



PJ LIBRARY OTTAWA SURVEY RESULTS

Survey Conducted Fall 2014

Response Rate: 20% (73 out of 365 parents) – Double Standard Response Rate

In the fall of 2014, the Jewish Federation of Ottawa conducted a voluntary online survey of current and past parents of children who receive monthly PJ Library books to understand the impact the program has had on the Ottawa Jewish Community. Launched in Ottawa in May 2011, the program sees children aged 6 months to 5 ½ years of age receive a free Jewish-themed book each month, funded by a partnership between generous local donors and the Harold Grinspoon Foundation. There are currently 335 children enrolled in the PJ Library program in Ottawa.

Below are results of key questions as well as comments submitted by parents:

KEY RESULTS

- **69%** - the number of households who had 5 or fewer Jewish themed children's books prior to receiving books from PJ Library
- **42%** - the number of families reading PJ books together at least 3 times a week, with another 25% reading once weekly
- **100%** - found the Jewish content in the books to be very or somewhat meaningful
- **71%** - were satisfied or very satisfied with PJ Library events they attended
- **98%** - the number of families which experienced enhanced Jewish life after receiving PJ books
- **73%** - respondents who think more about incorporating Jewish practices at home as a result of receiving the PJ books
- **85%** - families feel connected to the Jewish community as a result of receiving the PJ books
- **73%** - the number of families who have introduced a new Jewish tradition or strengthened an existing one in their home as a result of reading the PJ books together



- **63%** - families learned about community programs, agencies, and opportunities from notifications by PJ Library
- **25%** - had a significant or moderate impact on a family's decision to join or attend a community organization, such as pre-school, afternoon school, day school, camp, synagogue, or the SJCC
- **34%** - feel connected to the Ottawa Jewish community as a result of participating in PJ Library, and 44% already felt connected but PJ Library enhanced the connection
- **82%** - indicated PJ Library is somewhat or much more likely to influence them to become more connected in the future
- **68%** - were influenced somewhat or strongly to donate money or time to a Jewish organization
- **46%** - number of families (or parents) who have increased their participation in Jewish community events, programs, and holiday celebrations
- **57%** - parents who reported their children's participation has increased in Jewish community events, programs, and holiday celebrations

TRADITIONS THAT WERE INTRODUCED OR ENHANCED

- "More interactive Shabbat with story-telling"
- "Reading books before each Jewish holiday"
- "Our son, Teddy, lives his life like "Tikkun Olam Ted", a book about mitzvahs, and we have made it our most important family value to do good for others"
- "Learning about and looking forward to every holiday"
- "Talking about the meaning of Sh'ma Yisroel and actually say it"
- "Do Shabbat and give tzedakah"
- "We make sure to have Friday night dinner together and light candles"



ADDITIONAL COMMENTS SHARED BY PARENTS

As a Jewish woman with a non-Jewish husband, when we had our first child almost 4 years ago we knew we wanted to raise him to be Jewish, but not much about the "how" to do it or what we would do. The PJ Library books are the primary source of Jewish content in our home, and provide a regular opportunity for us to talk about Jewish content. My son loves to read and often picks a PJ Library book to be read. I'm thrilled we can receive the books and it nudges me to think a bit more about Judaism and how to pass it on to my son every time we receive a book in the mail or read one. Now I just need to figure out the next step!

This has been a great opportunity to read books we would never have access to through our local library. I love how the books touch not only on religious themes, but life lessons that can be shared through a Jewish lens. Thank you!!

Being a PJ family has been very important to us. We live in a rural area and my kids are the only Jewish ones in play group and school. PJ Library books have been a way to explore Judaism with my children at home, in the community, and at my son's school. The program means a lot to us and we are very thankful for having it!

This is a fantastic program! Since becoming a PJ Library family, we, among other things, have built a Sukkah, started having our kids donate to the food bank when we shop for groceries, and enjoy our kids' increasing Yiddish and Jewish vocabulary. Thank you!

I love that we now have a children's book about every Jewish holiday. Even though my children are now older than 6 years old and we have stopped receiving the books, we still pull out the appropriate book when a holiday rolls around and my children really enjoy them. Thank you!

PJ Library program is, in a single word, invaluable.

Living in a community (Wakefield) with very few Jews, I am sooooo grateful to have had PJ Library help foster my kids' sense of their Jewish identity. My kids are always excited to get a new book, and we love reading them together. Many of the stories have spurred lots of interested dialogue and Jewish beliefs, practices and values. I feel so lucky to have benefited from this amazing program and can't believe it's all for FREE! Thank you, thank you.



My children are learning values of the Jewish religion. My husband who is not Jewish gets to educate himself and the children at the same time.

We love our PJ Library books and have been particularly impressed by the diversity of people and Jewish practices that the books have included. The day that our PJ Library books arrive in the mailbox every month is so exciting for both children, they just can't wait to come inside and see what their new books will be. On those days we truly do drop everything and read our books before doing anything else. As a parent of children in secular public schools, I am particularly appreciative that there is a high-quality and diverse Jewish content coming into our home on a monthly basis to keep my kids excited about their Jewishness. We only wish the program continued past 5 years of age! Keep up the good work PJ Library – you have a great thing going.

Being a non-Jewish mother who is raising her child Jewish (father is Israeli), I too get to learn along with her. PJ Library has really helped me with why we practice and gotten (child's name) excited about her Jewish life. She especially loves any book with Hebrew! Thank you so much for having this wonderful program.

As my child is still quite young, I feel that PJ Library books help us create a strong foundation for their Jewish identity. It supports and complements the Jewish traditions and values we practice at home. My child loves them. They are always colourful and beautifully illustrated and deal with important themes. Thank you for this beautiful program.

It is a great program, one that I am happy to partly support through my Federation contributions. While not every book is a hit with either parents or kids, they are mostly good. We still read the "two dads" Purim one, and many of the other books just get added to the book shelf and become favourites in the same arbitrary way that other books do for kids. Overall, we are big fans!