THE LIBRARY IN THE CITY: CHANGING DEMANDS AND A CHALLENGING FUTURE

PHILADELPHIA RESEARCH INITIATIVE / ABT SRBI POLL

TOPLINE FOR SELECTED QUESTIONS AND RELATED GRAPHICS

January 4 – January 19

BASE = 1,600 Philadelphia Residents Except Where Noted

*Means less than 1%

Q. HAVE YOU VISITED A PUBLIC LIBRARY IN PHILADELPHIA THE PAST 12 MONTHS?

YES 51%

NO 49%

DON'T KNOW/REFUSED *

Q. HOW OFTEN DO YOU GO? (809 RESPONDENTS WHO VISITED A PUBLIC LIBRARY IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS)

EVERY DAY OR MOST DAYS 4%

AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK 15%

ABOUT 1-3 TIMES A MONTH 38%

LESS THAN ONCE A MONTH, BUT MORE THAN ONCE A YEAR 27%

ABOUT ONCE A YEAR 15%

OR LESS OFTEN DON'T KNOW/REFUSED *

Q. DO YOU USUALLY GO TO THE CENTRAL LIBRARY ON THE PARKWAY, OR TO A BRANCH LIBRARY? (809 RESPONDENTS)

CENTRAL 14%

BRANCH OR REGIONAL LIBRARY 79%

BOTH THE SAME 6%

DON'T KNOW/REFUSED 1%

Q. PLEASE TELL ME WHETHER YOU HAVE DONE EACH OF THE FOLLOWING ON A TRIP TO THE LIBRARY IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS. (809 RESPONDENTS)

A. CHECKED OUT BOOKS OR OTHER MATERIAL

YES 79%

NO/NOT IN 2011 21%

EVEN IF BEFORE

B. TAKEN A CHILD TO THE LIBRARY

YES 57%

NO/NOT IN 2011 43%

EVEN IF BEFORE

C. ATTENDED A CLASS, PROGRAM, OR MEETING
YES    20%
NO/NOT IN 2011  79%
EVEN IF BEFORE  
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED/  
CAN'T RECALL

D. USED A COMPUTER IN THE LIBRARY TO ACCESS THE INTERNET

YES    57%
NO/NOT IN 2011  43%
EVEN IF BEFORE

Q. HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE THE LIBRARY’S COMPUTER? (394 RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE USED A LIBRARY COMPUTER FOR INTERNET)

EVERY DAY OR MOST DAYS  5%
AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK  13%
ABOUT 1-3 TIMES A MONTH  33%
LESS THAN ONCE A MONTH, BUT MORE THAN ONCE A YEAR  24%
ABOUT ONCE A YEAR  23%
OR LESS OFTEN  1%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED

Q. PLEASE JUST TELL ME IF YOU HAVE DONE EACH AT THE LIBRARY IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS. (809 RESPONDENTS)

A. LOOKED FOR A JOB

YES    29%
NO/NOT IN 2011  71%
EVEN IF BEFORE  
DON'T KNOW/CAN'T RECALL

B. GOTTEN INFORMATION ON OR APPLIED FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES OR BENEFITS

YES    23%
NO/NOT IN 2011  77%
EVEN IF BEFORE  
DON'T KNOW/CAN'T RECALL

C. STUDIED FOR A TEST, INCLUDING THE GED

YES    18%
NO/NOT IN 2011  82%
EVEN IF BEFORE  
DON'T KNOW/CAN'T RECALL

D. GOTTEN HEALTH INFORMATION

YES    34%
NO/NOT IN 2011  66%
EVEN IF BEFORE  
DON'T KNOW/CAN'T RECALL

E. LEARNED HOW TO USE A COMPUTER

YES    22%
NO/NOT IN 2011  78%
EVEN IF BEFORE  
DON'T KNOW/CAN'T RECALL

F. LEARNED HOW TO READ (ASKED ONLY IF ENGLISH NOT NATIVE LANGUAGE, 53 RESPONDENTS)

YES    42%
NO/NOT IN 2011  58%
EVEN IF BEFORE  
G. LEARNED HOW TO SPEAK ENGLISH (ASKED ONLY IF ENGLISH NOT NATIVE LANGUAGE, 53 RESPONDENTS)

YES 30%
NO/NOT IN 2011 70%
EVEN IF BEFORE

H. FILED TAXES/GOT HELP FILING TAXES (809 RESPONDENTS)

YES 12%
NO/NOT IN 2011 88%
EVEN IF BEFORE
DON'T KNOW/CAN'T RECALL *

Q. THE FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA SERVES A NUMBER OF PURPOSES. PLEASE TELL ME HOW IMPORTANT ARE EACH OF THE FOLLOWING?

A. PROVIDING ACCESS TO COMPUTERS AND THE INTERNET FOR PEOPLE

VERY IMPORTANT 85%
SOMewhat IMPORTANT 11%
NOT VERY IMPORTANT 4%
DEPENDS *
DON'T KNOW 1%

B. PROVIDING ACCESS TO BOOKS, MAGAZINES AND DVDS

VERY IMPORTANT 80%
SOMewhat IMPORTANT 14%
NOT VERY IMPORTANT 6%
DEPENDS *
DON'T KNOW 1%

C. PROVIDING A SAFE PLACE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO COME

VERY IMPORTANT 91%
SOMewhat IMPORTANT 6%
NOT VERY IMPORTANT 2%
DEPENDS *
DON'T KNOW *

D. PROVIDING A QUIET PLACE TO STUDY AND READ

VERY IMPORTANT 89%
SOMewhat IMPORTANT 8%
NOT VERY IMPORTANT 2%
DEPENDS *
DON'T KNOW *

E. PROVIDING A PLACE TO ATTEND A PROGRAM, CLASS OR MEETING

VERY IMPORTANT 70%
SOMewhat IMPORTANT 23%
NOT VERY IMPORTANT 6%
DEPENDS *
DON'T KNOW 1%

F. PROVIDING A GATHERING PLACE FOR PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY

VERY IMPORTANT 65%
SOMewhat IMPORTANT 24%
NOT VERY IMPORTANT 9%
DEPENDS *
DON'T KNOW 1%

Q. IF THE LIBRARY HAS BUDGET PROBLEMS IN THE FUTURE, TOUGH CHOICES WILL HAVE TO BE MADE. PLEASE TELL WHICH ONE YOU WOULD PREFER IF A CUTBACK IS NECESSARY.

REDUCE THE HOURS THE BRANCHES AND CENTRAL LIBRARY ARE OPEN 42%
CLOSE SOME BRANCHES WITH THE FEWEST VISITORS AND CLOSEST TO OTHER LIBRARIES 25%
Q. IF YOUR LOCAL BRANCH CLOSED, DO YOU THINK THAT WOULD HAVE?

A MAJOR IMPACT ON YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD  56%
A MINOR IMPACT  25%
NOT MUCH OF AN IMPACT  15%
DEPENDS  *
DON'T KNOW  3%

What Philadelphians Think About Approaches to Future Budget Cuts

- Don't know: 5%
- Cut other city services: 28%
- Close some branches: 25%
- Reduce hours: 42%

What Philadelphians Think About Branch Closures

- Don't know: 3%
- Not much of an impact: 15%
- Minor impact: 25%
- Major impact: 56%