



Building Resilient Jewish Communities: **A Jewish Response to the Coronavirus Crisis**

HIGHLIGHTS FROM BRANDEIS
RESEARCH STUDY

Brandeis

COHEN CENTER FOR
MODERN JEWISH STUDIES
STEINHARDT SOCIAL
RESEARCH INSTITUTE

100 The **Associated**
Jewish Federation of Baltimore



Study Overview

- Brandeis University: Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies
- Aggregate data includes over 15,000 respondents from across 10 communities
- Baltimore report is based on data from 1,325 local respondents collected online between May 21 and June 23, 2020
- Study is not representative of Baltimore Jewish community – sample includes a larger proportion of synagogue members, as well as Federation donors

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Five Stories and Emerging Themes

Financial Well-Being

“My business is virtually shut down, I don’t know what I am going to do if people continue to work from home.”

Financial Well-Being

RESPONDENTS IN MORE DIFFICULT FINANCIAL SITUATIONS PRIOR TO THE CRISIS WERE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE THEIR FINANCIAL SITUATIONS WORSEN. YOUNG ADULTS FEEL PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE.

KEY DATA:

26% of all respondents reported that their financial situation worsened.

Younger respondents were more likely to be concerned about their immediate needs.

35% of respondents with not enough money pre-pandemic indicated that their financial situation worsened.

Coping and Emotional Health

“The biggest personal impact has been being forced to move back home. Although it is nice to spend time with my family, this is not what I anticipated. It was a lot more difficult to adjust to life at home again and to get work done at home.”

Coping and Emotional Health

THE PANDEMIC HAS HAD THE MOST SIGNIFICANT MENTAL HEALTH IMPACT ON YOUNG ADULTS AND ADULTS WITH FINANCIAL CHALLENGES.

KEY DATA:

55% of adults between 18-34 indicated that they were experiencing emotional or mental difficulties that hurt their ability to live day-to-day life in past week (compared with 16% of adults ages 75 and older).

Adults under age 35 and those ages 75 and older had the greatest need for any services.



Relationships with Jewish Organizations

“I live by myself and have been working from home. The vast majority of my social interactions have been by phone, zoom or computer. I see people in the real world when I go for daily walks and when I go grocery shopping every couple of weeks. This has been a very isolating time.”

Relationships with Jewish Organizations

RESPONDENTS WHO WERE HIGHLY ENGAGED IN JEWISH COMMUNAL LIFE PRIOR TO THE PANDEMIC WERE MORE LIKELY TO BE CONTACTED BY JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS THAN THOSE WHO WERE LESS ENGAGED.

KEY DATA:

32% of respondents were not contacted by any Jewish organization since the start of the crisis.

28% of Jewish adults were contacted by both a Jewish organization and a synagogue.



Charitable Support

*“I have a lot more gratitude
for the blessings in my life and a
greater appreciation of all the good
and kindnesses that human beings
can be capable of.”*

Charitable Support

SUPPORT FOR JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS WAS STABLE WITH THE POTENTIAL FOR SOME GROWTH, AS MOST RESPONDENTS EXPECTED TO INCREASE OR MAINTAIN THE AMOUNT THEY GIVE TO JEWISH CAUSES.

KEY DATA:

Among the 80% of respondents who donated to a Jewish cause in 2019, **15% planned to increase their Jewish giving, and 61% planned to keep it the same.**

Interest in causes related to social justice, human service needs, politics and health care and research increased during the pandemic.



Online Jewish Life

*“Understanding the power
of a supportive Jewish
community. Nice to not feel alone.”*

Online Jewish Life

ONLINE JEWISH LIFE HAD THE GREATEST APPEAL FOR THOSE WHO WERE ENGAGED IN JEWISH LIFE PRIOR TO THE PANDEMIC AND SERVED AS A CRITICAL LINK TO MAINTAIN JEWISH CONNECTIONS IN THE ABSENCE OF IN-PERSON ACTIVITIES.

KEY DATA:

About **four out of five Jewish adults** participated in some form of online Jewish life in the month preceding the survey (April-May).

Online Jewish life was more effective at connecting participants to programs than people – 56% said they were exposed to new programs, while 15% said they were exposed to new people.



