



2025 Greater Boston Jewish Community Study.

A circular inset image showing two women in profile, facing each other and smiling. The woman on the left has dark, curly hair and is wearing a white top with black polka dots. The woman on the right has dark hair pulled back and is wearing a striped top. The background is blurred, suggesting an indoor setting with other people.

**Jewish communal
and organizational
connections.**

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Sponsored by: Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston
Conducted by: Rosov Consulting with SSRS
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cjp.org/CommunityStudy2025

Published February 2026

Introduction.

2025 Greater Boston Jewish Community Study

This study is an independent research initiative sponsored by Combined Jewish Philanthropies (CJP). The mission of CJP is to inspire and mobilize the diverse Greater Boston Jewish community to engage in building communities of learning and action that strengthen Jewish life and improve the world.

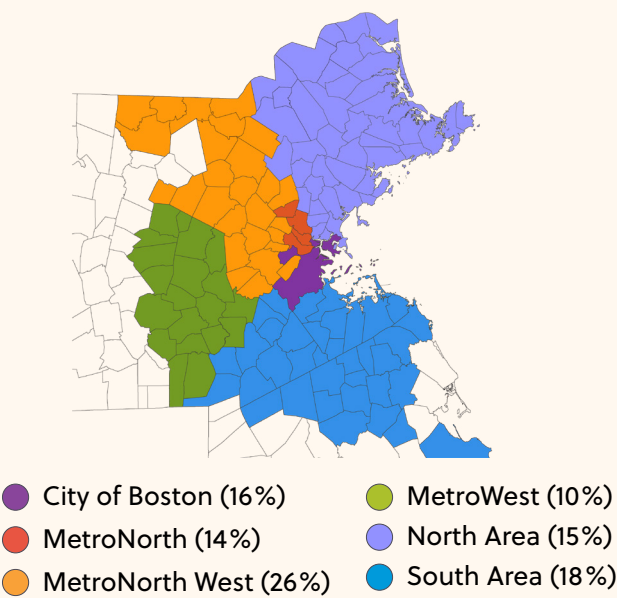
The goal of this study is to provide a transparent, fact-based picture of the community today. Conducted once every decade, this study gives the community the chance to step back and ask: Who are we today? Where are we thriving? And what does our community need to build a strong and safe future?

The research is based on 4,776 responses from a probability survey of a randomly selected sample of Jewish households across Greater Boston and is supported by follow-up interviews and focus groups. These reports remind us that every

data point represents a real person—a life, a story, and a lived experience in our community. Readers are encouraged to approach the findings with curiosity and openness to the diverse experiences they represent. The reports present two types of data: estimates of the number of Jewish households and the people in them, and percentages describing their characteristics, attitudes, and behaviors. As with all probability-based surveys, these estimates are not exact and include a margin of error of about ± 2.6 percentage points for the full sample. For smaller groups, the margin of error is wider. Throughout the reports, estimates are rounded to whole numbers and populations to the nearest hundred, so categories may not equal the total.

To read all the reports and access a detailed explanation of the survey methodology, visit cjp.org/CommunityStudy2025.

Map of Jewish households



For a detailed map, visit: cjp.org/regionalmap

Population estimates of Greater Boston

Jewish households	138,200
Individuals in Jewish households	333,100
Adults	277,900
Jewish	184,500
Not Jewish	93,400
Children	55,200
Jewish	44,000
Not Jewish	10,800
Unknown	400

Glossary

Terms used in the reports

Jewish household: A home in which one or more Jewish adults reside. All Jewish households have at least one Jewish adult living in them. About half of them are also home to one or more adults or children, or sometimes both, who are not Jewish.

Adults

- **Jewish adults:** A person who identifies as Jewish by religion, ethnicity, culture, parentage, or how they were raised, so long as they do not also identify with another religion.
- **Adults who are not Jewish:** Adults living in Jewish households who do not identify as or consider themselves Jewish by religion, ethnicity, culture, parentage, or how they were raised.

Children

- **Jewish children:** A person ages 0-17 who is being raised Jewish by religion, or Jewish and another religion, or is considered Jewish aside from religion, including ethnically or culturally.
- **Children who are not Jewish:** Children ages 0-17 who are living in Jewish households who are not being raised Jewish by religion, or Jewish and another religion, or considered Jewish aside from religion.

Index of Jewish Connection

A system to measure how Jewish adults connect with Jewish life in Greater Boston

Contemporary Jewish life is multidimensional. There is a wide range of different and diverse ways to connect to it. To measure and categorize this diversity among Jewish adults in Greater Boston, an Index of Jewish Connection was developed and is used throughout the series of reports about the study.

The index—which is based on a statistical procedure called latent class analysis—captures the primary ways that five segments of Jewish adults connect to Jewish life in Greater Boston. It is not designed to place the groups in a hierarchy of engagement, with some doing “more” and some doing “less.”

Instead, it highlights what makes each group distinctive in how they connect in ways that are personally meaningful to Jewish life, distinctions that are reflected in the names given to the groups.



Seeking the Social - 29%

The *Seeking the Social* group is similar to *Family Focused* and, additionally, is more active in communal and organizational events, activities, and programs.



Tenuously Tethered - 27%

The *Tenuously Tethered* group is minimally involved in Jewish life, with infrequent participation in personal, home, and family-based Jewish activities or organizational events and programs.



Family Focused - 17%

The *Family Focused* group is focused on personal, home, and family-based Jewish activities and holiday observances.



Deeply Devoted - 15%

The *Deeply Devoted* group is similar to *Enthusiastically Engrossed* and, additionally, is more focused on synagogue involvement and religious observance.



Enthusiastically Engrossed - 12%

The *Enthusiastically Engrossed* group has a wide range of family, personal, home, organizational, and cultural connections to Jewish life.

Participating in Jewish communal life.

The Greater Boston Jewish community has an ecosystem of organizations that support participation in Jewish communal life.

To better understand their role, this report explores how Jewish adults take part in Jewish communal life, including: their connections to Jewish communities in their area and across Greater Boston; their participation in Jewish organizations, programs, and events; their awareness of and meaning derived from Jewish programming; their engagement with informal or grassroots groups; and their efforts to offer support through donations and volunteer work.

To explore more personal and individual ways that Jews in Greater Boston are involved in Jewish life, read the [*Jewish Identity and Behaviors*](#) report.

Key takeaways



Satisfaction with Jewish programming is high, but participation is infrequent

Nearly all people who participated in Jewish organizational programming said they were satisfied. Two-thirds of Jews have attended events and programs hosted by Jewish organizations, though most do so infrequently. Cultural and holiday programs draw the most participation, while spiritual, social action, and Israel events attract smaller crowds. Interest in future participation is high, especially for cultural and educational offerings.



Awareness is a key barrier to engagement

Limited awareness of Jewish programming, especially among individuals who are less connected, emerges as a significant barrier to participation. Many Jews who are not involved cite a lack of outreach or visibility, as well as fewer connections to the Greater Boston community as reasons for their lower levels of involvement.



Synagogues and informal groups anchor Jewish connection

Synagogues remain central hubs for Jewish engagement, not only for religious practice but also for social and cultural connection, especially for families and older adults. Informal or grassroots groups attract a smaller proportion of Jews in Greater Boston, and they provide meaningful spaces for connection, especially among younger adults and those who are not connected in more traditional ways, such as synagogue membership.



Giving and volunteering are common among Greater Boston Jews, though generational differences exist

Charitable giving is widespread among Jews in Greater Boston, with most donors supporting both Jewish and non-Jewish causes. Volunteering is less common than donating, though those who volunteer for Jewish organizations frequently contribute through board or committee service. Generational patterns shape both giving and volunteering: Older adults are more likely to donate and often take on leadership roles within Jewish organizations, while younger adults tend to prioritize non-Jewish causes.

Involvement in Jewish community.

People are connecting to Jewish communal life in Greater Boston through Jewish organizations. Two-thirds (65%) of them have attended in-person or online events, activities, or programs sponsored by Jewish organizations in the 12 months before the survey. Among those who participate in organized Jewish programming, slightly over a quarter (29%) do so every few months, while close to half (47%) rarely take part, only once or twice a year. A quarter of adults participate in Jewish programming once a week or more.

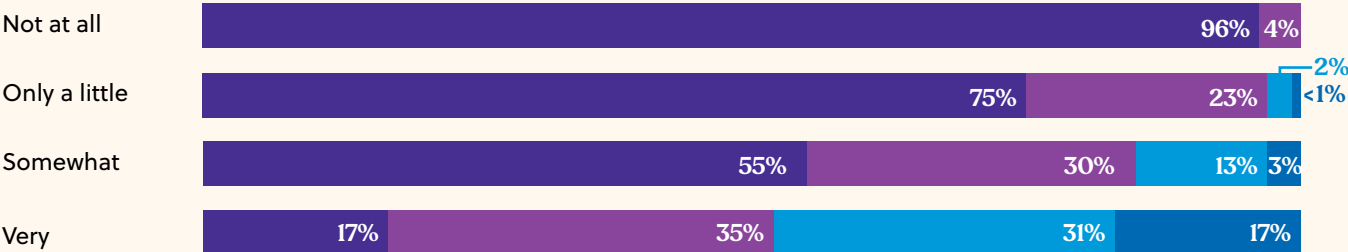
The rate of participation increases greatly among those who say that being part of a Jewish community is important. Jewish adults who say being part of a Jewish community is very important are three times more likely to participate in Jewish programming once a month or more compared with those who say it is somewhat important.

Connection to Jewish community by frequency of participation

Once or twice during the year Once every few months Once or twice a month Once a week or more



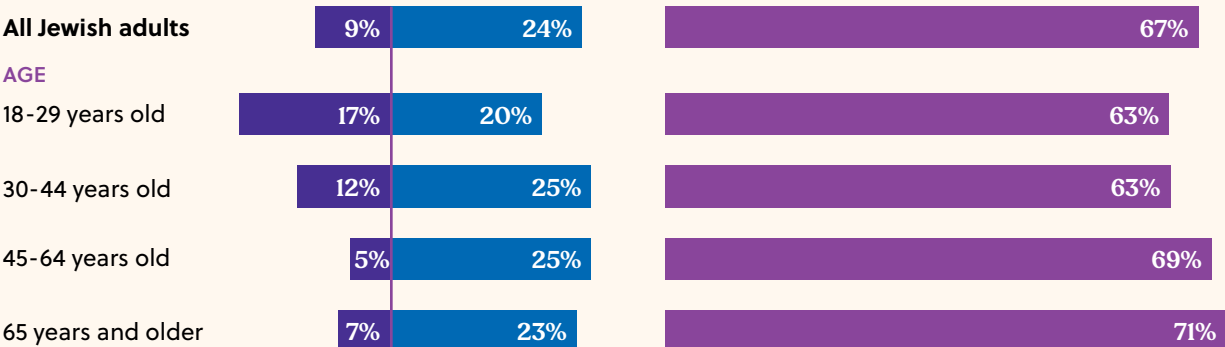
IMPORTANCE OF BEING PART OF A JEWISH COMMUNITY



Following the events of October 7, 2023,¹ national research showed a surge in connections and participation among American Jews.² Similar rates of increased connections and participation are seen among Jewish adults in Greater Boston compared to these national estimates. A quarter (24%) of community members say they became more involved after October 7, while two-thirds (67%) say their involvement remained the same.

Involvement in Jewish life since October 7 by age group

Less engaged More engaged As engaged



Awareness of Jewish programming.

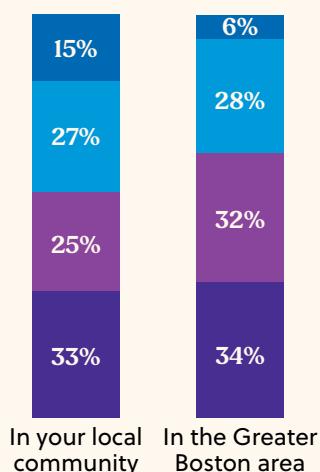
Awareness of Jewish programming is rather low.³ Only four in 10 Jews (42%) say they are very or somewhat aware of programming in their local Jewish community. Awareness of programming in the Greater Boston region is less widespread, with slightly over a third (34%) of individuals being very or somewhat aware. Overall, 40% report that they are not at all aware of local or regional Jewish programming.

Older adults and Jews who are *Deeply Devoted* are most aware of local Jewish programming. Jews who are *Tenuously Tethered* or *Family Focused* are less connected to Jewish organizations and reported the lowest levels of awareness.

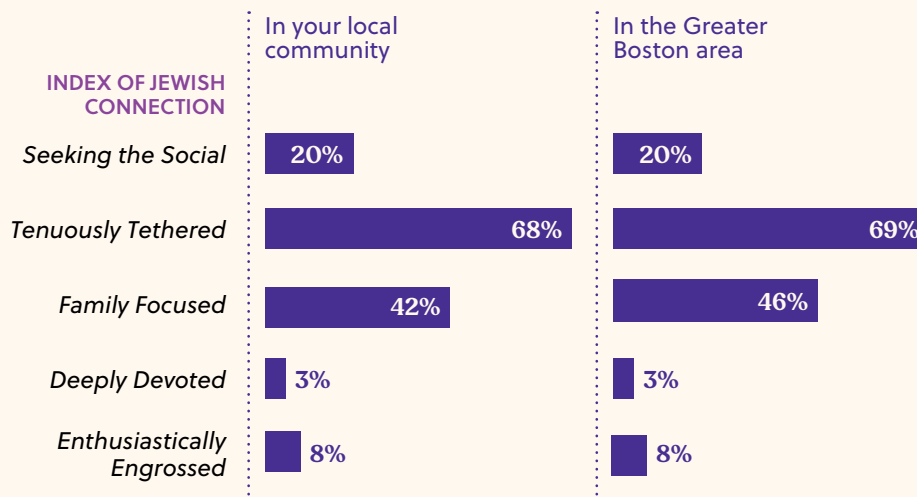
Four in 10 adults say they are not at all aware of programming

Awareness of Jewish events, activities, or programs

- Very aware
- Somewhat aware
- Just a little aware
- Not aware at all



Jews who said they were not at all aware of Jewish events, activities, or programs



In follow-up interviews and focus groups, some community members said there is a need for greater outreach and publicity, especially for people who are more loosely connected to the Jewish community.

“

I do think that every Jewish organization should be striving harder to find the people who are sort of disconnected or just don't know how to get their first foot in the door and make it more accessible, because for people like me, then we can find something and be connected in some way.

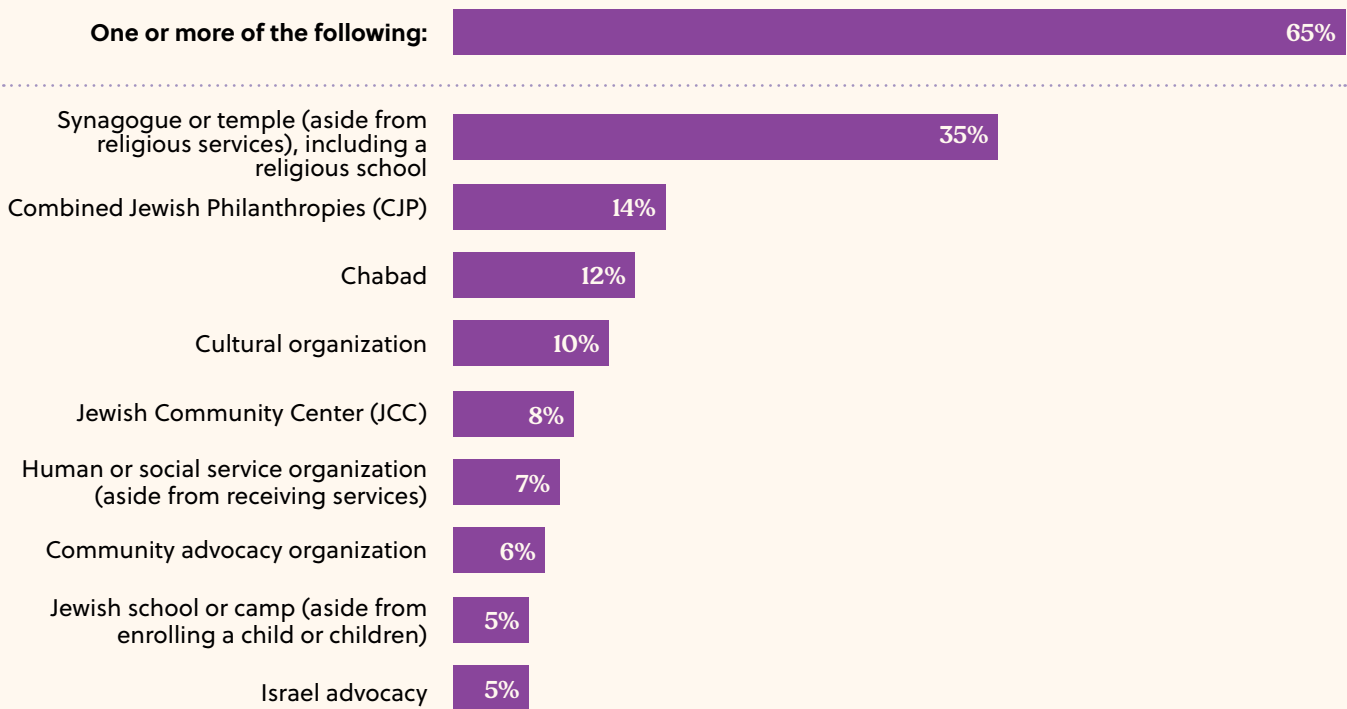
Outreach, publicizing events, more advertisement and notifications. ... It's just I'm not on anybody's radar for whatever reason. I didn't grow up in the community, I don't have kids that go to the schools, so in terms of [not] having those networks, maybe that's part of it.

”

Organizational involvement.

Two-thirds (65%) of Greater Boston Jews interacted with Jewish organizational activities, events, and programs in the 12 months before the survey. Synagogues are the most popular type. Slightly over a third (35%) of people have attended events, activities, or programs other than religious services. In contrast, approximately 10% or less attended other types of Jewish organizational activities, events, and programs, such as cultural, community, or Israel advocacy.

In-person and online involvement in Jewish organizations



For some community members, organizational participation has been a central part of their family life for many years.

“

We participate in Jewish organizations. That’s what my parents did, that’s what their parents did. That just feels like part of my core identity.

My parents were involved and active and I just sort of learned that’s what you do. My kids make fun of me that I can’t say no, but I enjoy it.

For many others, organizational participation and membership, especially in synagogues, create and sustain social circles and friendship networks.

We have sort of created an informal havurah (Jewish friendship circle) of other young families in our neighborhood. But those are all folks that we met through our synagogue, and so we see them in synagogue, participate in religious life with them, and then also informally have that friend network, but it was rooted in our shul (synagogue or place of learning).

”

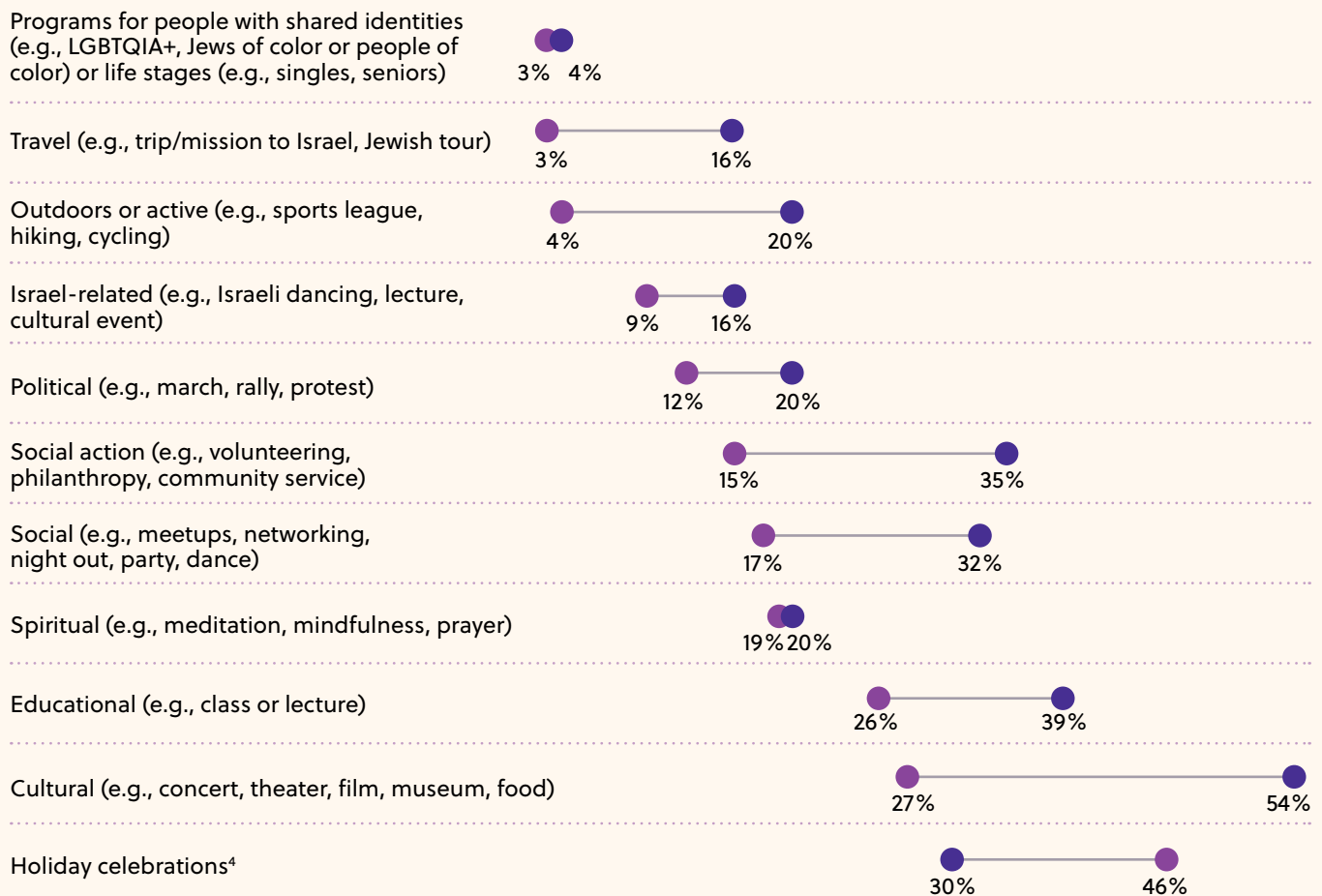
Interest in Jewish programming.

The most common types of Jewish programming attended in the 12 months before the survey were holiday celebrations (46%), cultural events (27%), and educational programs (26%). Fewer than 20% attended spiritual, social gatherings, or social action programs. Approximately 10% attended Israel-related or political events.

Across nearly all types of Jewish programming, interest in programs and events is higher than actual participation. Jews in Greater Boston are most interested in attending cultural events (54%), educational programming (39%), social action events (35%), and social gatherings (32%). Jews who are *Deeply Devoted* and *Enthusiastically Engrossed* report greater interest across nearly all types of Jewish programming compared to others. However, those who are *Deeply Devoted* have greater interest in religious events and holiday celebrations (68%) compared to *Enthusiastically Engrossed* (46%).

Participation and interest in Jewish programming

● Participation ● Interest in participating



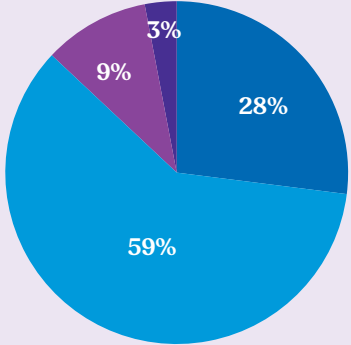
Satisfaction, meaning, and new connections.

Nearly nine in 10 Jews (87%) who participated in Jewish programming in the 12 months before the survey were very or somewhat satisfied with their experience.

Two-thirds (66%) felt the events, programs, and activities provided them with a very or somewhat meaningful experience. Close to half (45%) said the events, programs, and activities helped them create new connections with friends and peers in the Jewish community. These findings are consistent across age groups.

Satisfaction with Jewish programming

- Very dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Very satisfied



Benefits of Jewish programming

Not at all A little Somewhat A lot

Offered you meaningful Jewish experiences



Helped you create new connections with friends and peers in your Jewish community



In addition, Jews with varying degrees of connection to Jewish life are similarly satisfied with the organized programming they have participated in, with those who are *Enthusiastically Engrossed* and *Deeply Devoted* more likely to say they are very satisfied than other groups. The meaningfulness of these Jewish experiences and new connections with friends are strongest among *Enthusiastically Engrossed* and *Deeply Devoted*. Jews living in the North and South Areas were slightly less satisfied with their programmatic offerings.

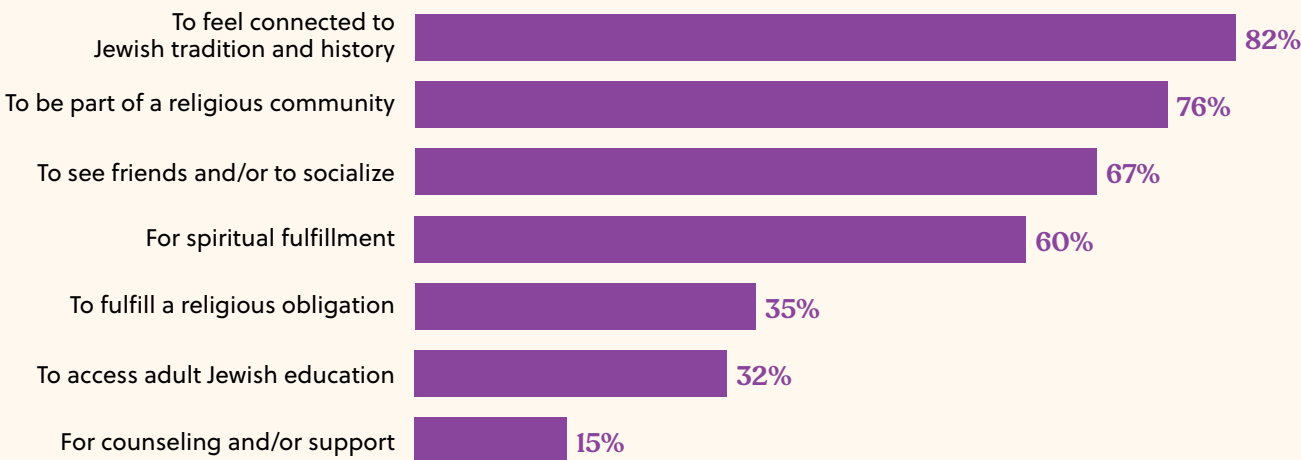


Synagogue membership and regular participation.

One-third (31%) of Jews in Greater Boston say they are, or someone in their household is, a member of or regular participant in a synagogue, representing 26% of all Jewish households.⁵ The main reasons they join or participate include: feeling connected to Jewish history and tradition, being part of a religious community, socializing with friends, and spiritual fulfillment. Parents of children ages 0-17 overwhelmingly said they participate in a synagogue to show their children what it means to be part of a Jewish congregation.

Reasons for being a synagogue member or regular participant

ALL SYNAGOGUE MEMBERS



SYNAGOGUE MEMBERS WHO ARE PARENTS OF CHILDREN AGES 0-17



“

I'm a member of our temple and have been very involved in different aspects. ... Many of the people that come are people that I've gotten to know. Some are quite good friends. Some of them were casual acquaintances. But joining together as the congregation and reciting some of the prayers, singing together, knowing some of their family histories, being supportive when there are needs, I think those are aspects that I would think of as my connection to Jewish community.

”

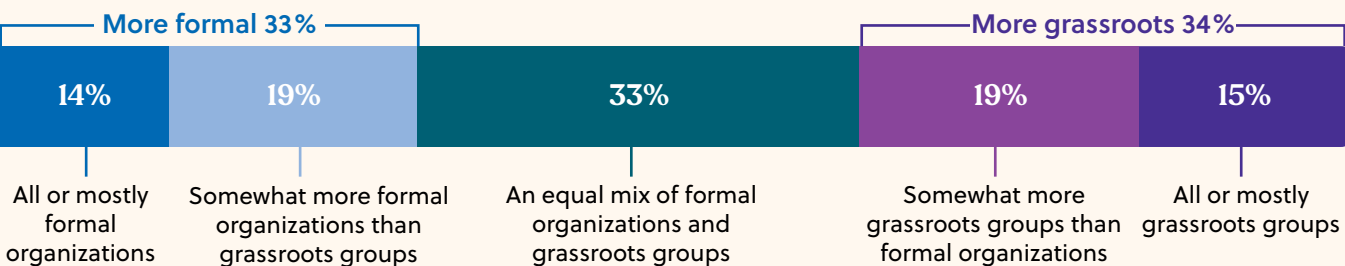
Most people (70%) who attend synagogue events, activities, and programs, excluding religious services, live in a household with a synagogue membership. Attendance at synagogue programming other than religious services is lowest among young adults under 30, while synagogue membership or regular participation is highest among adults ages 45 and older. Synagogue program attendance and membership tend to be highest among Jews who are *Deeply Devoted*. Regionally, synagogue attendance and membership is somewhat higher among those living in MetroNorth West compared to other regions.

Informal and grassroots Jewish groups.

About one in 10 (9%) Jewish adults in Greater Boston say they participate in informal or grassroots Jewish groups, such as a social havurah⁶ or a book club. Among them, one-third (34%) say informal or grassroots groups are their main form of participation. Another third (33%) say they split their participation more or less equally between informal or grassroots groups and more formal groups and organizations. The final third (33%) say formal organizations are their primary form of participation, though they occasionally take part in grassroots groups.

Informal or grassroots participation is most common among younger adults, Jews who are *Enthusiastically Engrossed* and City of Boston residents.

Informal or grassroots Jewish participation



Jewish programming on college campuses

Less than half (41%) of Jewish college students⁷ in Greater Boston say they are very or somewhat aware of Jewish events, activities, and programs on their campus. However, only a small proportion of Jewish college students participate in them on a regular basis, with 13% attending at least once a month and an additional 12% attending a few times a year. Three quarters (75%) of Jewish college students say they seldom or never attend such programming on their campus.

For those college students who do attend Jewish events, activities, and programs on their campus, 81% say their attendance provides them with meaningful Jewish experiences and 94% say their attendance helps them make new connections with Jewish peers.

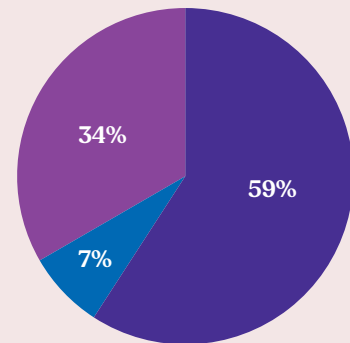


Patterns of giving and volunteering.

Among Jews in Greater Boston, 80% made donations in the 12 months before the survey. Fewer than one in 10 donors (7%) only gave to Jewish organizations and causes, while 34% of donors only gave to non-Jewish organizations and causes. Most donors (59%) gave to both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations and causes.

Jews who gave charitable donations

- Non-Jewish organizations and causes only
- Jewish organizations and causes only
- Both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations and causes



Volunteering tends to be less common than donations among Jews in Greater Boston. Nearly half (46%) volunteered with specific organizations or causes in the 12 months before the survey.

Among them, 14% only volunteered for Jewish organizations and causes, while 51% only volunteered for non-Jewish organizations and causes. Just over one-third (36%) volunteered for both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations and causes.

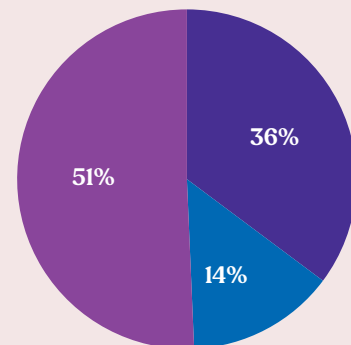
Four in 10 Jews who volunteered for a Jewish organization serve on a board or committee. This type of volunteer work was most common among adults 45 years or older.

Focus group participants serving on boards and committees said they are motivated by contributing to the well-being and health of the Jewish community, especially when they have the skills and the time.

One community member recently joined the board of a local day school, even though her children are too old to attend.

Jews who volunteered their time

- Non-Jewish organizations and causes only
- Jewish organizations and causes only
- Both Jewish and non-Jewish organizations and causes



I agreed to join because I think that how the school is doing is really very much related to how the community is doing.

Another said she uses her professional skills to help.

I also have a child at [a Jewish day school] and I've recently become involved through my profession ... [which] is mental health, and there are mental health groups ... that are happening. So I've gotten involved on a professional level, but it's personally meaningful.



Another participant said he started volunteering after he was asked.

“

It never occurred to me to ask to join or to volunteer. So I basically didn't join until somebody reached out and asked if I would do it.

”

Donating is more common among older adults. Many younger adults who do not make donations say it is not a priority for them. This factor appears to be a stronger driver than affordability.

Among those who donate and volunteer, Jews who are under 45 years old are more drawn to non-Jewish causes than older Jews, as demonstrated by a greater proportion of younger Jews giving their money and time to exclusively non-Jewish causes.

Charitable giving and volunteering by age

	Charitable giving			Volunteering		
	NON-JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS & CAUSES	JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS & CAUSES	JEWISH & NON-JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS & CAUSES	NON-JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS & CAUSES	JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS & CAUSES	JEWISH & NON-JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS & CAUSES
18-29 years old	45%	8%	47%	59%	6%	35%
30-44 years old	42%	11%	47%	59%	16%	25%
45-64 years old	34%	5%	60%	47%	16%	38%
65 years and older	24%	6%	70%	45%	14%	42%

Charitable giving and volunteering are also more common among Jews who are *Enthusiastically Engrossed* and *Deeply Devoted*. They are also relatively more inclined to give their money and time to strictly Jewish causes compared to their peers.

Conclusion.

The findings of this report reveal a vibrant community with varying levels of Jewish communal connection in Greater Boston.

While many Jews engage meaningfully through cultural, educational, and religious programs, as well as philanthropy and volunteerism, others remain on the periphery, often due to limited awareness of opportunities. Satisfaction with Jewish programming is high among those who participate, and interest in different types of Jewish programming often surpasses actual rates of participation, suggesting the potential for deeper and broader engagement. Strengthening outreach, enhancing visibility, and broadening the range of entry points into Jewish life can help bridge this gap. By doing so, the Greater Boston Jewish community can strengthen community bonds across generations.

Did you know?

This report is part of a series of 13 reports across a range of topics that are important to the Greater Boston Jewish community. To explore insights, access additional resources, and read the other reports, visit cjp.org/CommunityStudy2025.

Notes.

1. On October 7, 2023, Hamas attacked Israel, killing more than 1,200 Israelis and other nationals living in Israel, kidnapping more than 250 people, the largest single-day massacre of Jews since the Holocaust. The Greater Boston Jewish Community Study was conducted from December 2024-April 2025, more than a year after the initial attack on October 7 and during the period of war between Hamas and Israel. While some respondents may answer questions about Israel differently if taking the survey today than they did during the original survey period, primary survey themes and patterns would likely remain the same.
2. At the time of this survey and publication of this report, national research showed an increase in involvement in Jewish life after October 7, 2023. See for example **JFNA 2025 Survey of Jewish Life since October 7th.**
3. In addition to awareness, accessibility to Jewish programming is another factor that affects involvement in Jewish communal life. This could include affordability, geographic accessibility, and disability accommodations. The **Accessibility and Barriers** report has additional findings related to these matters.
4. Survey participants were asked "Over the past year, have you attended any of the following types of events, activities, or programs sponsored by a Jewish organization, whether in person or online?" Holiday celebrations. However, the question about interest was asked differently. Survey participants were prompted: "Looking forward, which of the following types of Jewish events, activities, and programs are you most interested in attending, regardless of whether you have done so in the past or not." Religious (aside from a religious service)/ Holiday celebrations.
5. Only 4% of Jews in Greater Boston say they or someone else in their household is a regular participant or member of a JCC.
6. A havurah is a small, informal fellowship or group of Jewish friends who gather regularly for shared experiences like prayer, study, holiday celebrations, social events, and social action, stemming from the Hebrew word *haver*, meaning "friend" or "companion."
7. Respondents who are college and university students are included in all three sampling strata: Jewish community lists, modeled likely Jewish households, and the residual address-based sampling frame. These students may be somewhat underrepresented in the full sample, particularly among the youngest undergraduates who are more likely to live in campus dormitories, while also slightly overrepresenting older undergraduate and graduate students, such as those living in off-campus housing.