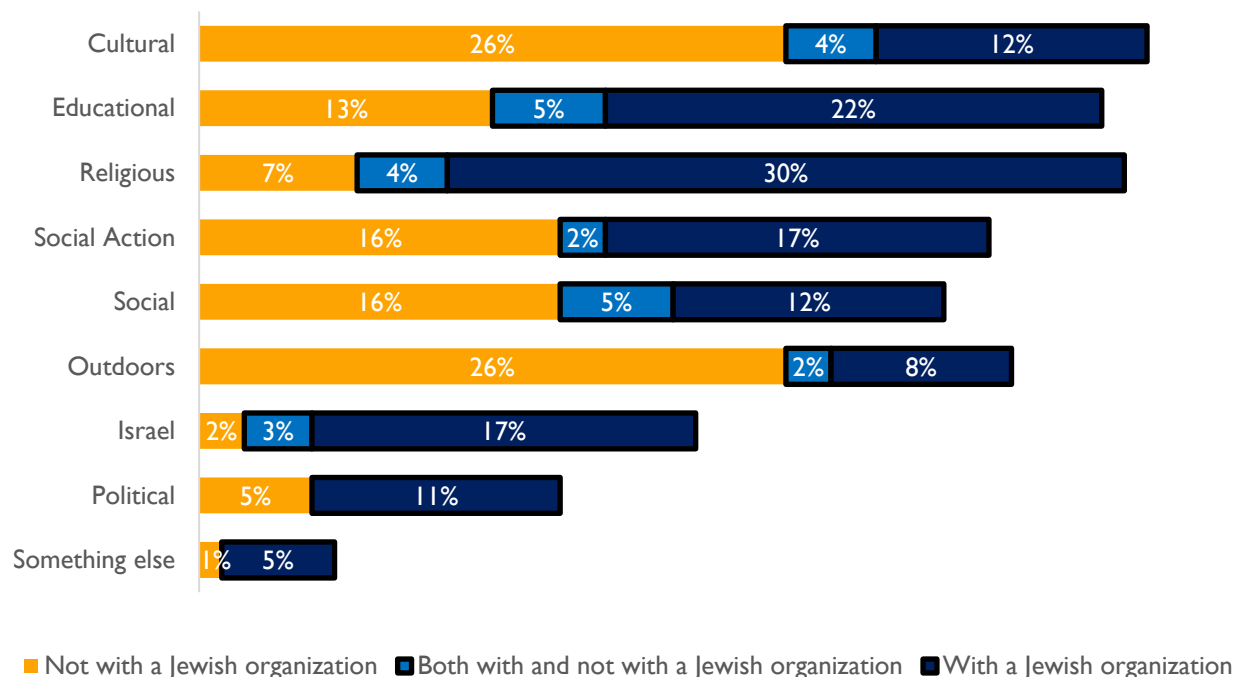
Notably, there are not significant differences between political viewpoints as to whether Jewish adults feel unwelcome for their political views (not shown in table).

Program types and sponsorship

Members of the Northeast Florida Jewish community participate in programs and activities both sponsored and not sponsored by the Jewish community (Figure 5.2, Tables 5.5a and 5.5b). The most attended programs last year were primarily cultural (42%). Jewish adults also participated in religious or spiritual programs (41%) and educational programs (40%). Most who participated in cultural programs did so outside of Jewish organizations, while most who attended religious and educational programs did so through Jewish organizations.

Twenty-three percent of Jewish adults attended Israel-related programs, including 17% who attended programs exclusively sponsored by Jewish organizations and 3% who attended both those sponsored by Jewish organizations and those sponsored by non-Jewish organizations.

Figure 5.2. Sponsorship of programs or activities by type, past year (% Jewish adults)



Across all engagement categories, the Immersed group were the most likely to attend activities with Jewish organizations. Nearly all in the Immersed group (99%) attended an educational program, and 89% attended a religious or spiritual program. While three quarters of the High Engagement group attended a religious or spiritual program (75%), fewer than half attended any other kind of Jewish-sponsored programming.

There are also some differences by region. About two thirds of Jewish adults in Mandarin attended a Jewish-sponsored educational program (69%) and a religious or spiritual program (67%), compared to one third and one quarter of the overall community, respectively. Jews living in Mandarin and Northern and Western Jacksonville had similar shares of Jewish adults who participated in social, cultural, political, and outdoor Jewish programs.

Around half of single Jewish adults attended a religious or spiritual event (52%), compared with 38% of inmarried and 14% of intermarried Jewish adults. Forty percent of inmarried Jewish adults attended an educational program compared to 10% of intermarried Jewish adults. Single Jews were the most likely to have attended a cultural (30%), political (21%), or outdoors (22%) programs. One percent or less of intermarried Jewish adults were likely to have attended these types of programs.

Table 5.5a. Types of programs or activities with a Jewish organization, past year

	Religious or spiritual (%)	Educational (%)	Israel-related (%)	Social action (%)	Social (%)
All Jewish adults	34	26	20	19	17
Jewish engagement					
Lower Engagement	1	2	1	1	1
Moderate Engagement	39	20	22	13	14
High Engagement	75	39	39	38	35
Immersed	89	99	64	78	63
Region					
Mandarin	67	69	40	53	37
S. Duval & N. St. John's	11	4	6	5	4
Beach Communities	27	19	17	3	19
Urban Core	29	11	15	12	6
N. & W. Jacksonville	42	35	31	31	30
Age					
22-44	36	24	24	19	20
44-59	30	31	22	21	14
60-74	37	25	17	18	18
75+	19	19	6	17	5
Relationship status					
Inmarried	38	40	27	30	21
Intermarried	14	10	7	7	6
Not married	52	34	32	29	29
Minor child in household					
No	36	28	22	22	19
Yes	24	23	19	19	16
Length of residence					
0-4 years	41	26	23	17	15
5-19 years	25	26	15	24	18
20+ years	38	29	26	23	18

Table 5.5b. Types of programs or activities with a Jewish organization, past year

	Cultural (%)	Political (%)	Outdoors (%)	Other (%)
All Jewish adults	16	11	10	6
Jewish engagement				
Lower Engagement	1	< 1	1	0
Moderate Engagement	10	3	1	1
High Engagement	36	25	20	6
Immersed	63	50	55	34
Region				
Mandarin	35	26	23	8
S. Duval & N. St. John's	5	1	2	< 1
Beach Communities	5	1	1	< 1
Urban Core	7	1	1	< 1
N. & W. Jacksonville	33	26	28	21
Age				
22-44	14	6	12	5
44-59	14	16	10	< 1
60-74	18	8	6	2
75+	10	2	2	1
Relationship status				
Inmarried	22	15	11	5
Intermarried	1	< 1	1	< 1
Not married	30	21	22	13
Minor child in household				
No	18	12	12	6
Yes	11	9	10	10
Length of residence				
0-4 years	12	13	7	2
5-19 years	18	8	13	4
20+ years	21	14	14	13

The Northeast Florida Jewish community includes many organizations that sponsor programs for its members (Table 5.6). Twenty-seven percent of Jewish adults participated in a program sponsored by a local Chabad, and 19% attended a program sponsored by a local synagogue. Despite 6% of Jewish households holding membership in the JCA (see Table 5.1), 14% of Jewish adults participated in a program sponsored by the JCA. Additionally, 10% participated in a program sponsored by the Jewish Federation and Foundation of Northeast Florida, 7% participated in a program sponsored by River Garden Senior Services, and 3% participated in a program sponsored by Jacksonville Kollel.

A larger share of the Immersed engagement group attended programs through Chabad (74%) and a synagogue (41%) than did other groups, while a larger share of the High Engagement (12%) and Moderate Engagement (15%) groups participated in River Garden Senior Center programs compared to other groups. Similar shares of the Moderate Engagement (29%) and High Engagement (28%) groups participated in programs with synagogues and congregations.

Jewish adults in Mandarin were more likely to have attended a Jewish program sponsored by Chabad (48%) or by a synagogue (46%) than any other group. A little less than half of Jewish adults in Northern and Western Jacksonville attended a program sponsored by Chabad (42%), and about one quarter of Jews living in the Urban Core attended a program sponsored by Chabad (27%) or by a synagogue or congregation (24%). About 9% of Jewish adults in the Urban Core attended an event sponsored by the Jacksonville Kollel.

Ten percent of Jewish adults ages 44-59 attended an event sponsored by the Jacksonville Kollel.

Table 5.6 Jewish program sponsorship by organization, past year

	Chabad (%)	Synagogue or congregation (%)	The Jewish Community Alliance (%)	The Jewish Federation and Foundation of Northeast Florida (%)	River Garden Senior Services (%)	Jacksonville Kollel (%)
All Jewish adults	27	19	14	10	7	3
Jewish engagement						
Lower Engagement	< 1	4	7	5	2	0
Moderate Engagement	25	29	18	15	15	5
High Engagement	63	28	26	20	12	7
Immersed	74	41	15	7	7	4
Region						
Mandarin	48	46	21	8	13	5
S. Duval & N. St. John's	10	6	10	12	6	< 1
Beach Communities	2	7	4	11	10	3
Urban Core	27	24	20	16	11	9
N. & W. Jacksonville	42	19	12	4	< 1	< 1
Age						
22-44	27	23	18	16	3	1
44-59	26	21	14	10	11	10
60-74	30	21	15	8	7	1
75+	3	19	8	5	18	3
Relationship status						
Inmarried	28	24	18	12	9	6
Intermarried	18	13	5	7	3	< 1
Not married	35	25	20	11	8	4
Minor child in household						
No	28	18	13	10	8	3
Yes	18	32	23	7	6	6
Length of residence						
0-4 years	25	17	17	14	9	6
5-19 years	23	23	15	5	4	3
20+ years	31	20	11	11	9	2

Outreach by Jewish organizations

More than half of Jewish adults (57%) received some form of personal outreach from a Jewish organization in the past year (Tables 5.7a and 5.7b). Invitations to participate in a program or activity (46%) and being asked for a financial donation (32%) were the most common types of outreach. Additionally, 23% of Jewish adults were asked how they were doing, 13% were asked to serve on a committee or in another leadership role within a local Jewish organization, 12% were offered assistance, and 5% were asked something else.

Most Jewish adults in the Immersed (92%) and High Engagement (84%) groups, half of those in the Moderate Engagement group (55%), and 41% of the Lower Engagement group received any outreach from a Jewish organization. While 80% of Jewish adults in the Immersed group received an invitation to participate in a program or activity and 79% were asked how they were doing, half received a fundraising appeal (50%) or were offered or provided assistance (49%). For the High Engagement group, the most commonly received types of outreach were being asked for a donation (72%) and being asked how they were doing (52%).

Just 29% of Jewish adults living in South Duval and North St. John's received at least one outreach from a Jewish organization, a much smaller share than those living in other parts of Northeast Florida. Smaller shares of Jewish adults living in South Duval and North St. John's, the Beach Communities, and the Urban Core were offered or provided assistance from a Jewish organization, compared to 22% in Mandarin and 29% in Northern and Western Jacksonville.

Nearly three quarters of Jewish adults ages 22-44 (73%) received an invitation to a Jewish program or activity, compared to 28-32% of Jewish older adults.

About one quarter of inmarried Jewish adults (28%) were asked to serve in a leadership role, compared to just seven to nine percent of single and intermarried Jews. Similarly, about one quarter of those living in Northeast Florida for 5-19 years (24%) were invited to be leaders, compared to seven to nine percent of newcomers or longer-term residents.

Table 5.7a. Outreach from Jewish organization, past year

	Any outreach from Jewish organization (%)	Invite you to participate in a program or activity (%)	Ask you for a financial donation (%)	Find out how are you doing (%)
All Jewish adults	57	46	32	23
Jewish engagement				
Lower Engagement	41	34	16	6
Moderate Engagement	55	46	30	9
High Engagement	84	41	72	52
Immersed	92	80	50	79
Region				
Mandarin	84	67	63	52
S. Duval & N. St. John's	29	21	15	5
Beach Communities	73	69	31	18
Urban Core	60	42	33	18
N. & W. Jacksonville	61	44	26	32
Age				
22-44	73	73	31	18
44-59	41	28	22	19
60-74	56	32	41	29
75+	51	30	44	17
Relationship status				
Inmarried	75	58	53	32
Intermarried	44	40	21	8
Not married	62	44	30	36
Minor child in household				
No	57	44	32	26
Yes	61	59	32	14
Length of residence				
0-4 years	59	38	35	36
5-19 years	61	54	33	22
20+ years	54	45	31	19

Table 5.7b. Outreach from Jewish organization, past year

Ask you to serve on a committee and/or in a leadership role (%)		Offer or provide assistance, whether or not you needed any (%)	Something else (%)
All Jewish adults		13	5
Jewish engagement			
Lower Engagement	6	5	1
Moderate Engagement	6	2	1
High Engagement	33	16	10
Immersed	28	49	18
Region			
Mandarin	26	22	16
S. Duval & N. St. John's	4	4	2
Beach Communities	11	1	< 1
Urban Core	15	4	1
N. & W. Jacksonville	13	29	5
Age			
22-44	19	7	7
44-59	5	1	3
60-74	18	14	6
75+	5	16	2
Relationship status			
Inmarried	28	20	5
Intermarried	9	6	5
Not married	7	14	4
Minor child in household			
No	11	13	5
Yes	28	7	1
Length of residence			
0-4 years	7	4	4
5-19 years	24	16	9
20+ years	9	16	1

Willingness to travel

While 13% of Jewish adults are not at all willing to travel on a regular basis to attend a Jewish program, the remaining 87% are willing to travel on a regular basis for under 10 minutes to a Jewish program (Table 5.8). There is little drop-off to slightly longer travel times, as 85% of Jewish adults would travel over 10 minutes, and 78% are willing to travel for longer than 20 minutes. Forty-one percent of Jewish adults would travel regularly for over 40 minutes to a Jewish program, and 2% of Jewish adults would travel regularly over one hour for a Jewish program.

Notably, there are not significance differences by region when it comes to how long Jewish adults are willing to travel for a Jewish program or activity on a regular basis (not shown in table).

Table 5.8 Willingness to travel for Jewish program or activity, regular basis

	All Jewish adults (%)
Over one hour	2
Over 40 minutes	41
Over 20 minutes	78
Over 10 minutes	85
Less than 10 minutes	87
Not willing to travel	13

Sources of information

Jewish adults access many sources of information about local Jewish activities, news, and events (Table 5.9). Sixty-two percent of Jewish adults get their information about Jewish events from Jewish organization newsletters and emails, followed by 40% who rely on family or friends for this information. One quarter of Jewish adults obtain information about events from a Jewish organization's social media. Seventeen percent of Jewish adults get information about Jewish events from local Jewish periodicals.

Table 5.9. Sources of information about local Jewish activities, news, and events

	All Jewish adults (%)
Jewish organization newsletter/email	62
Family or friends	40
Jewish organization's social media	25
Local Jewish periodicals (Jewish Life Magazine)	17

Note: Total exceeds 100 because respondents could select more than one option.

Individual Jewish activities

Jewish activities also include those that are not necessarily sponsored or facilitated by Jewish organizations, such as discussing Jewish topics, eating Jewish foods, or reading Jewish books (Tables 5.10a and 5.10b). In Northeast Florida, 94% of Jewish adults discussed Jewish topics with family or friends in the past year, including 48% who did so often. Eighty-three percent of Jewish adults read books, watched movies or TV, or listened to music that was Jewish-focused, including 25% who did so often.

Additionally, 81% of Jewish adults ate Jewish foods aside from Shabbat and holiday meals, including 27% who did so often. Seventy-four percent of Jewish adults read Jewish publications, including articles, magazines, and newsletters from a Jewish organization, including 32% who did so often. Twenty-five percent of Jewish adults studied or learned Jewish texts, including 15% who did so often.

Table 5.10a. Individual Jewish activities, past year

	Talked with family or friends about Jewish topics		Read books, watched movies or TV, or listened to music that is Jewish-focused		Ate Jewish foods, aside from Shabbat and holiday meals	
	Ever (%)	Often (%)	Ever (%)	Often (%)	Ever (%)	Often (%)
All Jewish adults	94	48	83	25	81	27
Jewish engagement						
Lower Engagement	89	25	65	9	63	8
Moderate Engagement	100	65	99	31	96	23
High Engagement	96	32	95	20	99	32
Immersed	100	98	100	64	100	97
Region						
Mandarin	96	75	94	64	96	54
S. Duval & N. St. John's	82	43	84	12	88	29
Beach Communities	100	40	57	7	61	7
Urban Core	98	31	90	23	73	6
N. & W. Jacksonville	100	54	85	20	88	42
Age						
22-44	95	46	67	21	69	18
44-59	97	67	92	33	97	45
60-74	100	44	93	30	80	31
75+	76	30	85	24	92	13
Relationship status						
Inmarried	94	54	92	52	84	40
Intermarried	95	34	74	13	75	22
Not married	94	60	87	20	90	30
Minor child in household						
No	94	49	83	22	79	27
Yes	100	46	85	41	94	32
Length of residence						
0-4 years	95	64	91	27	89	37
5-19 years	94	35	73	25	82	25
20+ years	94	48	87	25	79	27

Table 5.10b. Individual Jewish activities, past year

Read Jewish publications including articles, magazines, and newsletters from a Jewish organization			Studied or learned Jewish texts	
	Ever (%)	Often (%)	Ever (%)	Often (%)
All Jewish adults	74	32	25	15
Jewish engagement				
Lower Engagement	53	8	4	< 1
Moderate Engagement	95	42	21	1
High Engagement	85	21	27	5
Immersed	100	99	99	97
Region				
Mandarin	93	73	61	51
S. Duval & N. St. John's	67	21	8	2
Beach Communities	79	32	15	1
Urban Core	78	11	11	2
N. & W. Jacksonville	81	35	38	24
Age				
22-44	55	19	23	12
44-59	94	50	39	23
60-74	86	31	21	14
75+	67	34	14	2
Relationship status				
Inmarried	83	46	29	23
Intermarried	69	13	11	5
Not married	78	46	40	23
Minor child in household				
No	73	36	29	17
Yes	83	13	14	10
Length of residence				
0-4 years	73	46	28	18
5-19 years	72	28	19	12
20+ years	81	30	32	19

Sixty-eight percent of Jewish adults had at least one Jewish social media interaction in the past year (Table 5.11). The most common social media interaction was reading or viewing content about Jewish life (64%). A little under half of Jewish adults (42%) post about Jewish life on social media, and (37%) followed an influencer who posts content about Jewish life. Thirty-three percent follow or belong to an online group with Jewish content.

Seventy-four percent of Jewish adults in the Immersed group follow an influencer who posts content about Jewish life, and 69% follow or belong to an online group with Jewish content.

Younger adults had more Jewish social media interactions than older adults, with 82% of Jewish adults ages 22-44 having at least one Jewish interaction on social media, including 53% who posted about Jewish life.

Table 5.11. Jewish social media use, past year

	Any Jewish social media interaction (%)	Read or view content about Jewish life on social media (%)	Post about Jewish life on social media (%)	Follow an influencer who posts content about Jewish life (%)	Follow or belong to an online group with Jewish content (%)
All Jewish adults	68	64	42	37	33
Jewish engagement					
Lower Engagement	57	54	29	26	25
Moderate Engagement	65	60	39	41	32
High Engagement	78	69	66	18	20
Immersed	88	88	66	74	69
Region					
Mandarin	63	62	37	40	38
S. Duval & N. St. John's	57	52	19	29	20
Beach Communities	78	77	68	57	50
Urban Core	76	71	46	22	25
N. & W. Jacksonville	65	58	52	42	40
Age					
22-44	82	79	63	66	53
44-59	63	61	30	37	23
60-74	67	58	37	17	26
75+	27	26	13	2	5
Relationship status					
Inmarried	71	69	46	40	29
Intermarried	60	57	28	28	33
Not married	70	63	52	43	36
Minor child in household					
No	65	61	40	35	32
Yes	82	75	57	50	42
Length of residence					
0-4 years	75	75	52	42	30
5-19 years	64	60	43	36	38
20+ years	64	57	36	34	32

Volunteering

In the Northeast Florida Jewish community, 41% of Jewish adults volunteered in the past year (Table 5.12). This share includes 29% who volunteered for or with non-Jewish organizations and 19% who volunteered for or with Jewish organizations (Table 5.12).

Among the engagement groups, the Immersed group had the largest share that volunteered, with close to three quarters (71%) volunteering with Jewish organizations. Few members of the Immersed group volunteered with non-Jewish organizations (5%). One quarter of the High Engagement group volunteered with both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations, the largest share among the engagement groups who volunteered with both. Thirty-one percent of the Lower Engagement group volunteered last year and almost all did so with non-Jewish organizations (31%).

About one third of Jewish adults in Mandarin (37%) and Northern and Western Jacksonville (34%) volunteered with a Jewish organization.

Table 5.12. Volunteer activities, past year

	Any volunteering (%)	With non-Jewish organizations (%)	With Jewish organizations (%)
All Jewish adults	41	29	19
Jewish engagement			
Lower Engagement	31	31	1
Moderate Engagement	39	36	13
High Engagement	50	33	42
Immersed	71	5	71
Region			
Mandarin	38	14	37
S. Duval & N. St. John's	17	14	6
Beach Communities	77	76	10
Urban Core	43	39	14
N. & W. Jacksonville	49	19	34
Age			
22-44	50	38	23
44-59	34	30	14
60-74	43	30	19
75+	19	15	7
Relationship status			
Inmarried	39	22	26
Intermarried	46	41	10
Not married	40	23	27
Minor child in household			
No	40	28	19
Yes	53	36	20
Length of residence			
0-4 years	38	34	11
5-19 years	51	36	25
20+ years	36	19	22

Philanthropy

Sixty-five percent of Northeast Florida Jewish households made a charitable contribution in the past year, including 40% that gave to at least one non-Jewish organization and 31% who gave to at least one Jewish organization (Table 5.13).

Nearly all households in the Immersed (86%) and High Engagement (91%) groups made at least one donation, although majorities of the other groups did so as well. Half of the Lower Engagement

group (52%) donated to non-Jewish organizations, while just 3% of the Lower Engagement group donated to Jewish ones. Similarly, a larger share of the Moderate Engagement group donated to non-Jewish organizations (44%) than to Jewish ones (33%).

Fifty-nine percent of inmarried households gave to Jewish organizations, whereas over half of intermarried households (59%) gave to non-Jewish organizations.

Table 5.13. Charitable giving, past year

	Any donations (%)	To non-Jewish organizations (%)	To Jewish organizations (%)
All Jewish households	65	40	31
Jewish engagement			
Lower Engagement	54	52	3
Moderate Engagement	69	44	33
High Engagement	91	17	91
Immersed	86	7	86
Region			
Mandarin	72	32	48
S. Duval & N. St. John's	56	45	15
Beach Communities	71	41	36
Urban Core	77	58	26
N. & W. Jacksonville	56	26	35
Age			
22-44	53	26	30
44-59	80	54	30
60-74	61	39	30
75+	73	46	34
Relationship status			
Inmarried	78	36	59
Intermarried	69	59	13
Not married	56	22	38
Minor child in household			
No	63	37	32
Yes	75	53	26
Length of residence			
0-4 years	71	37	36
5-19 years	72	46	31
20+ years	56	34	29

The types of Jewish organizations that received donations in the past year varied widely (Table 5.14). More households donated to a local Chabad than to any other type of Jewish organization (18% of all Jewish households; 57% of Jewish households that donated to Jewish causes). Five percent of all

Jewish households donated to a congregation or synagogue in Northeast Florida. Four percent of Jewish households donated to the Jewish Federation and Foundation of Northeast Florida, and equal shares donated to a Jewish human service organization. One percent donated to a Jewish school or camp in Northeast Florida. Additionally, 8% of Jewish households donated to a Jewish organization that was focused outside of Northeast Florida, such as elsewhere around the country, in Israel, or around the world.

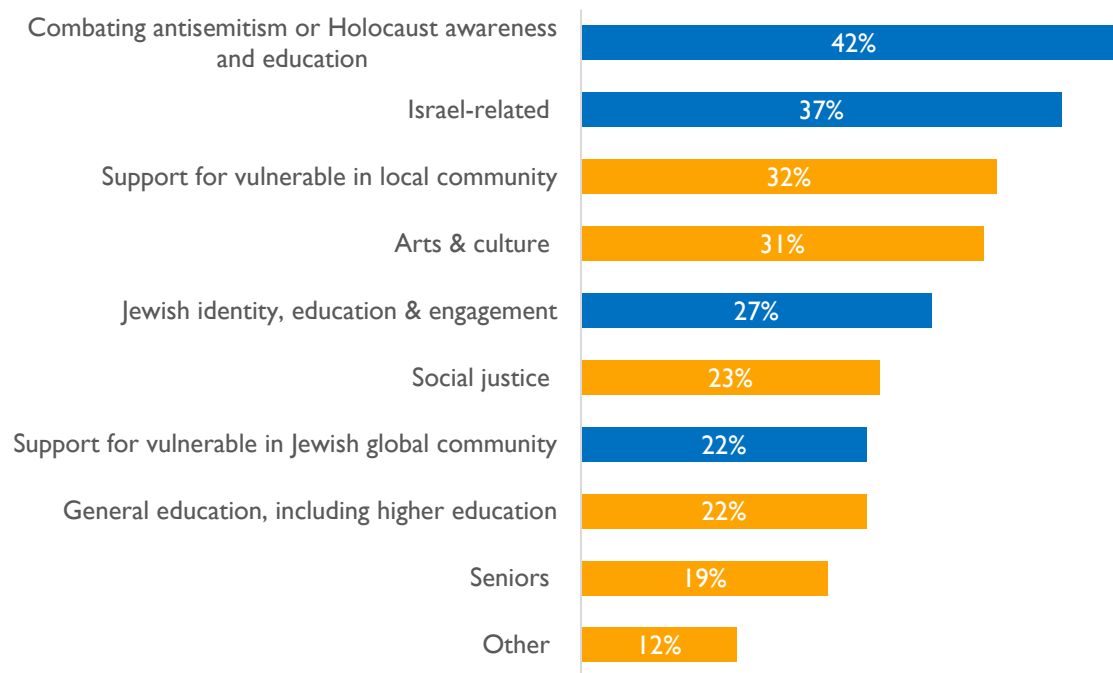
Table 5.14 Charitable donation by organization or type, past year

	All Jewish households (%)	Donors to Jewish causes (%)
Any Jewish organization or cause	31	100
Chabad in Northeast Florida	18	57
Congregation or synagogue in Northeast Florida	5	16
Jewish Federation and Foundation of Northeast Florida	4	14
A Jewish human service organization in Northeast Florida	4	12
A Jewish school or camp in Northeast Florida	1	3
Another Jewish organization in Northeast Florida	1	4
Jewish organization focused outside Northeast Florida	8	27

Causes of Interest

Jewish adults in Northeast Florida support a plethora of humanitarian, social, and Jewish causes (Figure 5.3; Tables 5.15 and 5.16). Causes related to combatting antisemitism or Holocaust awareness and education (42%) are the most popular for volunteering or philanthropy. Jewish adults also express interest in Israel-related causes (37%), Jewish identity, education, and engagement (27%), vulnerable Jewish local communities (32%), vulnerable Jewish global communities (22%), arts and culture (31%), social justice (23%), general education (22%), and causes effecting seniors (19%).

Figure 5.3. Causes of interest (% Jewish adults)



There are some significant differences between the engagement groups and support for Jewish causes. Members of the Immersed (65%), High Engagement (60%), and Moderate Engagement (41%) groups more commonly support Israel-related causes. The Lower Engagement group equally prioritizes Israel-related causes (14%) and causes focused on the vulnerable Jewish global community (14%). More than half of Jewish adults in the Immersed group support causes related to Jewish identity, education, and engagement (58%), as does 42% of the High Engagement group.

Inmarried Jewish adults (51%) prefer Israel-related causes in larger shares than do intermarried (12%) and unmarried (49%) Jewish adults. Unmarried Jewish adults (34%) also prefer causes related to vulnerable Jewish global communities in larger shares than do inmarried (24%) and intermarried (8%) Jewish adults.

More than half (59%) of Jewish adults ages 22-44 donated to causes related to vulnerable local communities. A quarter of Jewish adults ages 44-59 (25%) and ages 75 and older (26%) gave to causes concerned with vulnerable local communities.

Sixty percent of Jewish adults with a minor in the household gave to causes related to vulnerable local communities, compared with 28% of Jewish adults without a minor in the household.

More than a quarter of Jewish adults who have lived in Northeast Florida for longer than 20 years gave to causes related to seniors. By comparison, 18% of Jewish adults who have lived in Northeast Florida for 5-19 years and 8% of Jewish adults who have lived in Northeast Florida for four years or less gave to causes related to seniors.

Forty-two percent of Jewish adults who did not volunteer or donate to Jewish causes gave to causes related to vulnerable local communities, and 29% gave to secular social justice causes.

Table 5.15. Jewish causes of interest

	Combating antisemitism, or Holocaust awareness and education (%)	Israel-related (%)	Jewish identity, education & engagement (%)	Support for vulnerable in Jewish global community (%)
All Jewish adults	42	37	27	22
Jewish engagement				
Lower Engagement	32	14	7	14
Moderate Engagement	47	41	29	12
High Engagement	42	60	42	28
Immersed	64	65	58	59
Region				
Mandarin	42	44	48	26
S. Duval & N. St. John's	33	34	21	27
Beach Communities	31	29	22	21
Urban Core	43	38	22	5
N. & W. Jacksonville	61	33	19	29
Age				
22-44	50	38	35	23
44-59	45	36	30	15
60-74	34	25	22	20
75+	26	37	15	14
Relationship status				
Inmarried	30	51	37	24
Intermarried	39	12	17	8
Not married	54	49	28	34
Minor child in household				
No	43	38	28	24
Yes	38	21	20	11
Length of residence				
0-4 years	42	57	37	23
5-19 years	29	20	20	15
20+ years	55	35	22	27
Jewish volunteer and charitable giving				
Did not volunteer or donate	38	22	15	15
Volunteered or donated	51	59	44	35

Table 5.16. Secular causes of interest

	Support for vulnerable in local community (%)	Arts & culture (%)	Social justice (%)	General education, including higher education (%)	Seniors (%)	Other (%)
All Jewish adults	32	31	23	22	19	12
Jewish engagement						
Lower Engagement	43	30	23	21	25	16
Moderate Engagement	33	47	33	22	15	14
High Engagement	18	19	16	21	18	11
Immersed	14	16	7	30	19	1
Region						
Mandarin	28	33	12	37	28	7
S. Duval & N. St. John's	22	24	21	18	24	15
Beach Communities	48	13	15	15	12	12
Urban Core	45	57	33	21	13	8
N. & W. Jacksonville	29	28	29	21	20	20
Age						
22-44	59	37	40	29	17	11
44-59	25	37	14	15	14	17
60-74	19	32	18	27	30	10
75+	26	20	16	15	19	20
Relationship status						
Inmarried	28	31	14	18	19	12
Intermarried	42	36	28	31	19	17
Not married	26	27	22	17	21	9
Minor child in household						
No	28	29	20	23	20	12
Yes	60	47	38	19	19	16
Length of residence						
0-4 years	19	33	11	14	8	16
5-19 years	38	27	26	18	18	13
20+ years	37	34	26	32	31	10
Jewish volunteer and charitable giving						
Did not volunteer or donate	42	37	29	23	21	15
Volunteered or donated	17	21	11	21	18	8

CHAPTER 6. COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Chapter highlights

- Twenty-two percent of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida very much feel a sense of belonging to the Jewish community in which they live, while 26% do not feel any sense of belonging to the Jewish community in which they live.
- The majority of Jewish adults feel part of at least one community within Northeast Florida, either Jewish or not Jewish. Just 15% of Jewish adults do not feel at all part of a local community.
- Sixty percent of Jewish adults find community with their friends, including 29% who consider friends their primary community and 24% who consider friends their secondary community.
- Thirty-seven percent of Jewish adults find community with a Jewish organization or group, with 13% considering Jewish organizations their primary community and 17% consider Jewish organizations or groups their secondary community.
- Only 35% percent of Jewish adults who have lived in Northeast Florida for less than five years find community with local friends, compared to 60% of those who have lived in the area for 5-19 years and 73% of those who have lived in the area for 20 years or longer. Newcomers also have less community with local family (20%) than do longtime residents (52%).
- Nearly all members of the Immersed (96%) and High Engagement (94%) groups find community with a Jewish organization or group in Northeast Florida.
- Despite relatively few having community through a Jewish organization, 33% of the Lower Engagement group and 44% of those in the Moderate Engagement group have a community that includes at least some Jewish members.
- Among those who do not have a local Jewish community, most have at least a little interest in finding a Jewish community in Northeast Florida: One quarter of these adults are a little interested, 27% are somewhat interested, and 23% are very interested in finding a Jewish community.

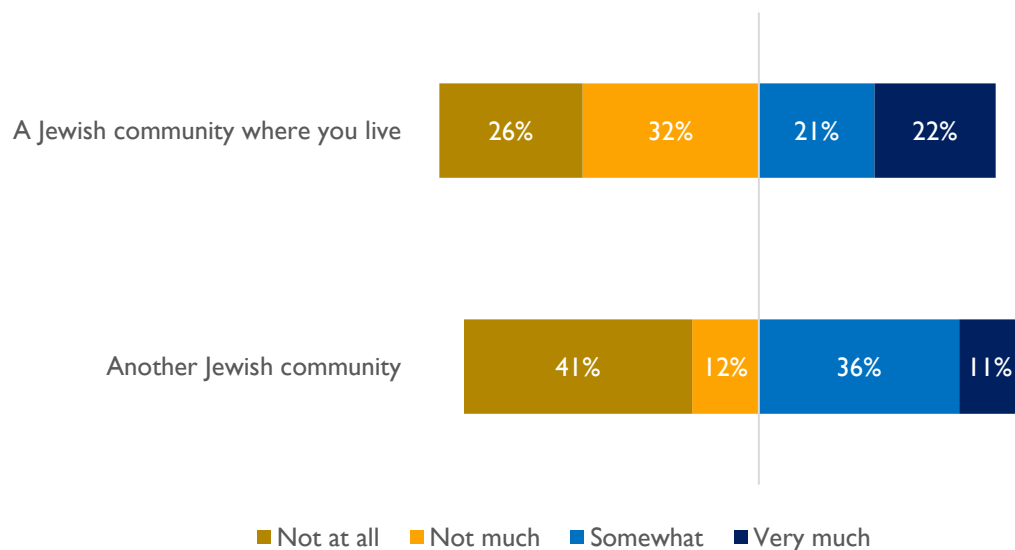
One goal of the *2024 Northeast Florida Jewish Community Study* is to ascertain how and where Jews find connection in their lives, not only within specifically Jewish spaces, but also with other Jews in general or in non-Jewish spaces. Between family, friends, clubs, their children, Jewish organizations, and their neighborhoods, people have many options for experiencing a feeling of community: defined in the study as a group people see regularly, to whom they feel emotionally connected, and who welcome, include, and value them.

Feelings of belonging to a Jewish community

Twenty-two percent of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida very much feel a sense of belonging to the Jewish community in which they live, while 26% do not feel any sense of belonging to the Jewish community in which they live (Figure 6.1). Eleven percent of Jewish adults very much feel a sense of belonging to another Jewish community that is not where they live, such as a Jewish summer camp,

a place they used to live, or an online Jewish group. In all, 62% of Jewish adults feel a sense of belonging to Jewish community where they live, or another Jewish community (not shown in figure).

Figure 6.1. Feel a sense of belonging to... (% Jewish adults)



Almost all Jewish adults in the High Engagement (98%), Immersed (96%), and Moderate Engagement (90%) groups feel a sense of belonging to a Jewish community where they live, with 86% of the Immersed group and 65% of the High Engagement very much feeling a sense of belonging (Table 6.1).

About half of Jewish adults in Mandarin (52%) and one third of those in Northern & Western Jacksonville (33%) very much feel a sense of belonging to a Jewish community where they live. In the other regions of Northeast Florida, far smaller shares feel such a strong sense of belonging.

Ninety-four percent of adults in the Immersed group and 76% of adults in the High Engagement group feel a sense of belonging to a different Jewish community.

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

...a Jewish community where you live			...another Jewish community	
	Any sense of belonging (%)	Very much (%)	Any sense of belonging (%)	Very much (%)
All Jewish adults	74	22	59	11
Jewish engagement				
Lower Engagement	53	3	48	4
Moderate Engagement	90	8	53	10
High Engagement	98	65	76	16
Immersed	96	86	94	25
Region				
Mandarin	93	52	73	19
S. Duval & N. St. John's	59	7	34	7
Beach Communities	79	3	72	8
Urban Core	78	16	64	3
N. & W. Jacksonville	74	33	65	13
Age				
22-44	83	20	60	3
44-59	80	22	59	14
60-74	65	21	67	15
75+	70	24	36	11
Relationship status				
Inmarried	81	30	57	17
Intermarried	72	7	62	8
Not married	75	35	60	7
Minor child in household				
No	73	21	59	10
Yes	86	23	66	16
Length of residence				
0-4 years	74	25	67	9
5-19 years	78	20	64	17
20+ years	74	26	50	4

Nineteen percent of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida do not feel a sense of belonging with any Jewish community, either where they live or elsewhere (not shown in table).

Belonging to Jewish communities outside of Northeast Florida

As noted in Figure 6.1, over half of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida feel at least some sense of belonging to another Jewish community apart from where they live. These respondents were invited

to share what kind of Jewish communities those were (Table 6.2). The most common response was another specifically named Jewish community in the United States (72). Within that category, 26 further noted that the Jewish community was where they grew up, and another 12 mentioned a Jewish community where they had previously lived as adults. Thirty-two respondents mentioned Israel or a specific city in Israel.

Many respondents listed organizations and groups connected to their childhoods as their source of community. The most common of these was a Jewish summer camp, mentioned by 31 respondents. Another 14 respondents mentioned a Jewish educational institution, such as their former day school/yeshiva, part-time school, or youth group. A collegiate group such as Hillel, Chabad, or a Jewish fraternity/sorority was listed by 10 respondents.

Congregations, including synagogues and Chabad houses, were sources of Jewish community mentioned by 73 respondents. Other Jewish organizations, such as Israel advocacy groups or national groups such as Hadassah, were mentioned by 20 respondents.

Many respondents mentioned personal connections as a source of Jewish community. Thirteen described their Jewish community as being family living elsewhere, such as parents or adult children, 22 mentioned friends living elsewhere, and 24 mentioned an online community of Jews, such as a Facebook group.

Other Jewish communities listed by 41 respondents included Jewish professional groups (e.g., clergy, educator), a demographic group (e.g., Israelis, queer Jews), study groups, the Jewish people as a whole, or a political advocacy group.

Table 6.2. Other Jewish communities

	Number of responses
Former home	
Somewhere else in the United States	72
Specifically from childhood	26
Specifically from adulthood	12
Israel	32
Childhood connections	
Jewish camp	31
Other Jewish education	14
College/graduate school	10
Organizations	
Congregation (synagogue, Chabad)	73
Jewish organization	20
Personal connections	
Online community	24
Friends	22
Family	13
Something else	41

Connections to local community and groups

To understand more about where people find their community, we consider the many types of local groups (Jewish and non-Jewish) to which people might feel connections. The majority of Jewish adults feel part of at least one community within Northeast Florida (Table 6.3). Just 15% of Jewish adults do not feel at all part of a local community, whereas 39% feel very much part of one.

Almost all adults in the Immersed group (94%) and a majority of those in the High Engagement group (63%) very much feel they are part of a community in Northeast Florida. Twenty-three percent of Jewish adults in the Lower Engagement group feel they are not at all part of a community in Northeast Florida.

Two thirds of Jewish adults residing in Mandarin (66%) and half of those residing in Northern & Western Jacksonville (50%) very much feel they are part of a community. Notably, 28% of Jewish adults residing in the Urban Core do not feel they are part of any community in Northeast Florida.

Table 6.3. Feel part of a community in Northeast Florida

	Not at all (%)	A little (%)	Somewhat (%)	Very much (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish adults	15	20	26	39	100
Jewish engagement					
Lower Engagement	23	14	35	27	100
Moderate Engagement	12	37	27	24	100
High Engagement	2	20	16	63	100
Immersed	4	1	2	94	100
Region					
Mandarin	1	13	20	66	100
S. Duval & N. St. John's	19	30	28	24	100
Beach Communities	12	17	50	20	100
Urban Core	28	15	25	32	100
N. & W. Jacksonville	14	20	17	50	100
Age					
22-44	12	18	34	36	100
44-59	19	11	16	53	100
60-74	9	27	25	40	100
75+	31	23	20	26	100
Relationship status					
Inmarried	17	17	17	49	100
Intermarried	9	18	47	26	100
Not married	17	24	12	47	100
Minor child in household					
No	15	21	25	39	100
Yes	15	10	33	43	100
Length of residence					
0-4 years	23	12	20	44	100
5-19 years	18	18	34	31	100
20+ years	6	26	22	46	100

Sixty percent of Jewish adults find community with their friends, including 29% who consider friends their primary community and 24% who consider friends their secondary community (Table 6.4). Forty-two percent of Jewish adults find community with their neighborhood or town, with 29% considering their neighborhood or town a secondary community. Thirty-seven percent of adults find community with a Jewish organization or group, with 13% considering a Jewish organization or group their primary community and 17% considering a Jewish organization or group their secondary community.

Additionally, 41% of Jewish adults describe their families as one of their communities in Northeast Florida, although the study did not distinguish primary community from secondary for families.

Table 6.4. Groups where Jewish adults find community (% Jewish adults)

	Part of this community (%)	Only community (%)	Primary community, of multiple (%)	Secondary community (%)
Friends	60	6	29	24
Neighborhood or town	42	4	9	29
Family	41	*	*	*
Jewish organization or group	37	7	13	17
Club, interest group, or activity	30	3	2	24
Children's activities or school (of parents)	27	< 1	4	23
Something else	4	2	< 1	1

Only 35% percent of Jewish adults who have lived in Northeast Florida for less than five years find community with local friends, compared to 60% of those who have lived in the area for 5-19 years and 73% of those who have lived in the area for 20 years or longer (Table 6.5). Newcomers also are less likely to have community with local family (20%) compared to long-time residents (52%).

Younger Jewish adults were more likely to find community with their neighborhood or town compared to older Jewish adults.

Table 6.5. Groups where Jewish adults find community (% Jewish adults)

	Friends (%)	Neighborhood or town (%)	Family (%)	Club, interest group, or activity (%)	Children's activities or school (of parents) (%)	Something else (%)
All Jewish adults	60	42	41	30	27	4
Jewish engagement						
Lower Engagement	55	47	42	36	--	7
Moderate Engagement	65	47	41	28	32	2
High Engagement	47	32	24	18	69	< 1
Immersed	66	14	54	18	--	< 1
Region						
Mandarin	73	32	47	26	59	7
S. Duval & N. St. John's	45	55	38	32	20	< 1
Beach Communities	76	64	40	50	--	9
Urban Core	44	34	40	26	--	5
N. & W. Jacksonville	63	23	43	18	--	1
Age						
22-44	71	66	56	39	54	< 1
44-59	59	45	28	18	24	2
60-74	51	24	37	32	--	7
75+	47	34	27	27	--	8
Relationship status						
Inmarried	66	37	33	21	37	< 1
Intermarried	66	56	53	45	50	7
Not married	47	29	37	20	--	4
Minor child in household						
No	57	37	39	30	0	3
Yes	72	64	59	21	59	6
Length of residence						
0-4 years	35	34	20	28	--	< 1
5-19 years	60	48	46	32	39	4
20+ years	73	38	52	27	6	6

Local Jewish community and groups

Nearly all members of the Immersed (96%) and High Engagement (94%) groups find community with a Jewish organization or group in Northeast Florida (Table 6.6). Of these groups, 84% of the Immersed group and 58% of the High Engagement group consider a Jewish organization or group in Northeast Florida their primary or only community. Sixty-five percent of Jewish adults residing in

Mandarin find community with a Jewish organization or group, including 53% who consider the Jewish organization or group to be their primary or only community in Northeast Florida.

Table 6.6. Part of community with Jewish organization or group in Northeast Florida

Community with Jewish org (%)		Primary or only (%)	Secondary (%)
All Jewish adults		20	17
Jewish engagement			
Lower Engagement	9	< 1	8
Moderate Engagement	30	9	21
High Engagement	94	58	36
Immersed	96	84	13
Region			
Mandarin	65	53	12
S. Duval & N. St. John's	20	6	14
Beach Communities	16	4	11
Urban Core	41	15	26
N. & W. Jacksonville	41	25	16
Age			
22-44	43	14	30
44-59	30	23	7
60-74	35	24	11
75+	28	18	12
Relationship status			
Inmarried	49	29	21
Intermarried	21	6	15
Not married	45	33	13
Minor child in household			
No	36	23	13
Yes	45	13	32
Length of residence			
0-4 years	35	29	5
5-19 years	36	15	21
20+ years	41	23	18

For those whose primary/only community in Northeast Florida is not a Jewish organization or group, most have a primary/only community that includes at least some Jews (Table 6.7). Just 15% of these Jewish adults have no Jews in their community they are closest to, and 26% have hardly any Jews in the community they are closest to. Close to half of Jewish adults (42%) whose primary/only community is not a Jewish organization or group have some Jews among their closest community members, 6% say most of the members of their closest community are Jewish, and 1% indicate all of the members of their closest community are Jewish.

Table 6.7. About how many members of the community you are closest to are Jewish?

Jewish adults whose primary community is not a Jewish org. (%) ↓	
None of them	15
Hardly any of them	26
Some of them	42
Most of them	6
All of them	1
Don't know	10
Total	100

To assess feelings of Jewish community belonging in Northeast Florida, we created four categories based on Tables 6.3, 6.4, and 6.7, as displayed in Table 6.8.

1. Those whose primary type of community is a Jewish organization or group (23% of Jewish adults)
2. Those with another primary type of community, with membership that includes at least some Jews (33% of Jewish adults)
3. Those with another primary type of community, with membership that includes no or hardly any Jews (29% of Jewish adults)
4. Those who do not feel part of any community in Northeast Florida (16% of Jewish adults)

Despite relatively few being part of a community through a Jewish organization, 33% of the Lower Engagement group and 44% of those in the Moderate Engagement group have a community with at least some Jewish members.

Nearly all Jewish adults residing in Mandarin have a primary community with a Jewish organization (54%) or with at least some Jewish members (34%), a significantly higher share than among Jewish adults living in the other regions. Fifty-six percent of Jewish adults residing in the Beach Communities have a community with at least some Jewish members, despite just 4% finding community through a Jewish organization.

Table 6.8. Categories of Jewish community belonging in Northeast Florida

	Primary community is Jewish organization or group (%)	Other primary community, at least some members are Jewish (%)	Other primary community, none or hardly any are Jewish (%)	Not part of any community in Northeast Florida (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish adults	23	33	29	16	100
Jewish engagement					
Lower Engagement	< 1	33	41	26	100
Moderate Engagement	14	44	30	12	100
High Engagement	60	30	9	2	100
Immersed	84	6	7	4	100
Region					
Mandarin	54	34	22	1	100
S. Duval & N. St. John's	6	38	38	19	100
Beach Communities	4	56	28	12	100
Urban Core	27	17	25	31	100
N. & W. Jacksonville	26	21	38	15	100
Age					
22-44	20	36	32	12	100
44-59	23	27	29	21	100
60-74	25	35	30	9	100
75+	17	27	25	31	100
Relationship status					
Inmarried	30	26	25	18	100
Intermarried	12	42	37	10	100
Not married	32	26	24	17	100
Minor child in household					
No	24	32	29	16	100
Yes	12	40	32	16	100
Length of residence					
0-4 years	31	27	17	25	100
5-19 years	15	35	32	19	100
20+ years	28	31	34	7	100

Interest in finding a Jewish community

Among those who do not have a local Jewish community, most have at least a little interest in finding a Jewish community in Northeast Florida (Table 6.9). One quarter of these adults (25%) are a little interested in finding a Jewish community in Northeast Florida, 27% are somewhat interested, and 23% are very interested.

Table 6.9. Interest in finding a Jewish community in Northeast Florida

	Jewish adults without Jewish community (%)
	↓
Not at all	26
A little	25
Somewhat	27
Very much	23
Total	100

Twenty-six percent of Jewish adults who do not have a Jewish community have no interest in finding one. Reasons given for this lack of interest include not wanting to join any community, not wanting to join a specifically Jewish one, or feeling like they would not be accepted.

Those who are at least a little interest in finding a Jewish community were invited to share the reasons they have not yet found a Jewish community in Northeast Florida, and 143 respondents provided answers (Table 6.10).

Table 6.10. Reasons for not finding a Jewish community in Northeast Florida

	Number of responses
Geographic barriers	45
Don't fit in	35
Have other priorities	19
Difficult socially	19
Another reason	50

Among the other reasons for not finding a Jewish community in Northeast Florida cited by 50 respondents are affordability concerns and dissatisfaction with organizations they had tried out.

The most common response provided for why people had not found a Jewish community in North Florida related to the location of Jewish institutions and programming. As two respondents wrote:

We are far from the center of Jewish activity in town. Moreover, synagogue and Sunday School attendance are not high priority, high-value activities. If we lived in Mandarin, we would be more Jewishly active and be part of the community. If there were more social, non-religious Jewish activity [where we live], we would be more involved.

My area is fairly remote, about an hour to the nearest synagogue. There's a small, informal local Jewish community, and I've participated in some of their holiday activities, but being fairly new to the area and especially being single, I don't feel like I fit in with this community.

Many respondents do not believe they fit in with what is being offered by the Jewish community:

*The congregants at my synagogue are typically older, so while I have found and am part of the larger community, I do not feel like I have found *my* Jewish community, as that would entail more young people.*

I don't think there is a progressive congregation like the one I belonged to [in my former community].

There are 19 people who indicated that they have other, more pressing priorities, but are open to Jewish community. Two example responses include:

We used to belong to the temple when we got married, but it just hasn't risen to the top of our priorities.

I have not been proactive since the pandemic. In the past, I have participated a bit but never felt connected.

Some respondents shared social challenges they have faced trying to find Jewish community:

In my experience, local congregations and organizations are slow to welcome newcomers even when they demonstrate a desire to contribute.

Don't live in the Jewish area and are somewhat far from that area. I've only lived here a few years and have very young children. Moved here just prior to COVID, not an easy time to develop relationships generally.

CHAPTER 7. CONNECTIONS TO ISRAEL AND CONCERNS ABOUT ANTISEMITISM

Chapter highlights

- A majority of Jewish adults feel some level of emotional attachment to Israel, with 44% feeling very attached and 37% feeling somewhat attached.
- Jewish adults who have been to Israel have stronger emotional attachment than those who have not. Among Jewish adults who have been to Israel multiple times, 76% feel very attached, compared to 44% of all Jewish adults in Northeast Florida.
- About half of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida have been to Israel, including 21% who have visited once, 24% who have visited more than once, and 7% who have lived in Israel.
- Among those who are age-eligible to have ever participated on a Birthright Israel trip, 41% have done so.
- More than three quarters of Northeast Florida Jewish adults sought out news about Israel more than once a week over the previous month, 34% checked the news every few days, 23% checked the news once a day, and 23% checked the news more than once a day.
- There is general consensus among the Northeast Florida Jewish community about the statements “I consider it important for Israel to be a Jewish state” (78% strongly agree) and “I consider it important that Israel give equal recognition of all denominations” (66% strongly agree).
- Some Jewish adults in Northeast Florida somewhat agreed (16%) or strongly agreed (8%) with the statement “I often feel my views about Israel are unwelcome in Jewish settings.”
- One third of all Jewish adults in Northeast Florida (33%) were targeted by an antisemitic incident in the previous year. Of these incidents, 22% experienced an antisemitic remark from someone they did not know, and 17% experienced an antisemitic remark from someone they did know.
- Thirty-seven percent of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida avoided activities out of fear of antisemitism. The behavior most commonly avoided was wearing or displaying objects that identify them as Jewish (27%).
- Slightly over half of Jewish adults ages 22-44 (54%) and 45-59 (54%) avoided activities out of fear of antisemitism.
- Most Jewish adults (81%) are very concerned about antisemitism around the world, and 72% are very concerned about antisemitism in the United States. By contrast, 36% are very concerned about antisemitism locally in Northeast Florida.
- A little over half of Jewish adults age 22-44 (56%) are very concerned about antisemitism internationally compared to more than 90% of Jewish adults in all other age groups. Less than half of Jewish adults ages 22-44 (44%) are concerned about antisemitism in the United States compared to 94% of Jewish adults age 45-59. Only 8% of Jewish adults ages 22-44 are concerned about antisemitism in Northeast Florida compared to over half of Jewish adults ages 60 and older.

It is impossible to write about Jewish life in 2024 without acknowledging the impact of the October 7, 2023 Hamas attack on Israel and the resultant war that, as of this writing, is still ongoing. Some members of the Northeast Florida Jewish community were directly affected, having lost loved ones and colleagues in the attacks and subsequent fighting. In the aftermath of October 7, the Jewish community nationally and locally have engaged in many internal and external debates about a number of related subjects—the conduct of the war; the meaning of Zionism, anti-Zionism and antisemitism; and the place of Israel within American Jewish life.

The *2024 Northeast Florida Jewish Community Study* began interviews in early April 2024, six months after the Israel-Hamas war began, and completed the interviews that June, after a wave of protests on US college campuses. The field period also coincided with the campaigns for the 2024 presidential election, as well as those for other statewide and federal offices (although the survey ended months before voting in those elections). The attitudes about Israel and concerns about antisemitism, therefore, reflect community members' opinions in the first half of 2024 and may have changed alongside events over the subsequent year.

Emotional attachment to Israel

A majority of Jewish adults feel some level of emotional attachment to Israel, with 44% feeling very attached and 37% feeling somewhat attached (Table 7.1). Taken together, 81% of Jewish adults are somewhat or very attached to Israel.

Differences in Israel attachment vary across the Jewish engagement groups. About two thirds of Jewish adults in the Lower Engagement group are somewhat (42%) or very (39%) attached to Israel, compared to nearly all Jewish adults in the Immersed group, of whom 8% are somewhat attached and 92% are very attached.

Jewish adults who have been to Israel have a stronger emotional attachment to Israel than those who have not. Among Jewish adults who have been to Israel multiple times, 76% feel very attached to Israel, compared to 44% of all Jewish adults in Northeast Florida.

Table 7.1. Emotional attachment to Israel

	Not at all attached (%)	Not too attached (%)	Somewhat attached (%)	Very attached (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish adults	9	10	37	44	100
Jewish engagement					
Lower Engagement	15	19	42	25	100
Moderate Engagement	7	6	48	39	100
High Engagement	< 1	3	22	75	100
Immersed	< 1	< 1	8	92	100
Region					
Mandarin	< 1	6	24	69	100
S. Duval & N. St. John's Beach Communities	18	3	49	31	100
Urban Core	3	11	58	28	100
N. & W. Jacksonville	10	20	28	43	100
	7	14	24	55	100
Age					
22-44	14	10	40	35	100
45-59	3	8	44	45	100
60-74	5	16	28	51	100
75+	12	8	43	37	100
Relationship status					
Inmarried	8	2	31	59	100
Intermarried	9	12	52	27	100
Not married	9	15	23	54	100
Minor child in household					
No	7	11	35	47	100
Yes	9	8	47	36	100
Length of residence					
0-4 years	3	6	36	55	100
5-19 years	12	8	43	36	100
20+ years	9	16	28	47	100
Travel to Israel					
Never	16	12	42	30	100
Once	< 1	20	43	37	100
More than once	2	1	21	76	100
Lived in Israel	--	--	--	--	100

Travel to Israel

About half of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida have been to Israel, including 21% who have visited once, 24% who have visited more than once, and 7% who have lived in Israel (Table 7.2). The share of Northeast Florida Jews who have been to Israel (52%) is higher than among all US Jewish adults, of whom 45% have been to Israel.¹³

Israel travel varies significantly by Jewish engagement. Six percent of Jewish adults in the Lower Engagement group have been to Israel multiple times, compared with 67% of Jewish adults in the Immersed group. Jewish adults in the High Engagement group have the highest share of former residents of Israel, with 16% having lived in Israel in the past.

Over half of Jewish adults living in the South Duval and North St. Johns (59%), Urban Core (60%), and North and West Jacksonville (59%) regions have never been to Israel.

Inmarried Jewish adults have traveled to Israel more than their intermarried counterparts. Fifty-seven percent of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida have traveled to Israel at least once whereas 40% of intermarried Jewish adults have traveled to Israel at least once.

There is a strong and expected connection between travel to Israel and emotional attachment. Less than half of Jewish adults who are not too attached to Israel (59%) and somewhat attached to Israel (58%) have traveled to Israel. In contrast, among those who are very attached to Israel, 58% have visited more than once and another 10% have lived in Israel.

Table 7.2. Travel to Israel

	Never (%)	Once (%)	More than once (%)	Lived in Israel (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish adults	49	21	24	7	100
Jewish engagement					
Lower Engagement	71	19	6	4	100
Moderate Engagement	48	29	17	6	100
High Engagement	13	14	58	16	100
Immersed	22	10	67	1	100
Region					
Mandarin	41	18	39	2	100
S. Duval & N. St. John's	59	12	22	7	100
Beach Communities	16	57	23	4	100
Urban Core	60	23	17	< 1	100
N. & W. Jacksonville	59	8	26	6	100
Age					
22-44	43	26	19	13	100
45-59	51	10	38	1	100
60-74	54	21	21	4	100
75+	63	21	13	3	100
Relationship status					
Inmarried	43	18	25	14	100
Intermarried	59	30	10	< 1	100
Not married	45	11	37	6	100
Minor child in household					
No	46	22	25	7	100
Yes	72	10	12	6	100
Length of residence					
0-4 years	43	9	34	15	100
5-19 years	52	24	20	5	100
20+ years	52	24	23	1	100
Connection to Israel					
Not at all attached	--	--	--	--	100
Not too attached	59	38	3	< 1	100
Somewhat attached	58	23	15	4	100
Very attached	32	16	42	10	100

Northeast Florida Jewish adults have traveled to Israel on various organized trips, including on a Birthright Israel (41% of age-eligible participants), a mission or Jewish organization sponsored tour (9%), or an educational trip shorter than six months (8%) or longer than six months (7%) (Tables 7.3a, 7.3b). Another 27% of Jewish adults traveled to Israel by other means.

About half of Jewish adults ages 22-44 (49%) have traveled to Israel on Birthright Israel.

Table 7.3a. Types of trips to Israel

	Birthright (age < 53) (%)	Mission or tour sponsored by Jewish org. (%)	Educational program or volunteer trip < 6 months (%)	Educational program or volunteer trip > 6 months (%)	Other kind of trip (%)
All Jewish adults	41	9	8	7	27
Jewish engagement					
Lower Engagement	--	3	< 1	4	12
Moderate Engagement	65	12	12	9	23
High Engagement	59	20	32	17	47
Immersed	--	15	5	3	63
Region					
Mandarin	43	22	2	5	37
S. Duval & N. St. John's Beach	53	7	6	15	22
Communities	--	6	13	7	30
Urban Core	--	5	14	< 1	10
N. & W. Jacksonville	--	9	5	5	37
Age					
22-44	49	7	7	11	14
45-59	--	11	12	4	37
60-74	n/a	10	12	6	28
75+	n/a	16	< 1	5	22
Relationship status					
Inmarried	38	18	5	10	32
Intermarried	--	5	4	4	16
Not married	--	8	14	7	32
Minor child in household					
No	52	9	9	7	29
Yes	8	12	2	3	12
Length of residence					
0-4 years	--	5	21	7	26
5-19 years	43	10	6	9	23
20+ years	--	12	< 1	5	31

There is a strong connection between previous travel to Israel and type of trip to Israel. Jewish adults who have traveled to Israel once were most likely to have gone on a mission or tour

sponsored by a Jewish organization (25%), on an educational program or volunteer trip that was longer than 6 months (11%), or another kind of trip (33%). Slightly under half of Jewish adults who have been to Israel more than once attended Birthright (44%).

Table 7.3b. Types of trips to Israel

	Birthright (age < 53) (%)	Mission or tour sponsored by Jewish org. (%)	Educational program or volunteer trip < 6 months (%)	Educational program or volunteer trip > 6 months (%)	Other kind of trip (%)
All Jewish adults	41	9	8	7	27
Travel to Israel					
Never	0	0	0	0	0
Once	--	25	0	11	33
More than once	44	19	21	12	78
Lived in Israel	--	--	--	--	--
Attachment to Israel					
Not at all attached	--	--	--	--	--
Not too attached	--	10	< 1	7	28
Somewhat attached	57	4	4	8	17
Very attached	47	16	14	7	40

News about Israel

More than three quarters of Northeast Florida Jewish adults sought out news about Israel more than once a week over the previous month, 34% checked the news every few days, 23% checked the news once a day, and 23% checked the news more than once a day (Tables 7.4a, 7.3b). Nearly half of Jewish adults in the Immersed group (48%) sought news about Israel at least once a day, compared to 23% of all Jewish adults.

Over half of Jewish adults in Mandarin (55%) sought news about Israel at least once a day. By contrast, a little under half of Jewish adults in the Beach Communities (44%) sought out news about Israel only once or twice a month.

Table 7.4a. Seek news about Israel in past month

	Never (%)	Once or twice (%)	Once a week (%)	Every few days (%)	Once a day (%)	More than once a day (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish adults	2	12	6	34	23	23	100
Jewish engagement							
Lower Engagement	5	19	2	42	21	11	100
Moderate Engagement	< 1	8	7	29	28	28	100
High Engagement	< 1	12	26	22	8	33	100
Immersed	0	0	< 1	16	36	48	100
Region							
Mandarin	1	8	2	17	16	55	100
S. Duval & N. St. John's Beach Communities	2	11	1	42	28	16	100
Urban Core	2	44	1	13	14	26	100
N. & W. Jacksonville	< 1	9	14	41	17	19	100
	< 1	2	12	35	37	14	100
Age							
22-44	1	27	6	40	12	13	100
45-59	4	3	4	30	22	37	100
60-74	3	4	10	25	29	28	100
75+	< 1	13	2	31	22	32	100
Relationship status							
Inmarried	< 1	15	1	34	19	31	100
Intermarried	4	15	2	42	19	18	100
Not married	2	6	12	22	31	26	100
Minor child in household							
No	2	12	7	29	25	26	100
Yes	2	15	1	48	17	16	100
Length of residence							
0-4 years	< 1	10	10	27	24	29	100
5-19 years	5	21	1	37	15	22	100
20+ years	1	6	7	31	30	24	100

Jewish adults with higher levels of attachment to Israel follow news about Israel more frequently. More than a quarter of Jewish adults who are very attached to Israel (27%) sought out news once a day, and a little under half (46%) did so more than once a day. A similar share of Jewish adults who are somewhat attached sought news once per day (27%), but only 7% did so more than once per day.

Table 7.4b. Seek news about Israel in past month

	Never (%)	Once or twice (%)	Once a week (%)	Every few days (%)	Once a day (%)	More than once a day (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish adults	2	12	6	34	23	23	100
Travel to Israel							
Never	2	7	6	41	24	20	100
Once	6	22	< 1	32	24	16	100
More than once	< 1	11	11	17	28	33	100
Lived in Israel	--	--	--	--	--	--	100
Attachment to Israel							
Not at all attached	--	--	--	--	--	--	100
Not too attached	12	12	8	53	14	< 1	100
Somewhat attached	1	23	1	42	27	7	100
Very attached	< 1	2	7	18	27	46	100

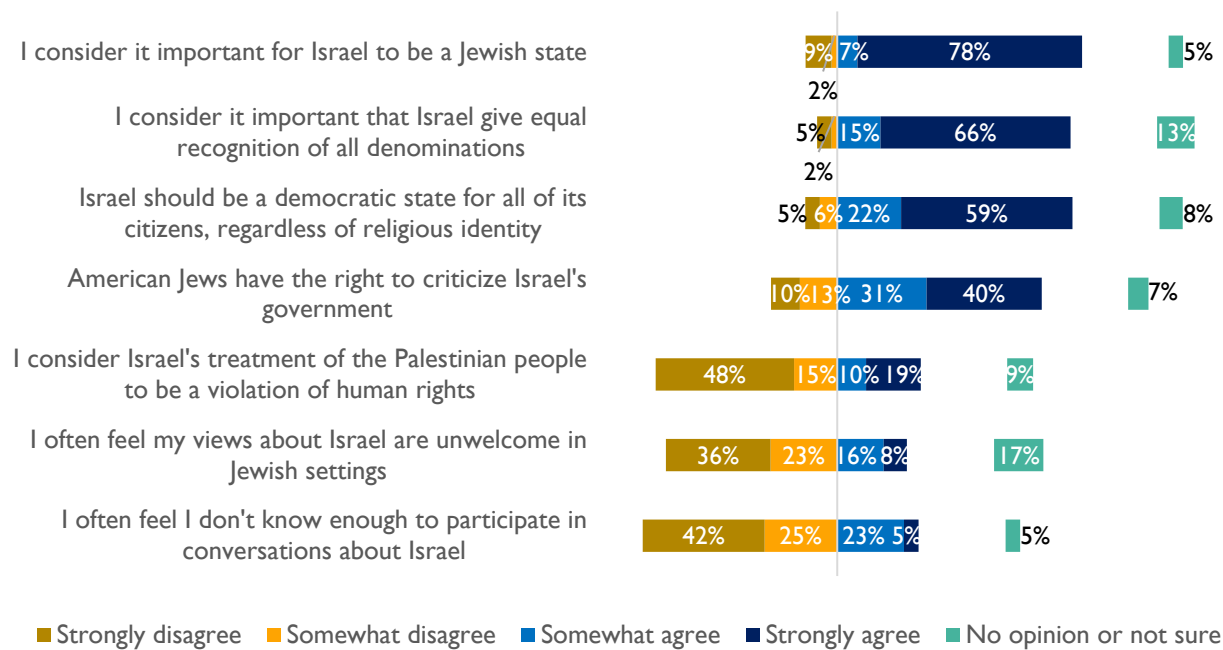
Views about Israel

Jewish adults in Northeast Florida hold a wide variety of views about Israel (Figure 7.1). The area of greatest consensus is about the statement “I consider it important for Israel to be a Jewish state” with 7% somewhat agreeing and 78% strongly agreeing. There is a similar strength of feeling about the statement “I consider it important that Israel give equal recognition of all denominations,” with 15% somewhat agreeing and 66% strongly agreeing. More than half of Jewish adults agree with the statement “Israel should be a democratic state for all of its citizens, regardless of religious identity,” with 22% somewhat agreeing and 59% strongly agreeing.

There is wider diversity of opinion on other views about Israel. In response to the statement “American Jews have the right to criticize Israel's government,” 10% strongly disagree and 40% strongly agree. There are also diverse reactions to the statement “I consider Israel's treatment of the Palestinian people to be a violation of human rights” (48% strongly disagree while 19% strongly agree).

Critically, some Jewish adults in Northeast Florida somewhat agreed (16%) or strongly agreed (8%) with the statement “I often feel my views about Israel are unwelcome in Jewish settings.” Relatedly, 23% of Jewish adults somewhat agreed and 5% strongly agreed with the statement “I often feel I don't know enough to participate in conversations about Israel.”

Figure 7.1. Views about Israel



There are relatively few differences by Jewish adults' demographic characteristics and connections to Israel in how strongly they agree with the statements about Israel (Tables 7.5, 7.6).

Within Jewish engagement groups, there are differences in whether people strongly agree with the statement, "American Jews have the right to criticize Israel's government." While 40% of all Jewish adults strongly agree, just 6% of the Immersed engagement group agree.

There were significant differences in opinion by region regarding the statement "I consider Israel's treatment of the Palestinian people to be a violation of human rights." Thirty percent of the Lower Engagement group, 20% of the Moderate Engagement group, and 1% each of the High Engagement and Immersed groups strongly agree. One third of Jewish adults ages 22-44 strongly agree with this statement as well, compared to 19% of all Jewish adults.

Table 7.5. Views about Israel, strongly agree

	I consider it important for Israel to be a Jewish state (%)	I consider it important that Israel give equal recognition of all denominations (%)	Israel should be a democratic state for all its citizens, regardless of religious identity (%)	American Jews have the right to criticize Israel's government (%)
All Jewish adults	78	66	59	40
Jewish engagement				
Lower Engagement	71	59	58	43
Moderate Engagement	74	80	60	54
High Engagement	87	54	76	37
Immersed	89	72	59	6
Region				
Mandarin	83	65	58	21
S. Duval & N. St. John's	74	64	49	32
Beach Communities	76	47	32	42
Urban Core	77	62	80	72
N. & W. Jacksonville	76	85	77	34
Age				
22-44	76	59	52	42
45-59	82	72	57	33
60-74	70	65	64	50
75+	78	65	66	26
Relationship status				
Inmarried	87	78	56	28
Intermarried	69	52	53	49
Not married	76	71	70	39
Minor child in household				
No	78	66	59	38
Yes	72	69	71	55
Length of residence				
0-4 years	85	65	56	40
5-19 years	78	53	51	35
20+ years	70	78	71	44

Table 7.6. Views about Israel, strongly agree

	I consider Israel's treatment of the Palestinian people to be a violation of human rights (%)	I often feel my views about Israel are unwelcome in Jewish settings (%)	I often feel I don't know enough to participate in conversations about Israel (%)
All Jewish adults	19	8	5
Jewish engagement			
Lower Engagement	30	8	9
Moderate Engagement	20	9	7
High Engagement	1	5	1
Immersed	1	9	0
Region			
Mandarin	5	9	5
S. Duval & N. St. John's Beach	17	11	4
Communities	18	< 1	8
Urban Core	33	9	11
N. & W. Jacksonville	21	7	3
Age			
22-44	33	15	10
45-59	4	1	5
60-74	20	8	4
75+	13	6	5
Relationship status			
Inmarried	10	6	8
Intermarried	25	7	7
Not married	20	10	3
Minor child in household			
No	15	6	4
Yes	44	17	17
Length of residence			
0-4 years	8	7	3
5-19 years	21	5	10
20+ years	25	11	4

Experiences of antisemitism

One third of all Jewish adults in Northeast Florida (33%) were targeted by an antisemitic incident in the previous year (Table 7.7). Of these incidents, 22% experienced an antisemitic remark from someone they did not know, and 17% experienced an antisemitic remark from someone they did know. Three percent of Jewish adults were targeted by an antisemitic act of vandalism and 1% were targeted by an antisemitic physical attack or threat of attack.

Table 7.7. Targeted by antisemitic incidents

	All Jewish adults (%)
Any antisemitic incident	33
An antisemitic remark from someone you don't know	22
An antisemitic remark from someone you know	17
An antisemitic act of vandalism	3
An antisemitic physical attack or threat of attack	1

In terms of who was targeted by antisemitism, there are no significant differences between demographic characteristics (Table 7.8).

Table 7.8. Targeted by antisemitic incidents

	Any incident (%)
All Jewish adults	33
Jewish engagement	
Lower Engagement	22
Moderate Engagement	43
High Engagement	30
Immersed	46
Region	
Mandarin	28
S. Duval & N. St. John's	21
Beach Communities	39
Urban Core	32
N. & W. Jacksonville	45
Age	
22-44	40
45-59	31
60-74	21
75+	28
Relationship status	
Inmarried	39
Intermarried	28
Not married	31
Minor child in household	
No	32
Yes	37
Length of residence	
0-4 years	28
5-19 years	27
20+ years	39

While over half of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida (58%) did not avoid activities out of fear of antisemitism, 37% did avoid activities (Table 7.9). The behavior most commonly avoided was wearing or displaying objects that identify the wearer as Jewish (27%). Similar shares of Jewish adults avoided posting Jewish content online that would identify them as a Jew (19%) and mentioning Israel, whether in person or online (18%). Sixteen percent of Jewish adults avoided going to particular places or events out of fear of antisemitism.

Among the 4% of Jewish adults who avoided something else out of fear of antisemitism, examples of activities include not identifying as Jewish at work, not going to Jewish spaces without visible security, and removing a mezuzah.

Table 7.9. Avoided activities out of fear of antisemitism

	Avoided (%)	Did not avoid (%)	Does not apply (%)	Total (%)
Avoided at least one activity	37	58	6	100
Wearing or displaying objects that would identify you as a Jew	27	52	22	100
Posting Jewish content online that would identify you as a Jew	19	58	23	100
Mentioning Israel, whether in person or online	18	69	13	100
Going to certain places or events	16	72	13	100
Something else	4	45	51	100

Jewish adults in the Moderate Engagement group were the most likely to avoid at least one activity out of a fear of antisemitism (47%), followed by those in the Lower Engagement group (37%) (Table 7.10). Despite their overall higher levels of engagement in Jewish life, smaller shares of the Immersed (27%) and High Engagement (23%) groups avoided activities out of fear of antisemitism.

There were also regional differences related to how Jewish adults altered their behavior out of fear of antisemitism. Most Jewish adults in the Beach Communities (85%) avoided at least one activity out of a fear of antisemitism, compared to 20% of Jewish adults in North and West Jacksonville.

Larger shares of Jewish adults ages 22-44 (54%) and 45-59 (54%) avoided activities out of fear of antisemitism compared to older Jewish adults.

About half of Jewish adults who have lived in Northeast Florida for less than 19 years avoided at least one activity out of a fear of antisemitism (49% of those in the area for 0-4 years, and 51% of those in the area for 5-19 years). By contrast, only 17% of Jewish adults who lived in Northeast Florida for 20 or more years avoided at least one activity out of a fear of antisemitism.

Table 7.10. Avoided activities out of a fear of antisemitism

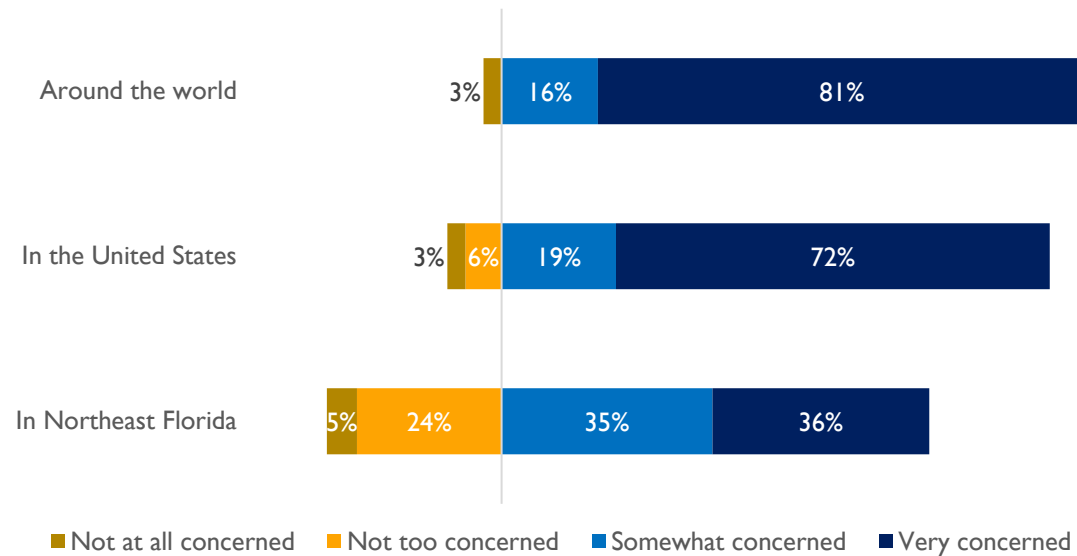
	Avoided at least one activity (%)	Did not avoid any activities (%)	Does not apply (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish adults	37	58	6	100
Jewish engagement				
Lower Engagement	37	51	11	100
Moderate Engagement	47	52	1	100
High Engagement	23	77	< 1	100
Immersed	27	71	1	100
Region				
Mandarin	18	78	4	100
S. Duval & N. St. John's	36	49	15	100
Beach Communities	85	15	0	100
Urban Core	46	51	3	100
N. & W. Jacksonville	20	79	2	100
Age				
22-44	54	42	4	100
45-59	54	43	3	100
60-74	29	69	2	100
75+	17	63	20	100
Relationship status				
Inmarried	26	71	3	100
Intermarried	48	44	8	100
Not married	34	61	5	100
Minor child in household				
No	35	59	5	100
Yes	48	44	8	100
Length of residence				
0-4 years	49	50	1	100
5-19 years	51	39	10	100
20+ years	17	78	5	100
Target of antisemitism				
No	33	59	8	100
Yes	46	54	< 1	100

Concerns about antisemitism

Jewish adults feel widespread concerns about antisemitism (Figure 7.2, Table 7.10). Most Jewish adults are 81% very concerned about antisemitism around the world, and 72% are very concerned

about antisemitism in the United States. However, fewer Jewish adults (36%) are very concerned about antisemitism locally in Northeast Florida.

Figure 7.2. Concerned about antisemitism...



Despite about half of Jewish adults ages 22-44 avoiding activities out of fear of antisemitism (see Table 7.10), they are less concerned about antisemitism than are older Jews (Table 7.11). A little over half of Jewish adults ages 22-44 (56%) are very concerned about antisemitism around the world compared to more than 90% of Jewish adults in all other age groups. Less than half of Jewish adults age 22-44 (44%) are very concerned about antisemitism in the United States, compared to 94% of Jewish adults ages 45-59. Only 8% of Jewish adults ages 22-44 are very concerned about antisemitism in Northeast Florida compared to over half of Jewish adults ages 60 and older.

Table 7.11. Very concerned about antisemitism...

	Around the world (%)	In the United States (%)	In Northeast Florida (%)
All Jewish adults	81	72	36
Jewish engagement			
Lower Engagement	74	69	45
Moderate Engagement	86	79	40
High Engagement	93	56	28
Immersed	89	87	24
Region			
Mandarin	87	84	43
S. Duval & N. St. John's	94	91	52
Beach Communities	63	62	30
Urban Core	83	55	36
N. & W. Jacksonville	75	66	26
Age			
22-44	56	44	8
45-59	95	94	41
60-74	92	80	57
75+	90	89	55
Relationship status			
Inmarried	88	81	30
Intermarried	77	69	50
Not married	82	70	31
Minor child in household			
No	84	74	39
Yes	68	66	30
Length of residence			
0-4 years	92	81	29
5-19 years	70	65	40
20+ years	85	74	43
Target of antisemitism			
No	79	69	42
Yes	89	82	28

CHAPTER 8. FINANCIAL WELL-BEING

Chapter highlights

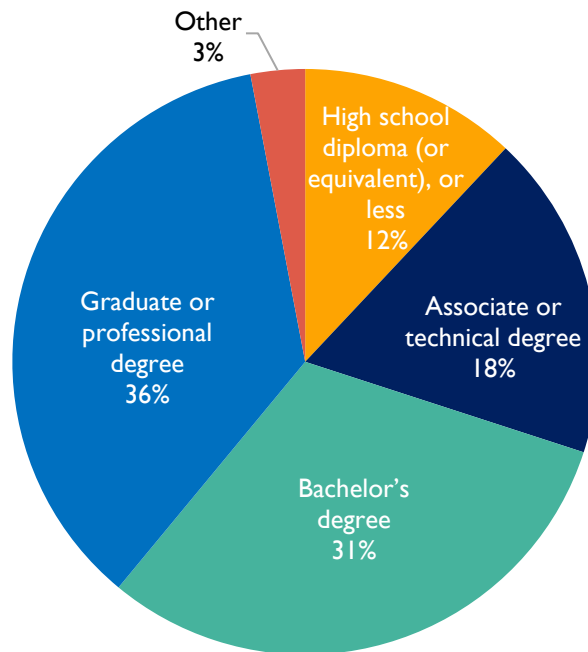
- Of Jewish adults ages 25 and older, 67% have at least a bachelor's degree, including 36% who earned a graduate or professional degree. Among all Northeast Florida residents ages 25 and older, 37% have at least a bachelor's degree, including 13% who have a graduate or professional degree.
- Three quarters of Northeast Florida Jewish adults who are not in high school are employed, either full-time (53%), part-time (13%), or in multiple positions (9%). Most of the remaining Jewish adults who are not working are retired (19%).
- Two percent of Northeast Florida Jewish households report they cannot make ends meet, and another 17% indicate they are just managing to make ends meet. More than one third of Jewish households (38%) believe they have enough money, 25% feels they have extra money, and 18% describe themselves as well-off.
- One percent of Northeast Florida Jewish households have incomes below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level, and in total, 15% of Jewish households earn below 250% FPL.
- Across the entirety of the Northeast Florida Jewish community, single households have smaller incomes than married ones, whether they are unmarried or intermarried.
- Debt is held by 42% of Jewish households in Northeast Florida, including 26% with credit card debt, 24% with student loans, and 12% with medical debt. Sixty-two percent of Jewish households ages 22-44 have debt.
- Among the 42% of Jewish households with debt, nearly half report debt is at least sometimes a source of financial stress for them, including 8% for whom debt is often stressful and 8% for whom debt is constantly stressful.
- Fourteen percent of non-retired Jewish adults do not think their retirement savings plan is on track. Among those Jewish adults who have already retired, 7% are not at all confident they will have enough money for retirement, and an additional 11% are not too confident.
- Eighteen percent of Jewish households receive a publicly provided benefit, 19% **do not** have sufficient funds to cover three months of expenses, and 5% are **unable** to pay in full an unexpected \$400 emergency expense.
- Twelve percent of Jewish households in Northeast Florida were unable to pay for at least one necessity within the past three years. These necessities include needed medical care or medicine; food; rent or mortgage payment; and utility payments such as water, electricity, or heat. In total, 10% of Jewish households experienced at least one financial hardship within the past year, and 2% experienced at least one financial hardship between one and three years ago.
- Sixteen percent of Jewish households had to limit or change their involvement in Jewish life due to their financial situation. The most frequent limitation was being unable to contribute as much to Jewish causes, with 11% of households limited in this way.

Educational attainment and employment

The Jewish community in Northeast Florida is highly educated. Of Jewish adults ages 25 and older, 67% have at least a bachelor's degree, including 36% who earned a graduate or professional degree (Figure 8.1). Among all Northeast Florida residents ages 25 and older, 37% have at least a bachelor's degree, including 13% who have a graduate or professional degree.¹⁴

Among Jews in the United States, 58% have a bachelor's degree, including 28% with a postgraduate degree.¹⁵

Figure 8.1. Educational attainment, Jewish adults ages 25+



Three quarters of Northeast Florida Jewish adults who are not in high school are employed, either full-time (53%), part-time (13%), or in multiple positions (9%; Table 8.1). Most of the remaining Jewish adults who are not working are retired (19%).

Table 8.1. Employment status

Jewish adults not in high school (%)	
	↓
Working	75
Full-time in one job	53
Part-time in one job	13
Working in multiple positions	9
Not working	25
Retired	19
Not working for pay and not looking for work	3
Not working for pay but looking for work	2
On temporary leave	< 1
Total	100

Household finances

One measure of financial well-being is a subjective assessment of a household's financial situation. Two percent of Northeast Florida Jewish households report they cannot make ends meet, and another 17% indicate they are just managing to make ends meet (Table 8.2). These two groups are combined for purposes of this report into a single category referred to as “struggling” and constitute 19% of Jewish households. More than one third of Jewish households (38%) believe they have enough money, 25% feels they have extra money, and 18% describe themselves as well-off.

Table 8.2. Financial situation

Report category	Response option	Jewish households (%)
		↓
Struggling	Cannot make ends meet	2
	Just managing to make ends meet	17
Enough	Have enough money	38
Extra	Have extra money	25
Well-off	Well-off	18
Total		100

Jewish household financial status differs by marital status (Table 8.3). These differences are particularly apparent with respect to single households: 31% percent are struggling, compared to 8-13% of coupled households, whether inmarried or intermarried.

Notably, there are no significant differences with regard to financial status by Jewish engagement, region, and age.

Table 8.3. Financial situation

	Struggling (%)	Enough (%)	Extra (%)	Well-off (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish households	19	38	25	18	100
Jewish engagement					
Lower Engagement	16	37	32	16	100
Moderate Engagement	19	39	23	19	100
High Engagement	27	46	8	19	100
Immersed	18	42	17	23	100
Region					
Mandarin	24	32	33	10	100
S. Duval & N. St. John's	12	50	16	21	100
Beach Communities	6	57	20	17	100
Urban Core	20	25	42	13	100
N. & W. Jacksonville	26	35	15	24	100
Age					
22-44	25	45	13	17	100
44-59	22	34	34	10	100
60-74	16	42	23	19	100
75+	8	28	29	34	100
Relationship status					
Inmarried	13	38	18	31	100
Intermarried	8	42	26	24	100
Not married	31	35	26	8	100
Minor child in household					
No	17	38	24	20	100
Yes	23	44	27	6	100
Length of residence					
0-4 years	17	39	27	18	100
5-19 years	16	44	14	26	100
20+ years	22	34	33	11	100

Income is another measure of financial well-being. Six percent of Northeast Florida Jewish households have an income of less than \$25,000, and another 9% have incomes between \$25,000-\$49,999 (Table 8.4). At the other end of the income spectrum, 9% of Jewish households have an income of \$250,000 or more. While 21% of Jewish households declined to provide their income or did not know that information, most of those households are financially comfortable: Just 4% of those who did not report income consider their household financial situation to be “struggling,” 53% report they had “enough” money, 27% indicate they had “extra” money, and 17% are “well-off” (not shown in table).

Household income is complicated by the need to account for household size. To address this, the US Department of Health and Human Services determines the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) annually, using a formula based on household income and household size.¹⁶ Using that formula, 1% of Northeast Florida Jewish households have incomes below 100% FPL, and in total 15% of Jewish households have incomes below 250% FPL.

Table 8.4. Household income and Federal Poverty Level

	All Jewish households (%)
Income	↓
Less than \$25,000	6
\$25,000 to \$49,999	9
\$50,000 to \$74,999	19
\$75,000 to \$99,999	8
\$100,000 to \$149,999	15
\$150,000 to \$199,999	9
\$200,000 to \$250,000	5
\$250,000 or more	9
Don't know/Prefer not to answer	21
Total	100
Federal Poverty Level	
< 250% of FPL	15
< 100% of FPL	1
100-149% of FPL	4
150-249% of FPL	10

Even when income and household size are accounted for, the picture of financial well-being is still incomplete, as it does not account for savings and financial obligations. While most financially struggling Jewish households have lower incomes, including nearly half of them with incomes under \$50,000 (45%), there are still 12% with incomes from \$100,000 to \$149,999 (Table 8.5a). Conversely, 3% of well-off households have incomes of under \$50,000.

Table 8.5a. Household income by financial situation

	Less than \$50,000 (%)	\$50,000 to \$99,999 (%)	\$100,000 to \$149,999 (%)	\$150,000 to \$199,999 (%)	\$200,000 to \$249,999 (%)	\$250,000 or more (%)	Don't know/Prefer not to answer (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish households	15	27	15	9	5	9	20	100
Financial situation								
Struggling	45	35	12	< 1	< 1	0	20	100
Enough	10	33	15	8	6	< 1	27	100
Extra	11	28	20	13	1	6	19	100
Well-off	3	1	10	16	11	42	28	100

Across the entirety of the Northeast Florida Jewish community, single households have smaller incomes than married ones, whether they are inmarried or intermarried (Table 8.5b).

Notably, there are no significant differences in Jewish household income in Northeast Florida based on region or age.

Table 8.5b. Household income

	Less than \$50,000 (%)	\$50,000 to \$99,999 (%)	\$100,000 to \$149,999 (%)	\$150,000 to \$199,999 (%)	\$200,000 to \$249,999 (%)	\$250,000 or more (%)	Don't know/ Prefer not to answer (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish households	15	27	15	9	5	9	20	100
Jewish engagement								
Lower Engagement	13	24	21	15	6	1	20	100
Moderate Engagement	14	29	8	6	9	7	27	100
High Engagement	32	21	7	2	1	18	19	100
Immersed	21	28	9	< 1	< 1	13	28	100
Region								
Mandarin	16	38	13	8	2	9	15	100
S. Duval & N. St. John's Beach	14	23	18	13	2	8	22	100
Communities	4	40	6	10	22	4	14	100
Urban Core	26	1	18	15	1	6	32	100
N. & W. Jacksonville	15	32	17	1	2	14	18	100
Age								
22-44	9	40	20	12	8	8	3	100
44-59	14	35	6	12	3	11	19	100
60-74	20	16	10	8	5	11	30	100
75+	24	15	28	2	3	2	36	100
Relationship status								
Inmarried	10	14	32	3	10	14	17	100
Intermarried	< 1	21	19	17	8	14	21	100
Not married	28	34	8	3	1	3	23	100
Minor child in household								
No	19	24	12	9	4	10	22	100
Yes	< 1	34	30	9	7	4	16	100
Length of residence								
0-4 years	20	32	9	13	5	7	14	100
5-19 years	9	26	16	13	9	11	15	100
20+ years	18	24	18	4	2	8	26	100

Debt and financial stress

The consideration of a household's debt burden completes the snapshot of financial health. Debt is held by 42% of Jewish households in Northeast Florida, including 26% with credit card debt, 24% with student loans, and 12% with medical debt (Table 8.6).

A larger share of younger Jewish households hold debts compared to older Jewish households. While 42% of all Jewish households have debt, 62% of Jewish households ages 22-44 and 47% of Jewish households ages 44-59 have debt. For the younger Jewish households, student loan debt is largely the driver of household debt: Forty percent of Jewish households ages 44-59 carry student loan debt, as do 32% of the Jewish households ages 22-44. By comparison, only 9% of the Jewish households ages 60-74 and 1% of Jewish households ages 75 and older have student loan debt.

As would be expected, far larger shares of financially struggling households carry debt than do other better off households. Most financially struggling households have debt: 68% have credit card debt and 49% have medical debt.

Among the 42% of Jewish households that carry debt, 24% have just one type, 17% have two types, and 2% have all three (not shown in table).

Table 8.6. Household debt

	Any debt (%)	Credit card (%)	Student loan (%)	Medical care (%)
All Jewish households	42	26	24	12
Jewish engagement				
Lower Engagement	40	26	24	4
Moderate Engagement	44	17	26	9
High Engagement	37	24	5	30
Immersed	36	40	2	17
Region				
Mandarin	34	32	10	21
S. Duval & N. St. John's	35	19	23	10
Beach Communities	37	17	30	9
Urban Core	42	19	29	5
N. & W. Jacksonville	54	37	23	18
Age				
22-44	62	43	32	15
44-59	47	20	40	16
60-74	27	17	9	12
75+	20	20	1	7
Relationship status				
Inmarried	44	28	14	21
Intermarried	34	21	26	5
Not married	44	30	20	16
Minor child in household				
No	38	22	19	12
Yes	54	41	40	17
Length of residence				
0-4 years	37	13	28	4
5-19 years	38	32	17	12
20+ years	43	28	22	18
Financial situation				
Struggling	87	68	36	49
Enough	37	19	21	9
Extra	34	20	28	< 1
Well-off	7	< 1	7	0

Among the 42% of Jewish households with debt, nearly half report debt is at least sometimes a source of financial stress for them, including 8% for whom debt is often stressful and 8% for whom debt is constantly stressful (Table 8.7). For nearly all financially struggling households with debt, the debt is a source of stress at least sometimes, including 24% for whom debt is a constant source of

stress and 27% for whom debt is often a source of stress. There are no differences in stress levels based on the type of debt held by households (not shown in table).

Table 8.7. Debt-related stress

	Constant source of financial stress (%)	Often a source of financial stress (%)	Sometimes a source of financial stress (%)	Not a source of financial stress (%)	Total (%)
Households with debt	8	8	30	53	100
Financial situation					
Struggling	24	27	42	7	100
Enough	< 1	< 1	15	84	100
Extra	< 1	1	71	27	100
Well-off	< 1	< 1	11	89	100

Retirement planning

As noted above in Table 8.1, 19% of Jewish adults in Northeast Florida are retired. Fourteen percent of non-retired Jewish adults do not think their retirement savings plan is on track (Table 8.8).

Nearly half of non-retired Jewish adults whose financial situation is “struggling” feel that they are not on track with their retirement savings (45%). Among “struggling” Jewish adults who are not retired, an additional 25% do not have a retirement plan, and 11% do not plan to retire—the largest shares of Jewish adults in either of these categories. By contrast, large majorities of “well-off” Jewish adults and those with “extra” report being on track for their retirement (84% and 79%, respectively).

Table 8.8. Retirement savings plan on track

	No (%)	Yes (%)	Don't have a retirement plan (%)	Don't plan to retire (%)	Don't know (%)	Total (%)
Non-retired Jewish adults	14	60	4	2	19	100
Age						
18-64	12	62	4	2	20	100
65+	17	57	5	2	18	100
Financial situation						
Struggling	45	3	25	11	16	100
Enough	11	64	1	1	24	100
Extra	5	79	< 1	< 1	15	100
Well-off	< 1	84	< 1	< 1	15	100

Among those Jewish adults who have already retired, 7% are not at all confident they will have enough money for retirement, and an additional 11% are not too confident (Table 8.9). Twenty-seven percent of Jewish retirees who are financially struggling are not at all confident in having enough money for retirement. By contrast, almost all Jewish retirees who are well-off are very confident they will have enough money for retirement (99%).

Table 8.9. Confidence in having enough money for retirement by financial situation

	Not at all (%)	Not too (%)	Somewhat (%)	Very (%)	Total (%)
Retired Jewish adults	7	11	30	52	100
Financial situation					
Struggling	27	47	26	1	100
Enough	9	27	39	24	100
Extra	1	< 1	55	44	100
Well-off	< 1	< 1	1	99	100

Economic insecurity

Eighteen percent of Jewish households receive a publicly provided benefit. Seven percent of Jewish households receive Kid Care, and six percent receive Supplementary Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). Four percent of households are on Medicaid, and another two percent receive assistance with food, housing, or utilities (Table 8.10).

Table 8.10. Receipt of public benefits

	All Jewish households (%)
Any public benefit	18
Kid Care	7
SSI or SSDI benefits	6
Medicaid	4
Assistance with food, housing, or utilities (e.g., SNAP, WIC+)	2
Unemployment benefits	< 1
Other	6

As markers of economic insecurity, 19% of Northeast Florida Jewish households **do not** have sufficient funds to cover three months of expenses, and 5% are **unable** to pay in full an unexpected \$400 emergency expense (Table 8.11). Twelve percent of Jewish single households cannot pay off an unexpected \$400 expense, compared to approximately 1% of Jewish coupled households, whether inmarried or intermarried.

Among financially struggling Jewish households, about one quarter (26%) cannot afford a \$400 emergency expense and over half (54%) do not have sufficient funds to cover three months of expenses. One third (33%) of financially struggling Jewish households and nearly one quarter (24%) of “enough” Jewish households receive any public benefit.

Table 8.11. Economic insecurity

	Insufficient funds to cover 3 months of expenses (%)	Received at least one public benefit (%)	Could not pay emergency \$400 expense (%)
All Jewish households	19	18	5
Jewish engagement			
Lower Engagement	9	21	1
Moderate Engagement	21	21	15
High Engagement	13	25	4
Immersed	14	6	< 1
Region			
Mandarin	20	13	< 1
S. Duval & N. St. John's	12	28	6
Beach Communities	19	24	0
Urban Core	13	2	6
N. & W. Jacksonville	26	19	11
Age			
22-44	31	14	7
44-59	17	15	5
60-74	9	25	6
75+	11	11	< 1
Relationship status			
Inmarried	7	7	1
Intermarried	11	17	< 1
Not married	27	21	12
Minor child in household			
No	15	17	5
Yes	34	21	5
Length of residence			
0-4 years	13	11	5
5-19 years	18	12	4
20+ years	22	26	7
Financial situation			
Struggling	54	33	26
Enough	16	24	0
Extra	7	9	2
Well-off	3	0	< 1

Financial hardships and services

Twelve percent of Jewish households in Northeast Florida were unable to pay for at least one necessity within the past three years (Table 8.12). These necessities include needed medical care or medicine; food; rent or mortgage payment; and utility payments such as water, electricity, or heat.

Table 8.12. Financial hardships, past three years

	All Jewish households (%)	Jewish households that experienced hardship (%)
Any hardship	12	100
Health care	7	64
Utilities	6	48
Rent	4	37
Food	3	24
Transportation	1	10
Other	< 1	< 1

In total, 10% of Jewish households experienced at least one financial hardship within the past year, and 2% experienced at least one hardship between one and three years ago (Table 8.13). Jewish households with a minor child experienced financial hardship in the past year at higher rates than Jewish households without a minor child (21% compared to 7%). Over one third of struggling Jewish households (36%) encountered a financial hardship within the past year, compared to < 1% of Jewish households that have extra financial resources or are well-off.

Table 8.13. Timeframe of financial hardships

	Hardship in past year (%)	Hardship between 1-3 years ago (%)	No hardship in past three years (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish households	10	2	88	100
Jewish engagement				
Lower Engagement	4	1	95	100
Moderate Engagement	13	1	87	100
High Engagement	11	6	83	100
Immersed	< 1	1	99	100
Region				
Mandarin	9	1	90	100
S. Duval & N. St. John's Beach	12	2	87	100
Communities	19	< 1	81	100
Urban Core	8	< 1	91	100
N. & W. Jacksonville	2	3	95	100
Age				
22-44	6	5	89	100
44-59	19	< 1	81	100
60-74	6	1	93	100
75+	7	< 1	93	100
Relationship status				
Inmarried	1	5	94	100
Intermarried	4	1	95	100
Not married	15	1	84	100
Minor child in household				
No	7	< 1	93	100
Yes	21	6	73	100
Length of residence				
0-4 years	9	3	89	100
5-19 years	10	2	88	100
20+ years	11	1	88	100
Financial situation				
Struggling	36	2	62	100
Enough	7	3	91	100
Extra	< 1	< 1	100	100
Well-off	0	< 1	100	100

Most of the Jewish households that encountered difficulty paying for necessities during the previous three years did not receive services, whether from JFCS or a non-Jewish provider (Table 8.14). Four percent received services from JFCS, and another 4% received services from non-Jewish providers.

Table 8.14. Receive services from JFCS

	All Jewish households (%)	Jewish households that experienced hardship (%)
	↓	↓
No hardship	88	n/a
Yes, from both JFCS and non-Jewish providers	< 1	< 1
Yes, only from JFCS	< 1	4
No, only from non-Jewish providers	< 1	4
No, received no services	11	92
Total	100	100

Some Jewish households received public benefits (see Table 8.10, above) despite not encountering a financial hardship during the previous three years; in total 18% of Jewish households in Northeast Florida either encountered a financial hardship or received a public benefit. Among this group, 39% deemed that any assistance they received was adequate, while 36% reported assistance they received was not adequate (Table 8.15). Another quarter of these households reported that assistance was not needed.

Table 8.15. Services were adequate

	All Jewish households (%)	Jewish households that experienced hardship or received public benefit (%)
	↓	↓
No hardship or public benefit	82	n/a
Yes, assistance was adequate	7	39
No, assistance was not adequate	6	36
No, assistance was not needed	5	25
Total	100	100

Impact of finances on Jewish life

Sixteen percent of Jewish households had to limit or change their involvement in Jewish life due to their financial situation (Table 8.16). The most frequent limitation was being unable to contribute as much to Jewish causes as they desired, with 11% of households limited in this way.

Table 8.16. Limits on participation in Jewish life

	All Jewish households (%) ↓
Any limitation	16
Unable to contribute to Jewish causes as much as desired	11
Required financial assistance to enroll children in Jewish education, Jewish camp, or activities (of parents)	9
Unable to participate in some Jewish activities	6
Required dues relief or financial assistance to maintain synagogue or JCA membership (of members)	5
Discontinued synagogue or JCA membership	3
Did not enroll children in Jewish education, camp, or activities (of parents)	3
Other	< 1

While 16% of all Jewish households experienced limitations on participating in Jewish life in Northeast Florida, 48% of financially struggling households experienced limitations (Table 8.17).

Table 8.17. Limits on participation in Jewish life

Any limitation on Jewish life (%)	
All Jewish households	16
Jewish engagement	
Lower Engagement	17
Moderate Engagement	17
High Engagement	23
Immersed	10
Region	
Mandarin	19
S. Duval & N. St. John's	14
Beach Communities	7
Urban Core	22
N. & W. Jacksonville	13
Age	
22-44	13
44-59	11
60-74	21
75+	15
Relationship status	
Inmarried	9
Intermarried	13
Not married	20
Minor child in household	
No	17
Yes	9
Length of residence	
0-4 years	17
5-19 years	9
20+ years	21
Financial situation	
Struggling	48
Enough	12
Extra	6
Well-off	< 1

CHAPTER 9. HEALTH NEEDS

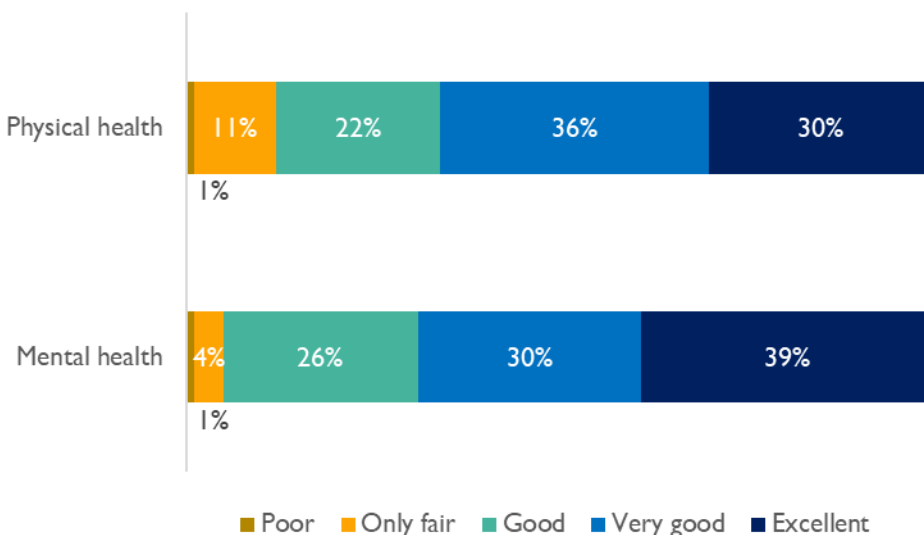
Chapter highlights

- Twelve percent of Jewish adults describe their physical health as “only fair” (11%) or “poor” (1%), and 5% describe their mental health as “only fair” (4%) or “poor” (1%). In total, 14% of Jewish adults consider at least one aspect of their health to be “only fair” or “poor.”
- One third of Jewish households (33%) include a member with a chronic health issue, disability, or other need that affects their participation in work, school, or other activities.
- The most common limiting health issues in Jewish households are chronic illness (18%), physical disability (15%), and mental or emotional health issues (11%).
- Eleven percent of Jewish households with a health issue did not receive all needed services, corresponding to 4% of all Jewish households in Northeast Florida.
- Among households that received health services (regardless of whether they were adequate), 27% did so from a Jewish provider, including 13% who received services exclusively from a Jewish provider. Seventy-three percent received services exclusively from non-Jewish providers.
- About half of Jewish adults (51%) believe it is at least “a little” important for them to receive services from a Jewish organization should they require assistance with physical or mental health, aging, transportation, or other needs.
- Among Northeast Florida Jewish adults with health or financial needs, almost half (48%) are familiar with River Garden Senior Services, and 44% are familiar with Jewish Family and Community Services.
- Twelve percent of Jewish households either manage or provide care for a close relative or friend on a regular basis, aside from routine childcare.
- Among Jewish households with someone age 65 or older, 14% include someone who requires assistance with daily tasks, such as doing housework, preparing meals, dressing and undressing, or walking up and down stairs.
- Over half of Jewish adults have either no one (3%) or just a few people (54%) in their nearby personal support networks.
- Two percent of Jewish adults ages 55 or older and 6% of Jewish adults ages 75 and older currently reside in an assisted living facility, nursing home, or independent senior living building or community.
- The majority of Jewish adults ages 55 and older intend to stay in their current home and age in place, including 60% of Jewish adults ages 55-74 and 97% of Jewish adults ages 75 and older.
- Most Jewish adults (80%) who are age 55 and older have at least one concern regarding their future plans. The most common concern among this group is having relatives or friends nearby to help take care of their needs (26% are somewhat concerned, 27% are very concerned). Sixty-three percent are somewhat or very concerned about their physical and mental health, 45% are somewhat or very concerned about their finances, and 38% are somewhat or very concerned about living in a Jewish environment or community.

Physical and mental health

Most Jewish adults in Northeast Florida are in good mental and physical health (Figure 9.1). About two thirds describe their physical health as “very good” (36%) or “excellent” (30%), and a similar share describe their mental health as “very good” (30%) or “excellent” (39%). There are, however, 12% who describe their physical health as “only fair” (11%) or “poor” (1%), and 5% who describe their mental health as “only fair” (4%) or “poor” (1%).

Figure 9.1. Physical and mental health, all Jewish adults



Fourteen percent of Jewish adults consider at least one aspect of their health to be “only fair” or “poor” (Table 9.1). Fifteen percent of Jewish adults who are not parents consider at least one aspect of their health to be “only fair” or “poor,” compared to 2% of Jewish adults who are parents of minor children.

Table 9.1. Health is fair or poor

	Physical or mental health (%)	Physical health (%)	Mental health (%)
All Jewish adults	14	12	5
Jewish engagement			
Lower Engagement	17	16	2
Moderate Engagement	12	11	8
High Engagement	11	10	6
Immersed	11	2	9
Region			
Mandarin	14	7	8
S. Duval & N. St. John's	18	18	3
Beach Communities	3	< 1	3
Urban Core	5	4	3
N. & W. Jacksonville	23	23	10
Age			
22-44	17	16	9
44-59	10	2	10
60-74	7	7	2
75+	30	30	3
Relationship status			
Inmarried	11	4	8
Intermarried	12	12	1
Not married	17	16	8
Minor child in household			
No	15	13	6
Yes	2	1	1
Length of residence			
0-4 years	8	4	6
5-19 years	12	11	4
20+ years	19	19	7

Health and disability

One third of Jewish households (33%) include a member with a chronic health issue, disability, or other need that affects their participation in work, school, or other activities (Table 9.2).

Table 9.2. Chronic health issue, disability, or health need

	All Jewish households (%)
All Jewish households	33
Jewish engagement	
Lower Engagement	36
Moderate Engagement	33
High Engagement	37
Immersed	20
Region	
Mandarin	30
S. Duval & N. St. John's	36
Beach Communities	21
Urban Core	41
N. & W. Jacksonville	33
Age	
22-44	36
44-59	22
60-74	40
75+	36
Relationship status	
Inmarried	36
Intermarried	34
Not married	30
Minor child in household	
No	37
Yes	15
Length of residence	
0-4 years	22
5-19 years	30
20+ years	42

The most common limiting health issues in Jewish households are chronic illness (18% of all households, 56% of households with a health issue), physical disability (15% of all households), and mental or emotional health issues (11% of all households) (Table 9.3).

Table 9.3. Specific health issues

	All Jewish households (%)	Jewish households with a limiting chronic health issue, disability, or special need (%)
	↓	↓
Any health issue	33	100
Chronic illness	18	56
Physical disability	15	47
Mental or emotional health issues	11	33
Developmental or intellectual disability	2	5
Substance abuse or addiction	2	5
Dementia	< 1	1
Complications related to COVID-19	< 1	1
Other	1	4

In 32% of all Jewish households, at least one adult has a health issue. In 2% of all Jewish households, at least one child has a health issue.

Support services

Eleven percent of Jewish households with a health issue did not receive all needed services, corresponding to 4% of all Jewish households in Northeast Florida. These households were asked to describe which services were not adequate and the ways in which they were not adequate. Mental health services were the most common inadequate service. Commonly cited reasons for services being inadequate are affordability and difficulties in receiving approval from insurance.

Among Jewish households that received health services (whether or not they were adequate), 27% did so from a Jewish provider, including 13% who received services exclusively from a Jewish provider. Seventy-three percent received services exclusively from non-Jewish providers.

About half of Jewish adults (51%) believe it is at least “a little” important for them to receive services from a Jewish organization should they require assistance with physical or mental health, aging, transportation, or other needs (Table 9.4). This includes 10% for whom it is “very important.” Members of the Immersed group were the most likely to find it at least “a little” important (65%) to receive services from a Jewish organization, with 35% for whom it is “very important.”

Notably, there are no significant differences based on whether the household has a member with a health issue.

Table 9.4. Importance of receiving services from a Jewish organization

	Not at all important (%)	A little important (%)	Somewhat important (%)	Very important (%)	Total (%)
Jewish adults	49	17	23	10	100
Jewish engagement					
Lower Engagement	53	26	19	2	100
Moderate Engagement	48	10	35	8	100
High Engagement	48	13	22	17	100
Immersed	35	14	15	35	100
Region					
Mandarin	28	12	27	32	100
S. Duval & N. St. John's	32	34	30	3	100
Beach Communities	71	9	16	4	100
Urban Core	57	20	11	11	100
N. & W. Jacksonville	60	8	26	5	100
Age					
22-44	60	23	14	3	100
44-59	40	23	20	17	100
60-74	41	15	28	16	100
75+	33	13	45	10	100
Relationship status					
Inmarried	34	19	30	16	100
Intermarried	56	16	22	5	100
Not married	49	19	20	13	100
Minor child in household					
No	49	15	24	12	100
Yes	48	27	21	4	100
Length of residence					
0-4 years	37	28	21	13	100
5-19 years	53	20	19	8	100
20+ years	52	9	28	11	100
Health issue in household					
No	43	22	28	8	100
Yes	58	11	15	16	100

Among Northeast Florida Jewish adults with health or financial needs (see Chapter 8 for more on the community's financial well-being), almost half (48%) are familiar with River Garden Senior Services, and 44% are familiar with Jewish Family and Community Services.

Caregiving

Twelve percent of Jewish households either manage or provide care for a close relative or friend on a regular basis, aside from routine childcare (Table 9.5). Six percent personally provide care for a close relative or friend, 1% manage care provided by others, and 5% both personally provide care and manage care provided by others (not shown in table).

It does not appear that most Northeast Florida parents are feeling the “sandwich generation squeeze,” as just 1% of households with children personally provide or manage care for a close relative on a regular basis.

Table 9.5. Manage or provide care to close relatives or friends on regular basis

Provide or manage care (%)	
All Jewish households	12
Jewish engagement	
Lower Engagement	11
Moderate Engagement	10
High Engagement	13
Immersed	29
Region	
Mandarin	25
S. Duval & N. St. John's	16
Beach Communities	3
Urban Core	14
N. & W. Jacksonville	5
Age	
22-44	1
44-59	17
60-74	17
75+	18
Relationship status	
Inmarried	20
Intermarried	11
Not married	12
Minor child in household	
No	15
Yes	1
Length of residence	
0-4 years	1
5-19 years	3
20+ years	21
Health issue in household	
No	12
Yes	16

Of those households in which someone is managing or providing care, 44% are caring for parents or in-laws, 39% for a spouse, 20% for an adult child, 11% for a child under 18 with special needs, and 4% for someone else.

Among Jewish households with someone ages 65 or older, 14% include someone who requires assistance with daily tasks, such as doing housework, preparing meals, dressing and undressing, or walking up and down stairs (Table 9.6).

About one quarter (28%) of Jewish households with someone age 65 or older in the Mandarin area include a member who requires help with daily activities, twice the rate of the community overall.

Table 9.6. Household member typically need help with daily activities

Household member requires help with daily activities (%)	
Jewish households with someone age 65 or older	14
Jewish engagement	
Lower Engagement	29
Moderate Engagement	2
High Engagement	5
Immersed	2
Region	
Mandarin	28
S. Duval & N. St. John's	2
Beach Communities	7
Urban Core	--
N. & W. Jacksonville	--
Age	
22-44	--
44-59	--
60-74	17
75+	12
Relationship status	
Inmarried	3
Intermarried	30
Not married	5
Minor child in household	
No	15
Yes	--
Length of residence	
0-4 years	--
5-19 years	19
20+ years	13
Health issue in household	
No	8
Yes	24

Personal support network

Over half of Jewish adults have either no one (3%) or just a few people (54%) in their nearby personal support networks (Table 9.7). There are no significant demographic differences in the size of an individual's local support networks.

Table 9.7. Personal support network

	A lot of people (%)	A fair number of people (%)	Just a few people (%)	No one (%)	Total (%)
All Jewish adults	14	29	54	3	100
Jewish engagement					
Lower Engagement	8	35	56	1	100
Moderate Engagement	14	28	56	2	100
High Engagement	7	19	71	2	100
Immersed	37	18	34	12	100
Region					
Mandarin	9	22	58	11	100
S. Duval & N. St. John's	14	35	49	1	100
Beach Communities	27	46	26	< 1	100
Urban Core	2	26	70	2	100
N. & W. Jacksonville	21	16	62	1	100
Age					
22-44	15	40	45	< 1	100
44-59	5	34	61	1	100
60-74	11	21	59	9	100
75+	8	20	71	1	100
Relationship status					
Inmarried	13	21	63	3	100
Intermarried	9	41	45	5	100
Not married	19	21	59	1	100
Minor child in household					
No	15	28	54	3	100
Yes	11	32	56	1	100
Length of residence					
0-4 years	11	28	58	2	100
5-19 years	6	37	50	6	100
20+ years	22	20	56	1	100
Health issue in household					
No	18	27	51	3	100
Yes	7	30	61	3	100

Plans for the future

Jewish adults ages 55 and older with no children in the household were asked about their plans for the future as they age. Only two percent of this group currently reside in an assisted living facility, nursing home, or independent senior living building or community, including less than 1% of Jewish adults younger than age 75 and 6% of Jewish adults ages 75 and older.

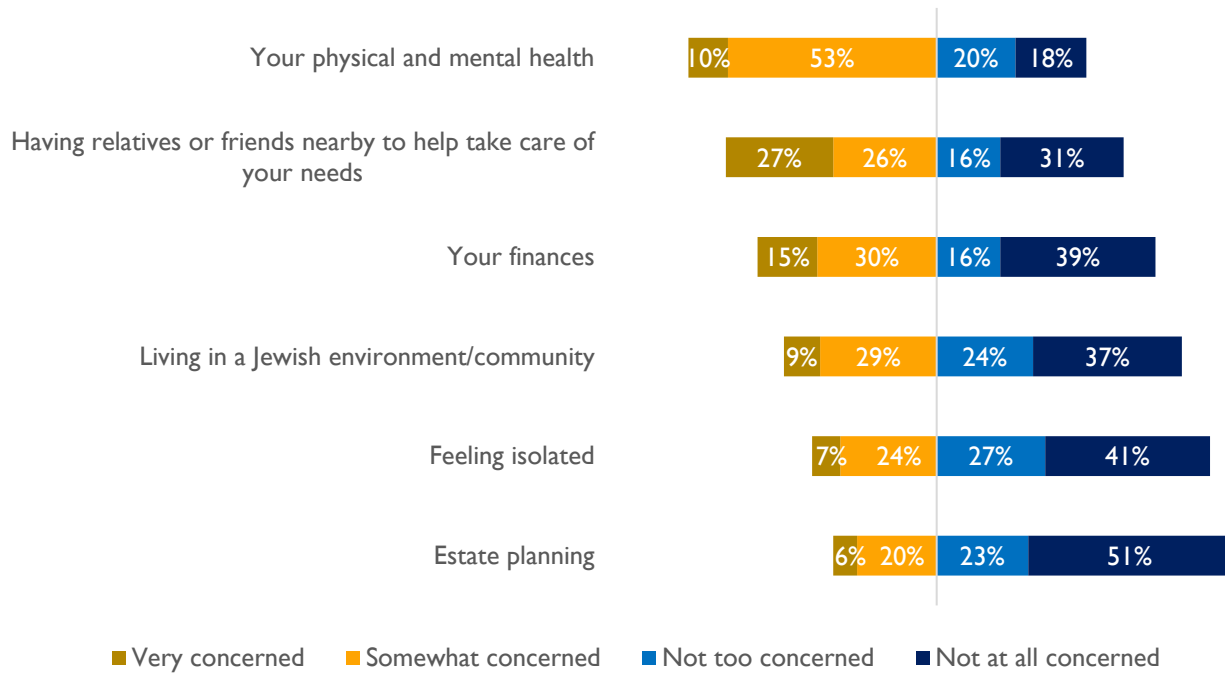
The majority of Jewish adults ages 55 and older intend to stay in their current home and age in place, including 60% of Jewish adults ages 55-74 and 97% of Jewish adults ages 75 and older (Table 9.8). Sixteen percent of older Jewish adults with no children in the household plan to move away from Northeast Florida to be closer to family or caregivers, including 24% of Jewish adults ages 55-74. Eight percent of older Jewish adults plan to move in with family or caregivers, including 7% of adults ages 55-74.

Table 9.8. Future plans

	Jewish adults age 55+ with no children in household (%)	Age 55-74 (%)	Age 75+ (%)
Stay in your current home and age in place	64	60	97
Move to an independent senior living building or retirement community	17	17	18
Move to a smaller home, condo, or apartment	16	18	9
Move away from Northeast Florida to be closer to family/caregivers	16	24	1
Move in with family/caregivers	8	7	< 1
Move to assisted living or a nursing home	5	4	3
Other	< 1	< 1	< 1

Most Jewish adults (80%) who are age 55 and older and have no children at home have at least one concern regarding their future (Figure 9.2). The most common concern among this group is having relatives or friends nearby to help take care of their needs (26% are somewhat concerned, 27% are very concerned). Sixty-three percent of this population is somewhat or very concerned about their physical and mental health, 45% is somewhat or very concerned about their finances, and 38% is somewhat or very concerned about living in a Jewish environment or community.

Figure 9.2. Concerns for the future



CHAPTER 10. IN THE WORDS OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS

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

1. Based on your own experience, what do you consider to be the strengths and gaps of the Northeast Florida Jewish community? (504 responses)
2. What is the greatest challenge facing the Northeast Florida Jewish community today? (506 responses)

The responses to these questions reinforce the themes presented throughout the report and provide further evidence of the needs of and opportunities available to the community.

This chapter summarizes the responses to these two questions about strengths and weaknesses of the Jewish community and about the challenges facing the local Jewish community. Many respondents touched on multiple themes and may be included in more than one category. Where relevant, quantitative data have been added, to provide additional context for the comments.

The numbers in this chapter reflect the number of respondents who mentioned each theme being addressed. Unlike in previous chapters, these responses are not weighted to be representative of the full Jewish community. Some quotations have been edited for clarity or to preserve the anonymity of the respondent.

Community Characteristics

Size and geography

The Jewish community of Northeast Florida is made up of 35,400 Jews living in 22,900 households. Respondents commented on the ways that the community's size (31 responses) and the area's geography (88 responses) have impacted their Jewish experiences.

A number of individuals in Northeast Florida view its size as a strength, while others noted how it can be seen a challenge.

When moving to Jacksonville in 1990, we were initially surprised by the tight-knit nature of a smallish community (as compared to our experiences [where we lived before]). Over the years, we have also been struck by the resilience of this community. We have theorized that because it is smaller, people feel they must be dependable to each other.

A strength is that it is a small, fairly close-knit community. However, the small size limits impact of Jewish community on the greater NEFL community.

It is a small enough community where you can actually get to know people and the people are kind and warm and try to get to know you. It is a very friendly community.

Northeast Florida is a small community and there are not as many resources as larger communities.

It is small Jewish community which can be isolating in our neighborhood and county but it is also a small enough community to feel intimate.

Most who discussed the geography of Northeast Florida cited distances and travel times as impediments to attending Jewish events and activities. As noted in Chapter 5, among Jewish adults, 41% are willing to travel for up to 40 minutes to attend a Jewish program or activity on a regular basis. Other respondents noted that Jewish life seems to be concentrated in specific areas despite how spread out the community of Northeast Florida is.

There is a gap in location, as most things are in central Jacksonville or Mandarin, and it's quite far for me to attend regularly.

The geographic dispersion is large; for example, I live near the beach, which means that I don't participate in as many events as I would if I lived closer to the JJC or JCA.

We live in Nassau County and it takes over an hour to get to shul or any JCA events and club meetings; we rarely go because of this. We wish there were more events planned at some satellite locations so those of us who can't live off San Jose are able to attend more than just High Holidays.

Participation in JCA and Federation not feasible due to travel time. They need to do more outside of Jacksonville. They need to consider people living in nearby counties.

In fact, for 73 respondents, the residential patterns of Jews across Northeast Florida and the barriers caused by travel time and distances has led them to see the region's geography as one of the greatest challenges facing the Northeast Florida Jewish community today, because it causes both logistical barriers and a lack of community cohesion.

This is a large geographic area and not everyone is willing to travel to participate in services/activities.

We need to adapt to the diverse needs of our community, which is spread out over a large geographic area, while services are concentrated in a very small area.

There is a thriving young population that continues to grow. ... There isn't enough emphasis on expanding Jewish life and community outside of the immediate area within Mandarin where most of the Jewish community currently lives. This isn't being recognized by a substantial part of the local leadership and volunteers.

Unity and cohesion

A common theme among individuals is the feeling of, or desire for, cohesion within the Jewish community. There were 68 people who discussed on how the community's unity, or lack thereof, affects their approach to Jewish life. Some describe the community as close-knit and supportive.

The strengths of the NEFL Jewish community are the enthusiasm of everyone involved and how closely connected everyone is. It's nice that everyone helps and supports each other.

It is a small, close-knit transient community, welcoming to all Jewish people.

It is a small but strong Jewish community with more cohesion than in the past but could be made even stronger.

Other respondents note that there is less cohesion between Jewish organizations and synagogues, as well as among congregations of different denominations.

While trouble here or in Israel does bring the community together, there are times when it feels as though organizations are competing with each other.

It seems that the community is not always united when it comes to events that should be open and celebrated by the entire Jewish community. There seems to be a lot of polarization between Jewish organizations.

I think we would benefit tremendously from a community calendar to which all synagogues and organizations contribute. There is a rich Jewish life here to enjoy and delve into, but there's nothing truly tying it together.

There is a lack of coordination and promotion of events; there should be more events that feel "accessible" and welcoming to Jews of all observance levels.

It seems that [community organizations] prefer to work in isolation and remain proprietary over their programming which may be enhanced through partnership. One of the big gaps is the community Hebrew High School program that we used to run for our students. Federation used to be involved with bringing the congregations together for that program and it has been missing for most of the last decade. I would love to see more collaboration of this nature in our community.

Newcomers

Fully one quarter of Jewish adults have lived in Northeast Florida for less than five years, and another 18% for only 5-9 years. With such rapid and recent growth within the Jewish population, many respondents (52) commented about newcomers and whether they feel welcomed.

This is a small, tight-knit community, which is both a strength and gap for those new to the area.

There's a welcoming atmosphere, but there needs to be more organizations for newcomers besides synagogues.

I have appreciated as a newcomer the diverse ways to be observant and social across the community. It is so nice to see friendly faces in many religious and social settings.

Unless a person pays for temple or JCA memberships, there were no welcome wagon programs when we moved here. We were extremely active volunteers before coming to NEFL. The community seems cliquish.

There is too much emphasis on fundraising and not enough on regular social engagement for building community with newer arrivals, particularly young people.

As a member of the community here for 20 years, I see that the “old” families run things and newcomers are more easily welcomed into leadership or participation if they are well off financially.

Diverse needs by age and life stage

No matter their household structures and life stages, members of the community wanted more community offerings for households that look like them (48).

Sixteen percent of Northeast Florida Jewish households include a minor child. Respondents who are parents wrote about the needs of their children, and desire to connect with other Jewish families in the area.

We need to be focusing on the younger generation and their families in terms better opportunities for families and children.

I would like to have seen teen oriented programming. My son has zero connection with the Jewish community.

Most of my children are in their late teens and 20’s. There are not many activities that they have been able to find for those their ages.

On the other hand, adults without children at home—both empty nesters and younger adults, singles and couples—felt there was not enough of a programming focus on people like them.

There seems to be a breakdown in engaging those of us who are a little older and no longer participate with our kids.

There is a good range of supportive welcoming activities, although ... not enough purely social for single young adults.

As a 40-year-old who isn’t married and without children I don’t feel like I have a place.

There needs to be improvement to bridge the gap connecting young adults, not solely based on their children or schools/PTAs.

The needs of the elderly are growing since people are living longer.

Jewish organizations

Congregations

In Northeast Florida, 23% of Jewish households belong to a local Jewish congregation, including synagogues, Chabads, and independent *minyans*. Eighty-eight respondents commented on their experiences of one of these institutions, desire for more appealing or nearby options, or wishes to see more collaboration between congregations.

Seems as if the younger generation is not as closely aligned with affiliated and organized synagogue life. Additionally, which could be a reason for the former, families seem to be moving further away from where synagogues are located in Jacksonville.

Jacksonville covers such a large demographic area and since most of the local synagogues are in the Mandarin area, that is where most activities are as well. If you live in other areas it is harder to feel connected to Jewish life in Jacksonville, especially if not affiliated with a synagogue.

I find that inspiration is lacking in the synagogue community. There isn't enough focus on welcoming new members, learning about how they can contribute to the community. The community is very quick to ask for money, but they don't value the strengths of those in the community. Not everyone can give money, they could definitely give time, teach something, inspire, etc. I don't see enough value in this.

There are several congregations and organizations to be affiliated with and lots of available programs. I think a weakness is connecting with others, as it can be hard for people to really develop relationships. Even as a member of a synagogue, people tend to stick with those they know. We could learn from how churches make their congregants feel connected.

I like that the Chabad ... provides ways to connect with other Jewish people, especially women.

The Jewish Community Alliance

One of the most commonly talked about topics related to strengths and gaps within organizations is the JCA, to which 6% of Jewish household belong. Forty respondents mentioned it as a centerpiece of their Jewish experiences in Northeast Florida. Those who expressed critiques did so out of a desire to see the JCA become more accessible, whether financially or geographically.

I appreciate being able to attend programs at the JCA even though I do not belong.

I think the JCA provides a lot of interesting options for people to meet and socialize. There are many different types of programs and it has been a great way for us to make new friends.

I wish the JCA had other branches in other areas like St. Johns County. Jews moving into town aren't going just to Duval—JCA is too far to be convenient to where Jews live anymore.

The JCA could realize that bigger families (multiple kids) need more financial assistance. Sending four kids to swim lessons, sports, or camp is cost prohibitive for middle income families.

Human service agencies

Thirty-seven respondents discussed one of the Jewish-sponsored human service agencies in Northeast Florida, in particular Jewish Family & Community Services or River Garden, which are seen by many as strengths of the community. Some, however, noted areas where they felt these institutions have fallen short. Among Northeast Florida Jewish adults with health or financial needs, almost half (48%) are familiar with River Garden Senior Services, and 44% are familiar with Jewish Family and Community Services.

I have high praise for JFCS. The staff there always responds to phone calls, and tries to help with any issues.

River Garden is possibly the greatest strength, because it assures many of us (for whom it is critically important), that we can age in a community which shares our values.

JFCS focusing more on the general community over Jews in past few years is a gap within the Jacksonville community.

The gaps include JFCS in relation to finding housing for those in the Jewish community in need.

The Jewish community has no assisted living places, only independent at one end or full nursing care at the other end.

We need more aging in place services for over-65 adults. Not everyone wants a residential location.

Jewish Federation and Foundation of Northeast Florida (28)

The Jewish Federation and Foundation of Northeast Florida is one of the community's central institutions, through which 10% of Jewish adults have attended a program and to which 4% of Jewish households have donated. There are 28 respondents who discussed the Federation, some positively and some with criticism.

I think Federation and Foundation are strong and have great leadership.

I like how the Federation is actively involved with trying to provide a cohesive and comprehensive Jewish community.

Jewish Federation volunteers can be cliquy and there's too much emphasis on Federation asking for money. People can give to local, national and international Jewish agencies individually; why give to Federation instead?

The Jewish Federation is too focused on money to Israel and other overseas communities, reducing money allocated to local agencies in Northeast Florida.

Jewish education

The Northeast Florida community provides a range of Jewish educational offerings. Forty percent of Jewish K-12 students received some type of Jewish education during the 2023-24 academic year, including 12% who attended either full- or part-time school. Twenty-seven respondents commented on existing schools and camps, their reputations, and the support they receive from the community.

I am very happy with the Jewish education my children receive, the extra-curriculars and after school care provided by the JCA, and the safety and confidence my children feel identifying as Jewish.

An important strength is the existence of a Jewish day school.

The community needs a Modern Orthodox High School. That is the number one reason families are leaving.

We need a quality Jewish high school, and better education in general. We have enough Jewish families to have our day schools full and thriving. However, enrollment is fairly low. I would love for most of the families who identify as Jewish in the Northeast Florida community to participate in this as well. I would like the Federation to possibly figure out what obstacles are in place that are keeping more families from sending their children to day school and see if/ how they can be addressed.

I think that the youth are not connected enough, not to their Jewish identity or to Israel. The programming is not strong enough and is often pointless (for example youth group events where the kids just play video games). Growing up, I was inspired weekly through Jewish youth group activities and religious school. There is so much more depth to Judaism and what it can mean to the next generation, especially in light of all the antisemitism showing its face.

Leadership

Thirty-two respondents mentioned issues concerning professional and lay leadership. Comments recommended diversifying leadership and developing young future leaders.

Weaknesses are the majority of people involved in the Jewish community are a lot older and therefore aren't up to date with the best ways to do things. There needs to be a lot more younger people involved in leadership positions and involved in general. The reason there is a deficit in younger people is because there is no advertising or info reaching the younger generation about what's out there that's Jewish and Jewish opportunities. Younger people consume their info from social media and the older generation doesn't know how to market and advertise in this modern day and age. People my age aren't going to read newsletters or magazines.

Leadership has stood up strongly in response to antisemitic incidents that have unfortunately been occurring with greater frequency and intensity in our area.

I think there are many strengths due to the quality of leaders in our community. However, I feel there are a large number of people who feel alienated because of the political views of rabbis and many Jewish professionals.

People who donate large amounts of money are valued, and small donors are marginalized by some of the Jewish organizations. I think the leadership needs to remember there are many ways people can contribute and make a difference, not just financially.

Outreach and communication

Slightly more than half of Jewish adults (57%) received some form of personal outreach from a Jewish organization in the past year. But this means that slightly less than half (43%) did not. One area of concern, cited by 41 respondents, is the need for more outreach to members of the community, particularly to increase engagement.

I think there could be more outreach and "inreach" within the Jewish community, so that Jews of all denominations feel comfortable and accepted by other Jews of other denominations.

There is a need to reach out to people who have a Jewish heritage that don't participate in Jewish activities.

Great community but so many people have moved here that are unaffiliated. More interesting community programs and more personal contact is needed.

At the events I have attended, they always reach out to express how much they want volunteers. I have, every single time mentioned how interested I am in volunteering, or helping in some way, so I could meet some Jewish friends. No one has ever followed up.

It has been my experience that the Jewish organizations in Jacksonville do not see a need to seek out or welcome Jews who are non-white.

In fact, 37 respondents said that the need for better outreach was one of the Northeast Florida Jewish community's primary challenges.

Need more outreach to people who are living alone or don't have families locally.

Need more outreach to Jewish younger citizens to get involved.

The community has a hard time engaging people that aren't already connected through their family or friends. Jacksonville is growing quickly and new people to the area have a hard time getting engaged in Jewish life.

Lack of outreach to Jews not directly engaged and involved in Jewish life and organizations.

Another concern from members of the community is the lack of communication, with 28 people noting a need for improvement.

It is a caring community, but communication is poor. We need a unified voice for the whole Jewish community.

The communication by the federation has brought the community together as a cohesive unit.

Communicating with, attracting and making people living outside the core Jewish area feel welcome and wanted in the community is a significant weakness. The only people that continually do that are Chabad and they are in no way my cup of religious tea.

I'm very concerned that there is not joint communication among the temples, synagogues etc. to inform the Jewish population of deaths, births, and simchas among the residents of Northeast Florida. It is very embarrassing to ask someone how a relative is doing to find out that he/she has passed away or is seriously ill. With all these institutions being online for their membership, it is unheard of that this information is not being shared with all of the Jewish community. In the past we did have a monthly Jewish newspaper that individuals could contribute to. Now we have none. Be that as it may, I have suggested this to every survey over the years. It should not be kept secret to only members of said group. But it falls on deaf ears. We have friends and acquaintances in all of the synagogues so this information should be made public to be posted online to each member on the membership lists. It is ruthless to not share this.

Community concerns

Perceived lack of affiliation

There are four distinct patterns of Jewish engagement found among Jewish adults in Northeast Florida. The largest pattern in the community (46%) is in the "Lower Engagement" group. They tend to engage in very few Jewish behaviors, and when they do, they require no connection to an organized Jewish community.

Sixty-six respondents expressed concerns about members of the community like those in the Lower Engagement group who are minimally involved in Jewish life, and saw this trend as one of the primary challenges facing the Jewish community.

The greatest challenge is the ambivalence and disinterest in being part of a Jewish community. Many people are busy with their day to day life and don't prioritize finding a Jewish community as important. Therefore, they don't take the time to visit and experience the many Jewish communities and events that are offered here.

I think people are scared to be Jewish. People, like my ancestors, would rather just assimilate for their safety and the safety of their kids. I get that choice but it's sad. We need to be more assertive with standing up for ourselves and not be victimized. There have been multiple instances of antisemitism in our schools and I hate it. But the kids are just taking it. They need to be trained to fight back.

A major challenge for us is the decreasing involvement in organizational life by the next generation of Jewish Jacksonvilleans.

I am concerned that younger generation will not be as committed to Judaism but this community has demonstrated some strength in this regard. Many young people return to the community when they settle down and participate actively in the Jewish community if they did so as teens. I worry that Jewish identity will be less synagogue oriented and more socially oriented. People coming to town look less for synagogues and more for JCA as their point of affiliation.

Cost of Jewish life

Sixteen percent of Jewish households report that their desired participation in Jewish life is limited by finances. As such, one commonly cited gap within the Northeast Florida Jewish community is the cost of various aspects of Jewish life, mentioned by 34 respondents.

The local synagogues are too expensive for average households.

I think everyone thinks we have more money than we do so we get less financial aid for the JCA and other programs, but prices and homes in Jacksonville have gone up a lot and that needs to be taken into consideration.

The largest gap is the inability for many to participate in Jewish programs and Jewish education due to finances—whether real or perceived.

There is not affordable high-quality childcare for preschool.

One challenge is how organizations are demanding more money and providing fewer programs/services. The dues model the synagogues have created has shifted affiliation from "We do it because our parents did it" to a value-based approach "What am I paying for?" Until the assumptions are reversed, participation at a synagogue will continue to dwindle."

Politics and Israel

Concerns about politics, whether domestic or about Israel, were mentioned by 35 respondents. In a community where roughly one third of Jewish adults each identify as liberal, moderate, and conservative, people mentioned frustrations with Jews who have different political opinions.

I would appreciate more politically conservative Jewish programs in Northeast Florida.

I would participate more if there was no political agenda pushed.

The community is too conservative to welcome everyone.

There are diverse and strongly held views among members of the Northeast Florida Jewish community about Israel—both in general and in the context of the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel and the resulting war. While most Jewish adults feel some level of emotional attachment to Israel, with 37% feeling somewhat attached and 44% feeling very attached, there still are 9% who feel not at all attached and 10% who feel not too attached.

The Northeast Florida Jewish community's strengths include strong leadership in support of Israel including occasional organizing of mass pro-Israel gatherings in times of Mideast crisis.

I feel good about how the Jewish community has come together after the events of October 7th.

There is too much content about Israel and not enough about our own community.

Gaps include strong voices that are pro-Israel that don't see any problems and are willing to be critical of US leaders and not Israel leaders. Not understanding being critical of Israel leaders is not being critical of Israel.

Fifty-eight respondents explicitly highlighted divisions over Israel and politics as the primary challenge facing the Northeast Florida Jewish community. Some of these challenges were framed as being internal to the Jewish community, while others were in the context of the relationship between Jews and their non-Jewish neighbors.

To recognize Jews that do not support Israel's apartheid government and oppression of Palestinians.

Educating our own Jewish community so we can increase our own overall knowledge of Judaism and of Israel.

Failure to welcome all political and cultural viewpoints. With all the newcomers, and in the midst of the current war and explosion of antisemitism nationally, Jewish life should be dynamic and supportive. It is not.

Maintaining a cohesive community that continues to bring Jews of all backgrounds and views together, especially amid ongoing conflict in Israel and Gaza in the aftermath of October 7th.

Living in Florida has been very challenging with politicians being often Republicans who back Trump for President again. This White Christian Nationalism has made us as Jews more concerned about antisemitism and concerned for our safety. We have had to have guards at our synagogue for a few years now for example.

Antisemitism, security, and relationships with the general community

When asked about the greatest challenge facing the Northeast Florida Jewish community today, the most common concerns among respondents, cited by 169, are related to antisemitism, safety, and security. Related is concern about how the Jewish community in Northeast Florida is perceived by and interacts with the general community of the area.

The same challenge facing the Jewish community nationwide: antisemitism. 0014502573

Lacking a unified voice to challenge antisemitism.

So many hate groups are located in this area, along with the people that participate in them. I feel that ignorance is at an all-time high, and many people openly support Hamas and it has truly created divisiveness in every community in Florida I have visited.

There are concerns about antisemitism and security. Weekly protests at Town Center or City Hall against Israel, issues with Nazi propaganda being distributed in mailboxes throughout the community, swastikas prominently lit outside of community events.... these do not promote a sense of security. Emails from ADL encouraging us to stay home or to speak out within the confines of our Jewish institutions further reinforce the sense of isolation. Security at Jewish religious and social events and gatherings is also a concern. During "main hours," synagogues and others post armed professional security personnel, but during off hours, anyone could come in. Just as bad, there are no limitations on congregants "packing weapons" during services or at events.

A lack of understanding of Judaism and lack of teaching about the Holocaust in middle or high school will lead to more antisemitism.

Gaining recognition for positively affecting NEFL at large, in particular the non-Jewish community. This would help the non-Jewish community understand and see the Jewish community in a better light.

CHAPTER 11. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The findings that are presented in this report provide a detailed portrait of the Jewish community of Northeast Florida, including community members' demographic characteristics; their participation in Jewish communal life and private Jewish activities; and their attitudes about Judaism, Israel, antisemitism, 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.

Reach out beyond the geographic core of the community

The majority of Northeast Florida's Jewish communal infrastructure is physically located in the Mandarin region, which is home to 22% of the area's Jewish households. However, the remainder of the community is somewhat evenly distributed across the rest of the area. Moreover, Jewish adults who live in Mandarin are disproportionately older— just 9% of Jewish adults ages 22-44 live in Mandarin, compared to 30% of those ages 60-74 and 39% of those ages 75 and older.

The Northeast Florida area is somewhat widespread, as well. Residents, particularly in St. John's County and the Beach Communities, report feeling as though they must choose between long commutes for Jewish life and making do closer to home without much institutional support. In the Beach Communities region, just 3% of Jewish adults report very much feeling a sense of belonging to a Jewish community where they live, compared to 22% of the population as a whole.

Bringing more programs to these outlying areas within Northeast Florida, keeping and making more programs and activities available online, and promoting stronger ties between Jewish organizations in the historic core and the rest of the community, can help to expand the community's reach.

Balance the needs of newcomers and long-time residents

Many members of the Northeast Florida Jewish community have longstanding ties to the area. Nearly half have lived in the area for 20 years or longer, including 12% who have done so for their whole lives.

Despite these longstanding local connections, the Jewish community is predominately newer to the area. One quarter of Jewish adults moved to Northeast Florida within the past five years, and an additional 18% did so between five and nine years ago. Those who have lived in Northeast Florida for fewer than five years are less likely to have local friends and family who might connect them to Jewish events, institutions, and people. Many newcomers feel frustrated by what they perceive as a community that is hard to break into. It may be helpful to introduce new residents to their options for synagogues, Jewish schools, Jewish cultural programs and activities, and to create opportunities to meet other Jews who share their interests.

Foster community through organizations and individuals

The importance of community for people's mental and physical well-being has long been documented.¹⁷ The majority of Jews in Northeast Florida do indeed have strong sense of attachment and connection to their community, whether Jewish or otherwise. Sixty-five percent of Jewish adults agree somewhat or very much that they feel part of any community in Northeast Florida. Still, not all Jewish adults have community nearby, with 20% agreeing only a little that they feel part of a community, and 15% agreeing not at all.

Despite the large share who feel connected to some community locally, nearly half of Jewish adults do not have any local **Jewish** community. This includes those who have no local community at all (15% of Jewish adults) as well as those whose community has few or no Jewish members (29% of Jewish adults). Among these Jewish adults, half have some interest in finding a Jewish community in Greater St. Louis: One third (27%) are somewhat interested and 23% are very interested in finding a Jewish community.

The study explored barriers to participation in Jewish life, and some of these might be the same barriers to building community. The most common barrier to participation that is cited by Jewish adults is not knowing many people (38%). An inconvenient location is a barrier for 34% of Jewish adults. Furthermore, 57% of Jewish adults report receiving any outreach from local Jewish organizations—leaving 43% who have not.

Address human service needs

Eighteen percent of Jewish households describe their financial situations as well-off, and 19% say they cannot make ends meet or are just managing to make ends meet (referred to in this report as “struggling”). In total, 10% of Jewish households were unable to pay for at least one necessity within the past year, and another 2% were unable to pay for at least one necessity between one to three years ago. These necessities included rent or mortgage payments; medical care or medicine; food; and payments or utilities such as water, electricity, or heat.

Sixteen percent of Jewish households had to limit or change their involvement in Jewish life due to their financial situation, including 6% who were unable to participate in some Jewish activities due to financial constraints. Among Jewish adults who did not attend Jewish programs but were interested in doing so, 7% indicated that affordability was a barrier to participation.

Jewish organizations look to provide for the health needs of its community members. One third of Jewish households include a member whose work, school, or activities is limited by a chronic health issue, special need, or disability. Of Jewish households with a member who has a limiting health issue, special need, or disability, 11% did not receive adequate services to manage the need.

Conclusion

These findings emerge from data collected systematically from a representative sample of 1,771 members of the community between January and April 2024. 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 Greater St. Louis. 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.

NOTES

¹ 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.

² Pew Research Center, “Jewish Americans in 2020” (Washington DC: Pew Research Center, 2021).
<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/05/11/jewish-americans-in-2020/>

³ <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs>

⁴ <https://ajpp.brandeis.edu/>

⁵ Pew Research Center, “Jewish Americans in 2020.”

⁶ Reports and details about each study can be found at <https://www.brandeis.edu/cmjs/community-studies/index.html>

⁷ US Census Bureau. (2024). *2023: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables*. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2023.DP05?t=Age+and+Sex&g=050XX00US12003,12019,12031,12089,12109&y=2023&moe=false>

⁸ Pew Research Center, “Jewish Americans in 2020.”

⁹ Pew Research Center, “Jewish Americans in 2020.”

¹⁰ Pew Research Center, “Jewish Americans in 2020.”

¹¹ See also Janet Krasner Aronson et al., “A New Approach to Understanding Contemporary Jewish Engagement,” *Contemporary Jewry* 39 (2018): 91–113.

¹² Pew Research Center, “Jewish Americans in 2020.”

¹³ Pew Research Center, “Jewish Americans in 2020.”

¹⁴ US Census Bureau. (2024). *2023: ACS 1-Year Estimates Subject Tables*. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST1Y2023.S1501?g=050XX00US12003,12019,12031,12089,12109>.

¹⁵ Pew Research Center, “Jewish Americans in 2020.”

¹⁶ See <https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines/prior-hhs-poverty-guidelines-federal-register-references/2021-poverty-guidelines#thresholds>

¹⁷ Stewart, K., & Townley, G. (2020). How far have we come? An integrative review of the current literature on sense of community and well-being. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 66(1-2), 166-189.