

Some Important Findings from the 2016 Jewish Federation of Broward County Jewish Community Study

The purpose of this study was to provide information that is useful for planning purposes for the entire Broward Jewish community. The study is based upon 1,200 random telephone interviews with households and includes both households who are known to the community and households who are unknown.

Demographics

- Broward remains the eighth largest American Jewish community and the largest Jewish community in Florida.
- The number of Jews in Broward decreased from 243,000 in 1997 to 149,000 in 2016. The percentage of Broward's population that is Jewish decreased from 16% in 1997 to 8% in 2016, mostly due to mortality in the large elderly population. About 900 Jewish households move into Broward annually.
- From 1997 to 2016, the Jewish population in all areas of Broward decreased, except in the Northwest, which experienced a 13% increase in Jewish households. 40% of Jewish households live south of I-595.
- The percentage of snowbird households (3-7 months of the year in Broward) decreased from 9% in 1997 to 4% in 2016.
- 19% of adults in Jewish households are foreign born. 41% of the foreign born are under age 50. 86% of the foreign born are US citizens compared to 44% of all foreign born persons in Broward.
- Broward has 13,200 Hispanic Jewish adults, almost as many as the 14,700 in Miami. Broward has 13,600 Israeli adults, compared to 9,000 in Miami.
- 11% of Jewish households in Broward are LGBT.
- The percentage of the population age 65 and over decreased from 46% in 1997 to 27% in 2016, from 123,500 persons to 46,500 persons. The number of persons age 75 and over decreased from 77,000 in 1997 to 23,000 in 2016.
- While the number of children age 12 and under decreased from 29,000 in 1997 to 17,500 in 2016, the number of teenagers remained about constant at 10,000.
- In 1997, 40% of adults age 18-34 were married. In 2016, it is 14%. As a result, households are having children later in life and joining synagogues and becoming more active members of the community later in life.
- The percentage of Jews with a college degree increased from 35% in 1997 to 61% in 2016. The 61% compares to 30% for all residents of Broward County.
- Median Jewish household income increased from \$60,000 in 1997 to \$82,000 in 2016 (adjusted for inflation). The \$82,000 compares to \$52,000 for all residents of Broward County.

Jewish Connectivity

- The number of Orthodox Jews decreased by 33% from 1997-2016.
- 92% of respondents say being Jewish is either very or somewhat important to them.
- The percentage of Jews observing home religious practices and attending services has not changed significantly since 1997. For example, the percentage of households who always/usually participate in a Passover Seder was 75% in 1997 and is now 78%.
- While the percentage of couples who are intermarried has increased from 18% to 23%, Broward remains well below average on this measure.
- Synagogue membership, in contrast to almost every other American comparison Jewish community, increased from 27% in 1997 to 34% in 2016, although this is still well below average among the comparison Jewish communities. The increase can be attributed to the decrease in Broward's elderly population and the growth of Chabad.
- Attending Jewish day school, Jewish overnight camp, Jewish teenage youth group, and college Hillel results in adults who exhibit more Jewish behaviors.
- Membership in Jewish organizations (other than synagogues and JCCs) has decreased from 37% to 20%. This reflects the significant decrease in the number of elderly living in housing developments with Jewish organizations that operated within the housing developments.
- 93% of Jewish households are involved Jewishly in some way. (Follow at least one home religious practice and/or attend synagogue at least once per year and/or join a synagogue, JCC, or Jewish organization and/or donate to a Jewish charity).
- 28% of respondents attended some kind of organized adult Jewish education class or program in the past year.

Israel/Holocaust

- The connections with Israel are strong. As of 2016, 61% of households have been to Israel, compared to 52% in 1997.
- In 2016, 22% of households with children have sent at least one child to Israel.
- 55% of respondents are extremely or very attached to Israel.
- 27% of households contain a survivor, the child of a survivor or the grandchild of a survivor.

The study was conducted by Dr. Ira M. Sheskin, Ph.D. from the University of Miami for the Jewish Federation of Broward County. Dr. Sheskin has conducted more than 45 similar studies in Jewish communities around the country.