

City of Arts & Innovation

Board of Library Trustees

TO: BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

DATE: AUGUST 10, 2026

FROM: RIVERSIDE PUBLIC LIBRARY

WARDS: ALL

SUBJECT: EVERY STORY COUNTS

ISSUE: Receive an update on the Every Story Counts statewide library survey.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Library Trustees receive an update on the Every Story Counts statewide library survey.

BACKGROUND:

The Riverside Public Library participated in Every Story Counts, a California State Library statewide initiative to encourage library users from across the state to share their feedback on their local libraries. English and Spanish language surveys were available in digital and print formats from January 25-31, 2026. This program was supported by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian.

Respondents were asked the following questions:

1. Tell us about your experience at the library! (Please select all that apply)
 - I feel welcome.
 - I connect with other people.
 - I trust the information from the library.
 - I plan to come back.
 - Other (Fill in the box)
2. Please tell us how you use the library (including in the building, in the community, or online etc). I use the library to... (Please select all that apply):
 - Borrow items (*For example, books, magazines, movies, parks pass, eBooks, or other items*)
 - Get information (*For example, from a person, from books, or from online resources*)
 - Attend programs and events (*For example, story times, youth/teen programs, author talks, book clubs, community and library events*)
 - Learn something or try something new (*For example, for school, work, fun, new hobbies, new experiences, new skills*)

- Be creative (*For example, writing, arts and crafts, STEAM/makerspace*)
- Support my health and well-being (*For example, movement and exercise, mindfulness, cooking, telehealth, physical and mental health resources*)
- Prepare for a job or career (*For example, search and apply for a job, create a résumé, build job skills, explore career, prepare for a test or certification, earn a diploma*)
- Use the library space (*For example, to read, to study or work, for quiet*)
- Spend time with people (*For example, study groups, programs, use meeting room, hang out, play games*)
- Access services (*For example, computers, literacy and ESL services, homework help, seek legal help, connect with community organizations, citizenship support*)
- Do personal paperwork and routine tasks (*For example, printing, copying/scanning, filling out forms, checking email*)
- Daily and essential needs (*For example, shelter, Wi-Fi, air conditioning/ heat, charging, restrooms, community support during emergencies*)
- Other (Please tell us!) (Fill in box)

3. Please tell us, are you:

- Older Adult (65+)
- Adult (18+)
- Teen (12-17)
- Child (0-11)

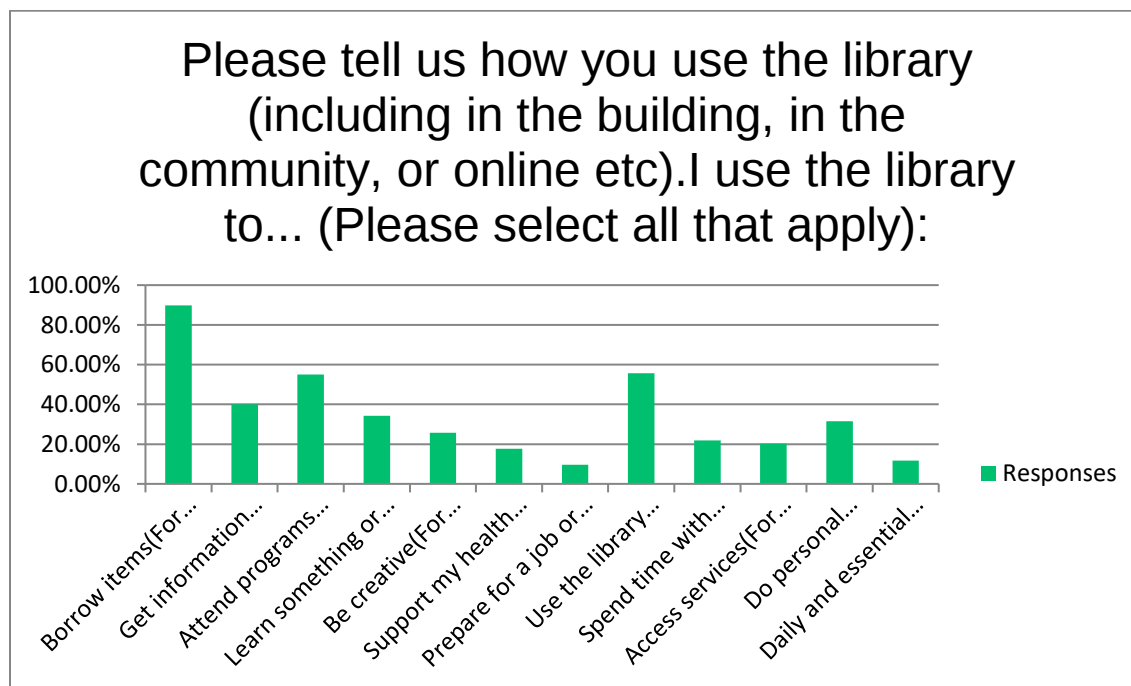
4. Every story counts! Please share anything else you'd like to tell us about how you use the library.

DISCUSSION:

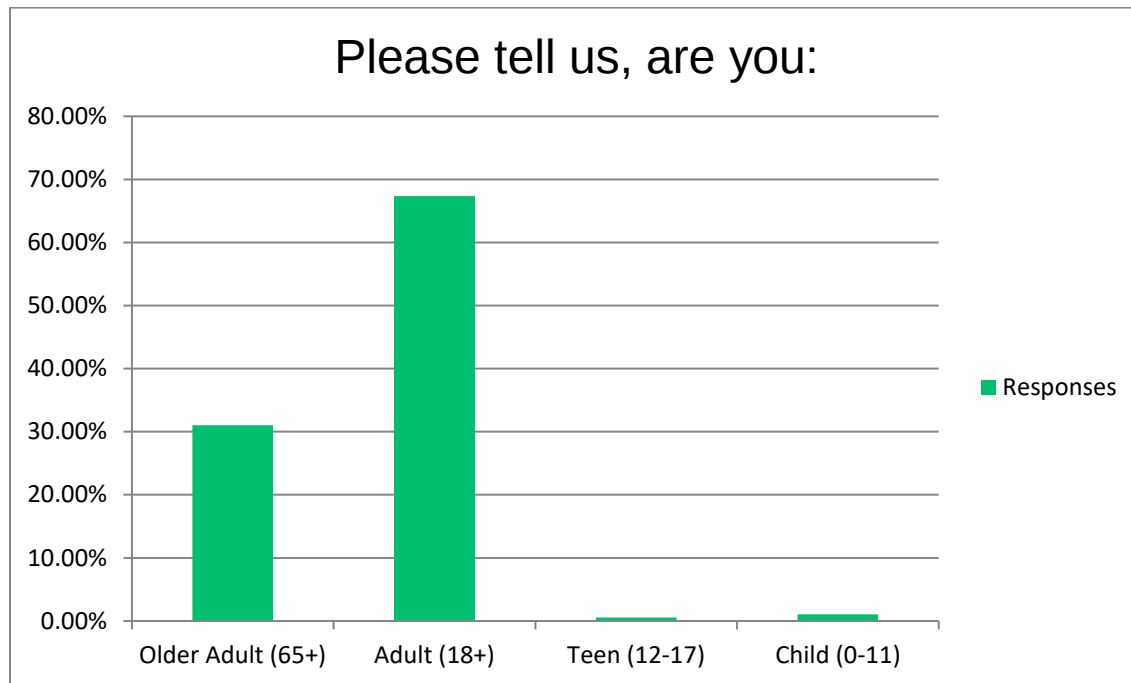
Across the state, there were 16,000 respondents from 99 library jurisdictions. Riverside Public Library had 190 responses. For “Question 1”, tell us about your experience at the library, the survey showed that (92%) felt welcomed, (32%) connected with other people, (67%) trusted the information from the library, and (81%) planned to come back.



For Question 2, customers indicated the top three reasons they use the library are to borrow items (90%), use the library space (56%), and attend programs and events (55%).



Question 3 indicated that most respondents were Adults ages 18-64.



In Question 4, 117 respondents shared a variety of comments about the Riverside Public Library. Responses included:

- “I am a childcare worker and I like to take children to experience the library.”
- “Although I visit most libraries in the system, I am much more an online user.”
- “My kids and I use the library a lot and appreciate everything. I’m a little concerned that there may be moves down the line to go away from print resources to digital. No data to back this, but I believe folks who read frequently have generally stuck to print and that more casual readers may think they prefer digital but won’t use the resources as much. Not a Luddite here. Just hoping the library won’t just assume that future thinking requires moving away from print. Thanks!”
- “Referring to the kids activities. It has been amazing. Have been taking my kids for 10 years now. I recommend it to everyone. I can’t always attend all the activities because of work but I show up when I can. The summer events are great. Never have I seen so many activities offered from a public library. Please continue the activities.”
- “Although I don’t live in Riverside, but work here in the City, Riverside’s library has been there as a tremendous resource for me and my family for the 20+ years I’ve been working here. From checking out children’s books and books on CDs to help my kids to learn and enjoy reading, to being able to discover new hobbies for myself (California history, photography, music, cooking, home improvement), to developing new skills for my career. I wish we had as wonderful a library in my city as the City of Riverside has. Thank you Riverside Library!”
- “Keep up the good work! The 2026 library offers many new things, all much appreciated by this “older” (and wiser?) library visitor.”
- “I recently moved to Riverside from out of state and the library has provided a way for me to connect with the community.”

As part of the Every Story Counts survey, the California State Library provided each participating jurisdiction with English and Spanish flyers highlighting our unique survey results.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact with this item.

Prepared and Approved by: Erin Christmas, Library Director

Attachment:

Attachment 1: English Flyer

Attachment 2: Spanish Flyer