Public Libraries –
A Wise Investment

A Return on Investment Study of Colorado Libraries

March 2009

Nicolle Steffen
Zeth Lietzau
Keith Curry Lance
Amanda Rybin
Carla Molliconi

A CLOSER LOOK

.ıllLRS
Library Research Service

Public Libraries –
A Wise Investment
A Return on Investment Study of Colorado Libraries

March 2009

by
Nicolle Steffen
Zeth Lietzau
Keith Curry Lance
Amanda Rybin
Carla Molliconi

Colorado State Library

UNIVERSITY OF DENVER
Morgridge College of Education

For more information about this report, contact:

cde Improving Academic Achievement

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

Other library staff that supported the project include:

- Jo Sarling and Beth Elder, Denver Public Library
- Shana Wade, Mesa County Libraries
- Susan Dobbs and Ann Myers, Rangeview Library District
- Bonnie F. McCune, Colorado State Library

To one and all: *Thank You!*

Preface

We all know that libraries are extremely valuable to our communities. But this return on investment (ROI) study gives that valuation a whole new dimension—it demonstrates the worth of public libraries in terms of dollars-and-cents. We are using a traditional business measure—return on investment—to put a value on library service. I think the study demonstrates that libraries do a tremendous job of managing their resources to meet the needs of the communities they serve. They are a wise investment.

Libraries combine the best of business practices, like economy of scale and resource management, and marry those to the best qualities of our society, to create a resource that benefits everyone. In terms of value for your money, you can't get any better than that.

Most of the libraries came out with a ratio of about five-to-one. That means for every dollar invested in public libraries, the community realizes five dollars in value. That's an incredible return on investment! And that's only what we can measure in term of dollars-and-cents.

Nicolle Steffen, Director
Library Research Service

After reviewing the literature of ROI studies done elsewhere, we chose a methodology similar to that used in studies in Florida and Pennsylvania that allowed library patrons to place a value on their library services. The primary factor in our study relied on in-library survey respondents' estimations of how much they would pay to meet their information needs if the library did not exist.

In other words, we let the library patrons tell us how much their library was worth to them. That they so strongly and so consistently provided us with a high perceived return on investment is a testament to the quality of the public libraries participating in this study.

If anything, the results we received from the respondents are a conservative estimation. When a patron's response was unclear, we used the lowest value that could be interpreted from their response. Additionally, we did not factor in the value of additional travel time required to meet their information needs elsewhere. We measured only the dollars that libraries are saving their patrons, when undoubtedly they are also saving the time of the user.

Zeth Lietzau, Associate Director
Library Research Service

Executive Summary

In spring 2006, a need was identified in Colorado to describe the variety of benefits delivered by public libraries to their patrons and to quantify the return on investment to taxpayers for monies invested in public libraries. To provide this data, the Library Research Service (LRS) undertook *What's It Worth to You? A Return on Investment Study of Selected Colorado Public Libraries* in May 2006. Using a multiple case study approach, this research was designed to create such information for eight public libraries, representing geographically, economically, and demographically diverse regions of Colorado. Libraries studied include Cortez Public Library, Denver Public Library, Douglas County Libraries, Eagle Valley Library District, Fort Morgan Public Library, Mesa County Public Library District, Montrose Library District, and Rangeview Library District.

Data were gathered using a combination of questionnaires, key informant interviews, and available data sources. Almost 5,000 Colorado residents responded to the survey questionnaire; in addition, library staff and community members were interviewed as key informants about their libraries' services and their economic value. Available data about library staff expenditures—including salaries, wages, and benefits—and library spending with vendors and contractors were obtained from the participating libraries.

For most of the libraries participating in the study, the return on investment (ROI) was approximately five to one---that is, for every $1.00 spent on public libraries, $5.00 of value was realized by taxpayers. Two outliers among the participating libraries—Cortez and Fort Morgan—demonstrated higher ratios, due to the pronounced discrepancy between who funds these libraries (i.e., municipal governments) and who uses them (i.e., county residents). While non-resident use is a factor for all public libraries, in these cases, it had an extreme impact on the study results.

Colorado Public Library
Return on Investment (ROI) Findings Summary

Library	ROI per $1.00
*Cortez Public Library**	*$31.07*
*Fort Morgan Public Library**	*$8.80*
Montrose Library District	$5.33
Douglas County Libraries (District)	$5.02
Denver Public Library	$4.96
Rangeview Library District (Adams County)	$4.81
Mesa County Public Library District	$4.57
Eagle Valley Library District	$4.28
Median	**$4.99**

An analysis of the many ROI studies conducted nationwide reveals that the differences in their resulting ROI ratios are readily understood by considering what returns and which investments are included as well as which services are addressed and which "market value" multipliers are used.

An analysis of patterns in various types of library use reported by respondents for participating libraries also revealed notable variations. Generally, it appears that the setting of a library—

whether it is located in a metropolitan or non-metropolitan area and whether it is a central city or a suburb—is strongly associated with these patterns (e.g., higher circulation rates for non-print formats, such as audio books and DVDs, greater use of library computers to access Web resources). Notably, the reported incidence of in-library use of materials varied little among the participating libraries.

To find out more about this Colorado ROI study and read this report and reports for the eight participating public libraries, go to: http://www.lrs.org/public/roi/ and see **Public Libraries – A Wise Investment**.

Introduction

In an era of ever-increasing scrutiny of taxes and the public institutions and services they fund, administrators are exploring more creative ways to measure and to communicate the value of their institutions and the services they provide. Public libraries are no exception. From the small public library serving an isolated rural community to the large metropolitan library with regional scope, library decision-makers are finding ways to demonstrate their value to the communities they serve.

One of the ways libraries throughout the U.S. are measuring the value to their communities is by using return on investment or ROI. This standard business principal measures a business's profitability. Simply put, it compares costs to profits and expresses it as a percentage or ratio. "There are multiple variations on ROI (return on investment), but the essential portion of the calculus involves a comparison between the initial outlay and the expected return…This of course does not take into account the benefits of intangibles that are not immediately quantifiable."[1] For a public institution, like a library, ROI measures the "value" a community realizes by the investment of tax dollars in that institution. That is, it puts a dollars-and-cents value on the materials and services provided by the public library.

Project Origins

This ROI study was conceived to meet the need to put a dollar-and-cents value on public library service in Colorado. Requests from the field were the impetus for undertaking an ROI study in Colorado. Two public library directors, James LaRue and Mike Sawyer, were supporters of the project from the beginning and, not surprisingly, their libraries, Douglas County Libraries and Rangeview Library District, became key partners in this study. In addition, ROI studies focusing on libraries were being done around the country on the individual library, consortia, and state level. Based on this demand, the Library Research Service (LRS), a unit of the State Library at the Colorado Department of Education, undertook a ROI study unique to the state.

Project Goals & Objectives

The principal goal of this project was to measure the return on investment to the state's taxpayers of their annual support of selected Colorado public libraries. This was accomplished by gathering data needed to determine:
- o   time and money costs to patrons of using public libraries;
- o   time, money, and other costs to patron of using alternatives to public library;
- o   benefits lost by users who would not use alternatives to public libraries;
- o   total revenue investment in public libraries;
- o   total measurable outputs of public libraries; and
- o   revenues lost by vendors, contractors, and others who could not do business with public libraries.

Some needed data was available from participating libraries, while other data were collected by surveying patrons. The key ROI ratio was calculated for each participating library by dividing total measurable outputs by total revenue investment.

A secondary goal of the project was to determine relationships between library use and a) selected economic activities and b) selected educational activities. This was achieved by conducting key informant interviews of library staff and community members. The findings of those interviews are appended to this report.

---

[1] Fool.com

The third project goal was to share the study's findings with participating libraries and to extend its benefits to all Colorado libraries. The fulfillment of this ongoing goal was facilitated by creating web pages about the project, including individual library reports and an online calculator. Individual library reports included both the overall results for each community as well as a breakdown of those results for key demographic groups (gender, age, race/ethnicity, educational attainment, income). The online calculator enables a Colorado library that did not participate in the study to identify its closest peer among the participants in the study and, using data for that library as well as the non-participating library in question, to estimate its ROI ratio.

Participating Libraries

Because it was not feasible to study all Colorado public libraries, a case study approach was used. To increase the potential for non-participating libraries to extrapolate from the results, a concerted effort was made to involve several libraries representing the diverse communities of the state. Such diversity was achieved, as the participating libraries include ones on the metropolitan Front Range, in non-metropolitan communities on the Eastern Plains, in the Mountains/Western Slope, and in metropolitan and resort areas in the latter region. The eight libraries, their legal service area (LSA) population, their general location, metropolitan status, and community type are listed in Introduction—Table 1.

Table 1
Participating Libraries and Key Characteristics

Library	LSA Population	Location	Metropolitan Status	Community Type
Cortez Public Library	8,550	Mountains	Non-Metropolitan	Rural
Denver Public Library	571,848	Front Range	Metropolitan	Urban
Douglas County Libraries (District)	251,418	Front Range	Metropolitan	Suburban
Eagle Valley Library District	40,107	Mountains	Non-Metropolitan	Resort
Fort Morgan Public Library	10,968	Eastern Plains	Non-Metropolitan	Rural
Mesa County Public Library District	130,662	Western Slope	Metropolitan	Urban/Rural
Montrose Library District	37,147	Mountains	Non-Metropolitan	Rural
Rangeview Library District (Adams County)	302,907	Front Range	Metropolitan	Suburban

Data Collection Methods

Data for this study was gathered from four sources, the 2006 Public Library Annual Report, library and patron surveys, and key informant interviews.

- **2006 Public Library Annual Report** – An existing data collection conducted every year, this online survey is required by state statute and is the official state and federal report for

public library statistics. This report provided information about income and visits, as well as key characteristics about the libraries.[2]

- **Library Survey** – Completed by library staff in the fall of 2006, the library survey supplied details about each library's expenditures broken down by local, state, and national spending. (See Appendix A.)
- **Patron Survey** – In March and April of 2007, paper surveys were distributed randomly to library patrons at each library. In addition, the survey was available online and linked to on each library's website. The patron survey collected data about usage habits, resources and services, alternative information sources, and demographics. (See Appendix B.)
- **Key Informant Interviews** – With contact information supplied by each library, LRS staff conducted key informant interviews during the summer of 2007. The interviews with library staff and community members supplied the stories behind the data, giving illustrative examples and details about the value expressed in the dollars-and-cents ROI. (See Appendix E.)

Potential Benefits of the Study

The data resulting from this study can equip administrators and advocates for the participating libraries to profile their library users and patterns of use, to describe the variety of benefits delivered by those libraries to their patrons, and to quantify the return on investment to taxpayers for every dollar invested in public libraries. For public libraries, locally and at the state level, to gain additional funding, administrators and advocates must be equipped to demonstrate that libraries are a good investment of limited public funds. To the extent that the study's findings are extrapolated to all public libraries in the state, they will contribute the reputation of the state's public libraries as a good value for the money invested in them.

---

[2] 2006 Public Library Annual Report available at www.LRS.org.

Methodology

This study follows a model of contingent valuation similar to that used in state-wide studies in Florida and Pennsylvania to determine a return on investment (ROI) for the libraries included. Contingent valuation is an economic technique often used for the valuation of non-market resources. We calculated this figure by examining the ramifications of not having a public library for the communities served.

We did not have funding to pursue a state-wide study, nor to attempt a random sample of residents of the libraries that participated in this study. Thus, the bulk of the data that we used in our study was provided from a patron survey distributed by the participating libraries to random visitors. The bulk of responses allowed us to create a picture of a representative visit to the participating library, from which we extrapolated to the entirety of visits for that library.

The following factors were included in our analysis:

Cost to Use Alternatives

If the library did not exist, most users would have tried to meet their needs from an alternate source. This is the estimated amount of money that would have been spent using that alternative.

Respondents were asked how they would fill their information needs if the library had not existed – those that said they would have tried to get the information from another source were then asked approximately how much money it would have cost for them to use another source. Each visitor that would have attempted to get their information by using another source was given an "alternative cost" value that matched their response to the question asking the amount of money they would have spent on their alternative. Respondents who said they either would not have tried to get the information elsewhere, or would not have known where else to get the information were given a value of zero for their alternative cost.

Some respondents said that they would have tried to find the information elsewhere, but skipped the question asking how much money they would have spent on retrieving the information from another source. For these patrons, we determined their alternative cost value by comparing them with similar visitors to their library. Respondents were asked their primary reason for visiting the library. For each possible reason at each library, we calculated a mean alternate cost from respondents who answered the cost of obtaining the information elsewhere. We used this value for respondents who visited the library for the same purpose, but did not provide an alternative cost. Once all respondents were assigned an alternative cost value, we found the mean alternative cost per visit for each library. The final "cost to use alternatives" value is derived by multiplying this average alternative cost by the number of annual visits for that library.

Lost Use

Some users said they would not have tried to meet their needs with another source, or would not have known where else to go. "Lost use" is the estimated value of the direct benefit that they would not have received if the library did not exist.

Similar to the calculations for cost to use alternatives, we created a lost use value for each survey respondent. For those who said they would have found their information elsewhere, we provided a lost use value of zero. For those who would not have met their needs with another source, we determined the lost use value by comparing them with similar visitors to their library. For these visitors, we used a lost use value of the mean alternate cost for respondents who visited the

library for similar reasons, but would have found their information elsewhere. Once all respondents were assigned a lost use value, we found the mean alternative cost per visit for each library. The final lost use value is derived by multiplying this average alternative cost by the number of annual visits for that library.

Direct Local Expenditures

The libraries that participated in this study purchased goods and services from businesses and individuals in their local communities. These contributions to community businesses would not have been made if the library did not exist. Dollar figures for expenditures on goods and services within the library's legal service area were provided by participating libraries.

Compensation for Library Staff

If the library did not exist, staff members would not receive compensation. Annual staff expenditures were provided by participating libraries.

Halo Spending

Purchases made by library users from vendors and business that are located close to the library. A study conducted in the United Kingdom found that approximately 23 percent of these purchases would not occur if the library did not exist.[3]

Differences from Florida and Pennsylvania

There are a few differences between our study and the statewide studies conducted in Florida and Pennsylvania. First, we used a multiple case study approach for particular libraries. Where their sample consisted of random respondents from throughout the state, ours used actual visitors to participating libraries. Rather than getting a snapshot of the "typical" resident of the study area, we found the typical library visitor.

The values used for "direct local expenditures" for the statewide studies consisted of any money spent within the state. Since we were studying individual library systems, our direct local expenditures figures only included spending within the library's legal service area.

Other studies have included pass through spending as well as halo spending when determining peripheral benefits to the local community. Pass through spending includes spending on local business that occurs within the library (for example, buying coffee from an outside vendor, whose shop is located in the library). Respondents may have included this figure in their responses to halo spending, but we did not directly address this.

Some studies have also included time as a factor in determining the cost to use alternatives, by assigning a dollar value to the respondents' time, and adding the value of the time they spent meeting their information needs through alternative methods. We took a more conservative approach of using solely the amount that they told us they would spend if they needed to meet their information needs elsewhere.

---

[3] Proctor, Richard, Bob Usherwood, and Gill Sobczyk. *What Happens When a Public Library Service Closes Down?* Library Management 18, no. 1 (1997): 59-64.

Extrapolating to the State

As this study progressed, there were requests for a statewide ROI number. In an attempt to extrapolate a ROI number to the entire state, we went through the following process. First, we looked at descriptive information for all of the public libraries in the state, and used this information to choose two peers from the group of eight libraries that participated in the study, identified as primary and secondary peers. To calculate ROI for each library in the state, we calculated the totals of the pieces of the total return as follows:

- **Cost to use alternatives** = number of visits x peer average alternative cost x percent of peer's visits where patron would have used an alternative source
- **Lost Use** = number of visits x peer average lost use cost x percent of peer's visits where patron would have **not** used an alternative source
- **Direct Local Expenditures** = total operating expenditures x percent of peer's operating expenditures spent locally
- **Compensation for Staff** = total staff expenditures
- **Halo Spending** = visits x average peer's amount spent elsewhere x 23%

We added a third, very conservative, 'peer' by using the ratios for the participating library that provided the lowest ROI ratio. We then divided the sum of the total returns by the total local operating income for the library to find the ROI.

For this process, we excluded school/public combined libraries and the Northeast Colorado Bookmobile, as their usage and funding patterns are irregular when compared to more traditionally organized public libraries.

Once we had an ROI number for each library, we weighted each library's figure based on its population size. We used this to produce three numbers for the state:

- Primary – this number is based on extrapolating each library's data from the study results for its 'primary' peer, or the library that we felt was most closely related to it
- Secondary – more conservative, this number is based on extrapolating each library's data from the study results of either its 'primary' or 'secondary' peer, whichever was lower
- Conservative – most conservative, this number is based on extrapolating each library's data from the study results for the participating library which provided the lowest ROI ratio

Table 2
Return on Investment Estimates for Colorado

Type of Estimate	ROI Ratio (return per dollar invested)
Primary	$6.39
Secondary	$5.51
Conservative	$5.31

While these estimates provide a suggestion of a statewide ROI from Colorado libraries, they should be used sparingly. The libraries used in this study were not intended as, nor are they, a representative sample of libraries throughout the state. Extrapolating ROI numbers to other libraries, and then statewide, based on using study libraries as peers, assumes a magnitude of similarity of libraries that is likely exaggerated, and is not a substitute for a true study.

Summary of Recent Public Library Return on Investment Studies

Over the past five years, 10 major return on investment (ROI) studies of public libraries, including this one, have been published.

Two major approaches were employed in assessing ROI of public libraries: contingent valuation and market valuation. Of the 10 major studies, three—Florida, Pennsylvania, and Colorado— used the contingent valuation approach, while the other seven—Vermont, South Carolina, Wisconsin, New York, Ohio, Pittsburgh, and Indiana—used the market valuation approach. It is probably no accident that six of the seven market valuation studies (Vermont being the exception) yielded lower ROI ratios than the three contingent valuation studies. Market valuation studies do not so much assess the value of the library as a whole as they do the value of the individual transactions that, taken together, constitute library services. For example, such studies multiply the number of books circulated times some dollar figure, ranging from the full retail cost of a book to steeply discounted costs that take into account the library's discount when purchasing the book and how much of a book's retail value a user could regain by selling it. The contingent valuation studies ask users to assess the value of the particular library materials and services they used based on their own estimates of the time they saved, the staff expertise that helped them find needed information content, and the like. In other words, contingent valuation studies, while in some ways more "subjective," take a more holistic perspective on library use. This is the tip of the iceberg, however, as there are numerous other differences between the studies in each of these two groups that likely contribute substantially to how high or low an ROI ratio they yield.

Table 3
Out of State ROI Findings Summary

Study	Scope	State	Return on Investment per $1.00
The Economic Impact of Vermont's Public Libraries	State	VT	$6.96
Taxpayer Return on Investment in Florida Public Libraries	State	FL	$6.54
Tax Payer Return on Investment in Pennsylvania Public Libraries	State	PA	$5.50
What's It Worth to You? A Return on Investment Study of Selected Colorado Public Libraries	8 libraries	CO	$4.99*
Economic Impact of Public Libraries in South Carolina	State	SC	$4.48
The Economic Contribution of Wisconsin Public Libraries	State	WI	$4.06
Placing an Economic Value on the Services of Public Libraries in Suffolk County	County (4 libraries)	NY	$3.93
Economic Benefits of Public Libraries, or Value for Money: Southwestern Ohio's Return from Investment in Public Libraries	SW region (9 libraries)	OH	$3.81
Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh: Community Impact and Benefits	1 library	PA	$3.00
The Economic Impact of Libraries in Indiana	State	IN	$2.38
		Mean	**$4.52**
		Median	**$4.06**

* The Colorado figure is the median of the return on investment ratios for the eight participating libraries.

Comparison and Contrast of Contingent Valuation Studies

Until the anomalous Vermont results, the Florida and Pennsylvania contingent valuation studies had yielded the highest ROI ratios—returns of $6.54 and $5.50 per dollar, respectively. (See Table 3.) That these figures exceed the Colorado study's median results of $4.99 per dollar is probably explained by the inclusion in the Florida and Pennsylvania studies of an additional factor that was excluded from the Colorado study: the value of time savings to users. Wishing to follow a reasonably conservative strategy, the investigators for this study omitted that factor.

Another difference between this study and its Florida and Pennsylvania counterparts is that the latter studies were conducted from a statewide perspective, while this study focused on the local level. Thus, when Colorado libraries tracked their spending on vendors and contractors, they included only local businesses; libraries in the other two states tracked spending on vendors and contractors statewide.

While the Florida and Pennsylvania studies also report additional results—i.e., more general, indirect impacts on the state's economic output, earnings, and employment—it seems clear that these factors are not included in the $6.54 and $5.50 figures.

The Colorado study did measure several concepts included in the Florida and Pennsylvania studies. These include: the cost of using alternatives to the library, the value of library use that would have been lost (for respondents who indicated not seeking alternatives), and halo spending—a percentage of other spending by library users at other destinations before or after visiting the library (e.g., restaurants and coffee shops, shopping). All three market valuation studies also included library staff expenditures (i.e., salaries, wages, and benefits) and expenditures on vendors and contractors within certain geographic bounds (usually the state).

Comparison and Contrast of Market Valuation Studies

Of the market valuation studies, Vermont (using the South Carolina model) reported the highest ROI ratio at $6.96 per dollar, while Indiana reported the lowest ratio, $2.38 per dollar. In the case of these two extremes, there is one obvious factor—the last one mentioned about contingent valuation studies. The South Carolina and other market valuation studies included staff and vendor/contractor expenditures in addition to the market valuation of various library services; but, uniquely, the Indiana study excluded the two categories of library expenditures, relying on market valuation data alone.

All of the market valuation studies determine values for certain basic library services—circulation of books and other materials, use of electronic resources, reference services, and program attendance—but, the range of multipliers used to determine the value of each service, and the level of detail at which those multipliers are used—taken together—go far in explaining whether a study's ROI ratio is higher or lower.

Circulation of Books & Other Materials
South Carolina valued book circulation at half the retail price of a book, while Southwestern Ohio valued it at half the price paid by the library. Suffolk County, New York, valued it at full retail price, while both Indiana and Wisconsin valued it at 20 percent of retail price.

Suffolk County, New York, valued circulation of audio and video items at full retail prices, while South Carolina valued loans of such items at 20 percent of retail prices. Southwestern Ohio applied average rental rates in the region. Wisconsin and Indiana valued A-V circulation using average used rates from Amazon and other online vendors of such second-hand media.

Circulation of periodicals is valued in a variety of ways. South Carolina multiplied the number of periodical subscriptions held times the current average subscription rate for all periodicals, $200.

Indiana multiplied the number of library computer users (a proxy for periodical users) times a steeply discounted rate of 25 cents per issue (presumably, whether circulated or read in the library).

Ohio took the novel approach of charging $5 per periodical circulation—that being the fee levied for lost periodicals.

It appears that Suffolk County, New York, and Wisconsin made no attempt to value periodical circulation.

Use of Electronic Resources
Wisconsin valued e-resource use by applying an hourly rate (a modest $4) to two-thirds of total computer hours.

Suffolk County, New York, valued such use by equating access to its own network with a year's subscription to AOL ($288), and charged out virtual reference transactions at rates based on Google Answers ($29). Indiana valued e-resource uses at an extremely modest 50 cents per hour; but, assumed that the average user spends two hours on a library computer.

Southwestern Ohio valued database downloads at $10 each, based on commercial rates, and assumed six minutes per virtual reference transaction at the rate of $50 per hour.

South Carolina rolled in e-resource use with use of other library facilities and equipment, valuing it all at the rate of 10 percent of the library's total operating expenditures.

Reference Services
South Carolina's multiplier for the number of reference questions was half of the median hourly wage for each local community (suggesting an average of 30 minutes per transaction).

Wisconsin's multiplier was based on the average hourly wage of librarians ($23), which was applied to the number of reference questions, assuming 15 minutes per transaction.

Suffolk County, New York's multiplier for reference questions was $29, based on Google Answers rates, while Indiana's multiplier was $10, based on assumptions of a 10 minute transaction and a $100 per hour rate, and Southwestern Ohio's multiplier was $5, based on the same 10 minute transaction assumption, but a lower $50 per hour rate.

Program Attendance
Wisconsin's multipliers for adult and children's program attendance were $6 and $4, respectively, based on the average rates of YMCAs, parks and recreation departments, and other community programming providers. On a similar rationale, Indiana valued adult and children's programs at $5 and $4, respectively.

Suffolk County, New York, used a multiplier of $9 for all program attendance. This is an inflation-adjusted figure from an earlier 1990's study in St. Louis.

Neither South Carolina nor Ohio included program attendance in its valuation efforts.

Meeting Room Use
Conspicuously, two studies included the value of meeting room use by outside organizations in their calculations. Indiana valued such use at $75 per event, while Ohio valued it at $50.

Relative Merits of Contingent and Market Valuation

Both contingent and market valuation approaches to calculating a library's ROI have strengths and weaknesses.

Market valuation bases dollar values on objective, "real world" values. As the preceding paragraphs reveal, however, there is no one right way to go about identifying those values. Some of the market values applied in extant studies seem extraordinarily high, while others seem quite low. Perhaps the greatest advantage of this approach is that it can be pursued using available, or readily obtainable, data about the library and the community it serves.

Contingent valuation bases dollar values on subjective perceptions of responding library users. In those "subjective" perceptions, though, users are responding more holistically, based on a complete library experience, and—perhaps more pointedly—a specific purpose and schedule. As the saying goes, "time is money," and the reports of individual study participants suggest that a great deal of a library's value in the eyes of many lies in the added value of having large collections of resources, computers and databases, the help of reference and other expert staff, and programming together in one place. Each of these resources can, and often does, reinforce the value of others, both in the content of the resulting service and in the time saved for users. Another plus of contingent valuation is that it does not rely upon limited available data about library services. Respondents to contingent valuation surveys could answer in reference to whatever service, or combination of services, they utilized on their surveyed visit. This approach acknowledges that the value of a library is quite likely greater than the sum of the value of its individual resources and services.

Pittsburgh Study

The study done for Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh took a unique approach to the ROI issue, opting for neither market nor contingent valuation. Instead, this study included in its assessment of public library value: the value of users' time (on the rationale that the value of library service is the value of the time people are willing to spend using it), library operating expenditures, and customer (i.e., halo) spending. As a result, it is little surprise that this study generated the second lowest ROI ratio.

Other Components of Studies

In addition to the quantitative analysis of return on investment, most of the extant ROI studies included additional quantitative and qualitative analyses.

The Florida and Pennsylvania studies included some econometric modeling to assess the indirect impact of libraries on the state's economic output, earnings, and employment. Their surveys also gathered specific data on education and employment-related outcomes.

The Colorado study conducted focus group interviews of library staff and users, focusing on educational and economic impacts.

The South Carolina survey included a substantial number of questions devoted to identifying quality of life and economic impacts of public libraries.

Like the Florida and Pennsylvania studies, the Wisconsin one made econometric estimates of the impact of public libraries on the larger economy. That state's study also included a SWOT analysis of various library user groups, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of public libraries.

The econometric analysis of larger economic impact in the Suffolk County, New York, study was among the most specific, assessing the impact of libraries by industry as well as by city, county, or region served.

The Southwestern Ohio survey asked respondents to identify a very wide variety of additional outcomes--in addition to education and employment-related outcomes—related to support for the elderly, blind, and disabled; cultural, craft, and patriotic, historical, and genealogical programming; cultural understanding and tolerance; and cooperation with other community organizations.

The Indiana surveys of library staff, patrons, and local leaders asked questions about library service capacity, customer satisfaction, outcomes, and needs assessment. In addition, there were 12 case studies of public library service to business.

Review of Colorado Results, Library by Library

The eight Colorado public libraries that participated in this ROI study were very diverse. This diversity is evident in the range of ROI ratios, and especially in the ROI ratios for two outlier libraries. Likewise, the diversity of use patterns at these libraries is clear when one considers the various types of use whose annual incidence was reported by individual respondents.

Reasons for Outlying Results

While return on investment (ROI) ratios for most of the eight participating public libraries centered at about five dollars, two libraries were outliers: Cortez, at $31.07, and Fort Morgan, at $8.80. (See Table 4.) Also, see Appendix A or the LRS website, http://www.lrs.org/public/roi/ for complete, individual library reports.

Table 4
Colorado Return on Investment (ROI) Findings Summary

Library	ROI per $1.00
Cortez Public Library*	*$31.07*
Fort Morgan Public Library*	*$8.80*
Montrose Library District	$5.33
Douglas County Libraries (District)	$5.02
Denver Public Library	$4.96
Rangeview Library District (Adams County)	$4.81
Mesa County Public Library District	$4.57
Eagle Valley Library District	$4.28
Median	**$4.99**

The more extreme case of Cortez illustrates dramatically the complications that can arise when who funds a library and who uses it do not match up. Fort Morgan follows these same patterns to a lesser extent.

First, though Cortez Public Library (CPL) is established and funded as a municipal agency, it serves many of the residents of Montezuma County beyond the city limits. More than half of its registered borrowers (55%) reside outside the Legal Service Area of the library. However, the majority of its funding is from the municipality with city funding of $36.86 per capita and 77¢ per capita for the unincorporated county population.

Second, CPL has an unusually high number of visits for a library of its size. This, combined with its small Legal Service Area population in relation to the number of people it actually serves, gives them a visits per capita ratio of 21.61, the highest in its population range (5,000 to 9,999) and higher than most non-resort or combined school/public libraries.

This discrepancy between who funds the library and who actually uses it largely explains the exceptionally high ROI figure for Cortez in comparison to other libraries that participated in this survey.

Annual Incidence of Library Use by Type

Individual patron survey respondents reported their annual incidence of several types of use, including:

- o Checking out books, CDs or tapes, and DVDs or videos;
- o Reading books; journals, magazines, and newspapers; and print reference materials in the library;
- o Soliciting and receiving reference and technology assistance from library staff;
- o Participating in library programs;
- o Using library computers to access software, free information on the Internet, and online databases;
- o Connecting online to libraries remotely from home, work and school; and
- o Downloading eBooks from home, work and school.

Checking Out Library Materials

Responding users of the eight participating libraries reported far more diversity of use for non-print formats than books. When asked how many times per year they checked out books, the average respondent from each library reported 17 times, with a range of 19 for Cortez, Douglas, and Eagle Valley to 14 for Fort Morgan. By contrast, there were marked differences among the eight libraries on the incidence of checking out non-print items. The number of times per year patrons checked out CDs or tapes ranged from 12 for Denver and Douglas County to six for Fort Morgan. Similarly, the range for annual DVD or video check-outs ranged from 13 for Douglas and Eagle to seven for Cortez, Fort Morgan, and Montrose. It is perhaps no coincidence that libraries whose users reported more non-print borrowing were those in metropolitan areas, while those that reported lower borrowing in this category were from outlying locations. Doubtless, one of the reasons for these differences in the relative size of the libraries' print and non-print collections. Responding users from Denver, Douglas and Eagle Valley may have reported checking out non-print formats more frequently because their libraries have larger collections in these increasingly popular formats. Denver and Douglas, in particular, have audio book and DVD/video collections many times the size of the other participating libraries. (See Table 5.)

Table 5
Annual Incidence of Checking Out Items, by Print/Non-Print Format
Reported by ROI Patron Survey Respondents

Library	Number of Times During Last 12 Months Checked Out Item		
	Book	**CD / tape**	**DVD / video**
Cortez	19	8	7
Denver	17	12	12
Douglas	19	12	13
Eagle Valley	19	11	13
Fort Morgan	14	6	7
Mesa County	17	8	8
Montrose	16	7	7
Rangeview	16	8	8
Total	**17**	**10**	**11**

Reading in the Library

Three of the most likely things for users to read in the library are books; periodicals (journals, magazines, and newspapers); and print reference materials. In the case of this type of in-library use, there was remarkably little diversity of response. Across the participating libraries, the average respondent read such materials in the library about five times a year. For individual libraries, the range of responses for these activities did not exceed two incidents a year. (See Table 6.)

Table 6
Annual Incidence of Reading in the Library, by Resource
Reported by ROI Patron Survey Respondents

Library	Number of Times During Last 12 Months Read in Library		
	Book	Journal, magazine or newspaper	Print reference materials
Cortez	4.2	6.0	4.8
Denver	5.6	6.4	5.7
Douglas	4.7	5.0	4.5
Eagle Valley	5.5	6.4	5.1
Fort Morgan	4.2	5.5	4.2
Mesa County	4.9	6.7	5.6
Montrose	4.3	5.4	4.4
Rangeview	4.9	5.5	5.3
Total	**4.9**	**5.8**	**5.0**

Soliciting & Receiving Reference & Technology Assistance

As with in-library reading, the annual incidence of respondents' reporting asking a librarian for help to find information was remarkably consistent across the eight participating libraries, averaging, again, 5 instances per year. Technology assistance, however, is another story. While the number of reported instances of receiving technology instruction in a year is low—rounding to once per year—the proportional differences between some of the libraries are noteworthy. Denver (1.3) and Mesa County (1.2), the state's major metropolitan areas on each side of the Continental Divide, reported twice the rate of technology instruction of Fort Morgan (0.6) , an Eastern Plains non-metropolitan community, and—surprisingly—Douglas County (0.5), a suburban Front Range community. One possible explanation for the unexpectedly low Douglas County figure may be that the area has more computer-savvy users who may not require such help. (See Table 7.)

Table 7
Annual Incidence of Reference & Technology Assistance, by Type
Reported by ROI Survey Respondents

Library	Number of Times During Last 12 Months	
	Asked a librarian to help in finding information in the library or on the internet	Received technology instruction
Cortez	4.8	0.7
Denver	5.8	1.3
Douglas	5.0	0.5
Eagle Valley	5.3	0.8
Fort Morgan	3.9	0.6
Mesa County	5.3	1.2
Montrose	5.0	0.9
Rangeview	5.7	0.9
Total	**5.2**	**0.9**

Participating in Library Programs
Just as the annual incidence of technology assistance varies more than the annual incidence of more general appeals for staff help, so the incidence of participating in literacy programs varies more than the incidence of participating in programming generally. Across the eight participating libraries, respondents reported participating in lectures, classes, and other library programs two and a half times per year. The range extended only from 3.1 times for Eagle Valley to 2.0 times for Fort Morgan. It is difficult to explain, however, why annual incidence of participating in literacy programs extended from once (1.0) for Eagle Valley and Mesa County to only half as often for Fort Morgan and Cortez (0.5 and 0.4, respectively). It is not the metro/non-metro difference seen earlier; but, it may be a difference associated with levels of library funding or staffing. While Eagle Valley is in a non-metro resort setting, it is comparatively well-funded and staffed compared to other non-metro libraries. (See Table 8.)

Table 8
Annual Incidence of Program Participation, by Type
Reported by ROI Survey Respondents

Library	Number of Times During Last 12 Months Attended	
	Lecture, class or other sort of program	**Literacy instruction or program**
Cortez	2.2	0.4
Denver	2.6	0.9
Douglas	2.6	0.6
Eagle Valley	3.1	1.0
Fort Morgan	2.0	0.5
Mesa County	2.2	1.0
Montrose	2.1	0.5
Rangeview	2.5	0.9
Total	**2.5**	**0.7**

Using Library Computers
The suggestion of a metro/non-metro distinction returns for networked uses of library computers. For computer use associated with the Web and online resources, respondents from metro libraries tend to report higher rates of use than their non-metro counterparts: free information on the Web (Denver, 8.5; Montrose, 4.3), online resources (Denver, 5.7; Montrose, 2.6). For using library computers to access software (e.g., Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint), that distinction does not seem to apply (Rangeview, 3.3; Douglas, 1.7). (See Table 9.)

Table 9
Annual Incidence of Library Computer Use, by Source Accessed
Reported by ROI Survey Respondents

Library	Number of Times During Last 12 Months Used a Library Computer to Access		
	Software	**Free information on the Web**	**Online research resources**
Cortez	2.1	5.0	2.8
Denver	2.8	8.5	5.7
Douglas	1.7	4.6	3.5
Eagle Valley	2.3	5.7	4.3
Fort Morgan	2.0	5.1	2.7
Mesa County	2.9	6.2	4.8
Montrose	1.9	4.3	2.6
Rangeview	3.3	7.4	5.0
Total	**2.3**	**6.1**	**4.2**

Using Public Libraries Remotely
The metro/non-metro divide is even more pronounced for the annual incidence of remote online use of public libraries. Denver and Douglas County top such use, regardless of computer location (home computer: 9.5 and 12.9, respectively; school computer: 2.1 and 1.5; work computer: 4.4 and 3.8); while Cortez and Fort Morgan report the lowest rates of such use (home computer: 3.1 and 3.0; school computer, 0.6 for both; work computer: 0.8 and 1.1). (See Table 10.)

Table 10
Annual Incidence of Remote Use of Public Library, by Computer Location
Reported by ROI Survey Respondents

Library	Number of Times During Last 12 Months Connected Online to a Colorado Public Library Remotely from		
	Your home computer	**A school computer**	**A work computer**
Cortez	3.1	0.6	0.8
Denver	9.5	2.1	4.4
Douglas	12.9	1.5	3.8
Eagle Valley	5.1	0.7	2.3
Fort Morgan	3.0	0.6	1.1
Mesa County	6.0	1.0	2.0
Montrose	3.8	0.8	1.3
Rangeview	7.1	1.1	3.2
Total	**8.1**	**1.3**	**3.0**

Downloading eBooks from Public Libraries
Of all the types of library use on which respondents reported, the lowest incidence of use was for downloading eBooks, regardless of computer location. But, Denver Public Library—the state's major resource center and an early adopter of new information formats and products—topped this category with 1.4 downloads from a home computer, 0.8 from a work computer, and 0.6 from a school computer. These rates of use, while very low, are several times as high as the rates reported by users of other libraries, especially those in outlying and rural areas. (See Table 11.)

Table 11
Annual Incidence of eBook Downloads by Computer Location
Reported by ROI Survey Respondents

Library	Number of Times During Last 12 Months Downloaded an eBook, etc using		
	Your home computer	**A work computer**	**A school computer**
Cortez	0.3	0.2	0.1
Denver	1.4	0.8	0.6
Douglas	0.8	0.3	0.2
Eagle Valley	0.6	0.4	0.2
Fort Morgan	0.2	0.2	0.1
Mesa County	0.7	0.3	0.3
Montrose	0.3	0.2	0.1
Rangeview	0.5	0.5	0.4
Total	**0.8**	**0.4**	**0.3**

Where notable differences in findings among the eight participating public libraries exist, most often, the most obvious potential explanation is whether the library is located in metropolitan area or not. That superficial appearance of an explanation, however, may simply mask several more complex factors that could just as easily explain the differences. Metro and non-metro areas tend to differ dramatically on several key demographic variables: age, race/ethnicity, educational attainment, income, and technology-savvy are the most obvious possibilities. Metro and non-metro areas also tend to differ dramatically in terms of how public libraries are organized to provide service. Metro public libraries tend to serve larger populations, have more funding, offer larger collections and more diverse programming, and to employ more librarians with ALA-accredited master's degrees. Suffice it to say that, whether the explanation for differences in these results is a matter of local demographics or how library service is organized and provided, the explanatory factors seem to be associated fairly consistently with metropolitan status.

Conclusion

What is to be done with results of a return on investment study of public library service? There are several options, any or all of which may be productive.
- Present a report about the study for your library in appropriate formats and venues.
- Have a conversation with decision-makers about what the findings for their library mean.
- Keep asking library patrons about how they benefit from the services they receive from public libraries.

Report in Appropriate Formats & Venues

A report about your library's ROI results could be produced in any one or combination of the following formats: report, flyer/brochure, poster, and/or web page. Venues in which such a report might be shared include a library board meeting, a local government session or hearing, a press conference, a newspaper article, a radio or TV spot, speeches to community organizations and other groups, and during outreach activities. To decide which formats to develop and which venues to seek, ask yourself the following questions:
- Which report formats work best generally with our decision-makers and public?
- Which reporting venues are most likely to be available for sharing our study's results?
- Which report formats will be best for those venues?
- Who will be prepared to make presentations about our ROI results?

Consider Promoting ROI Calculators

One particular web option worth exploring is the LRS's online ROI calculators, which allow one to estimate an ROI ratio from either a library or a user perspective. These calculators are available and explained in detail at http://www.lrs.org/public/roi/. Notably, while a few other states provide "library value" calculators, the calculators developed in association with this study are the only true ROI calculators made available in connection with any of the extant studies. Anybody can use the personal ROI calculator; but, the library one is specifically designed to allow other Colorado public libraries to enter key data about their operations, identify one of the eight participating libraries in this study as its nearest peer, and estimate an ROI ratio based on that information.

Have Conversations with Decision-Makers

One of the most useful sections in this report, beyond the findings, is the section in which the extant ROI studies from across the nation are compared and contrasted with each other. While some aspects of these studies will evade easy discussion, the basic approaches taken and the details of how they went about estimating ROI are quite "accessible." For instance, a strong case can be made for having used the contingent valuation approach by reviewing the number and variety of multipliers used in the studies that used the market valuation approach. There is something to be said for asking library patrons to place a value on their own library use, as its value to them often goes beyond the market value of the generic type of item used or borrowed. The contingent valuation approach also allows patrons to take into account the value-added aspects of library service that the market valuation approach cannot address. The value of a library is not merely the sum of the market values of its constituent bits—a book or DVD borrowed, a magazine or newspaper read, a question answered, or a program attended. There is some additional value associated with the savings of time and effort associated with finding all of these services in one location as well as the assistance of librarians and other staff that might not be counted as a reference question. Indeed, a library may offer many services on which usage

statistics are not available. Library patrons placing a value on their own use can include this type of value. They are also likely to give some further value to library services based on the specific informational content they received, regardless of the format, and how they intend to apply it in a particular home, school, or work context. None of these aspects of the value of library service can be addressed by market valuation. Talking through these points with decision-makers will lead them to think more deeply about the value of their libraries than if they merely read a report.

Keep Asking Patrons How They Benefit

As important a concept as return on investment is, it is not the only dimension of library service value worth exploring. In fact, an ROI ratio alone may ring hollow to many readers or audiences for your study findings, unless it is augmented with further quantitative and qualitative data about how patrons benefit from their libraries. Appended to this report are many public library success stories shared by both library staff and patrons. Collecting more quantitative data about qualitative value placed on library service by users may not be as difficult as some think. From 1999 to 2001, the Library Research Service conducted a national study to develop just such survey instruments. For more information about Counting on Results: New Tools for Outcome-Based Evaluation of Public Libraries, including several large-format postcard surveys for different Public Library Association service responses (i.e., library roles), see http://www.lrs.org/CoR.php.

While your library's ROI ratio may be just the bit of statistical information you need for an upcoming budget justification or public relations campaign, chances are the value of this study for your and other libraries will be enhanced greatly by extending the conversation with decision-makers and patrons in at least some of these ways.

Appendix A

Reports for the eight participating public libraries were published individually and are also available at http://www.lrs.org/public/roi/ under **Public Libraries – A Wise Investment**.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT
CORTEZ PUBLIC LIBRARY

$31

$1 Invested Yields $31 Return

$1

Cortez Public Library recently participated in a Return on Investment study conducted by the Library Research Service at the Colorado State Library. This study found a substantial return for taxpayers when investing in their local library. **For every $1.00 invested in Cortez Public Library, $31.07 of value is returned to the community.**[1]

Returns on Investment
Cortez Public Library[2]

66% Two-thirds of Cortez Public Library patrons said they would have spent $20 or more getting their information from another source if the library did not exist.

54% Over half of Cortez Public Library patrons come to the library over 25 times per year.

67% Two-thirds of Cortez Public Library patrons have used a library computer.

150,000 Patrons came to Cortez Public Library specifically to check out books over 150,000 times in the previous 12 months.

33% One-third of Cortez Public Library patrons connected to a Colorado public library from a home computer in the previous 12 months.

---

[1] Data was compiled from surveys of the individual libraries, the 2006 Colorado Public Library Report (accessible at www.LRS.org), and a survey in which library users were asked to estimate their cost of using alternative sources to meet their library-related needs, as well as their non-library expenditures.
[2] Based on responses to the ROI patron survey.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

CORTEZ PUBLIC LIBRARY

Why Return on Investment?
In the spring of 2006 a need was identified in Colorado to describe the variety of benefits delivered by public libraries to their patrons and to quantify the return on investment to taxpayers for monies invested in public libraries. To provide this data, the Library Research Service (LRS) undertook "What's It Worth to You? A Return on Investment Study of Selected Colorado Public Libraries" (ROI) in May 2006. Using a multiple case study approach, this research was designed to create such information for eight public libraries, representing geographically diverse regions of Colorado. Data were gathered using a combination of questionnaires, key informant interviews, and available data sources.

ROI Methodology
This study follows a model of contingent valuation that has been used in similar studies to determine ROI for public libraries. Contingent valuation is an economic technique often used for the valuation of non-market resources. This figure was calculated by examining the ramifications of not having a public library for the communities served. It includes:

- **Cost to Use Alternatives:** The estimated amount of money that would have been spent using an alternative information source.
- **Lost Use:** The estimated value of the lost information for users who would not have tried to attain the information elsewhere.
- **Direct Local Expenditures:** Contributions made by the library to community businesses and individuals in the form of purchasing goods and services.
- **Compensation for Library Staff:** Library staff would not receive compensation and unemployment would be a factor for at least some period of time.
- **Halo Spending:** Purchases made by library users from vendors and business that are located close to the library. A recent study found that approximately 23 percent of these purchases would not occur if the library did not exist.[3]

Table 1
Return on Investment Factors – Cortez Public Library[4]

Cost to Use Alternatives	$8,307,410
Lost Use	$818,878
Direct Local Expenditures	$61,169
Compensation for Library Staff	$231,030
Halo Spending	$713,518
Total Return on Investment	**$10,132,005**
Total Local Investment	÷ $326,128
Return per Dollar Invested	**$31.07**

---

[3] Proctor, Richard, Bob Usherwood, and Gill Sobczyk. *What Happens When a Public Library Service Closes Down?* Library Management 18, no. 1 (1997): 59-64.
[4] Data were compiled from surveys of the individual libraries, the 2006 Colorado Public Library Report (accessible at www.LRS.org), and a survey in which library users were asked to estimate their cost of using alternative sources to meet their library-related needs, as well as their non-library expenditures. Estimates for alternative costs are conservative, as they do not include the value of extra time that might have been necessary to meet their needs elsewhere.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

CORTEZ PUBLIC LIBRARY

Cortez Public Library at a Glance

Cortez Public Library is located in the mountainous southwest corner of Colorado. It is organized as a municipal library to serve residents of the city of Cortez. Its legal service area population is 8,550. It consists of one central library in Cortez. The collection includes over 58,000 print volumes, 3,700 audios, 4,700 videos, and 80 periodicals. To access online resources, it also has ten public access computers.

Table 2
Selected Statistics for
Cortez Public Library[5]

Description	Total		Ratio[6]
Circulation	138,994		16.3 per capita
Visits	184,800		21.6 per capita
Library Programs	64	178	Program attendees per 1,000 served
Public Access Computers	10		1.17 per 1,000 served

This study examines the return on investment for each library's community.[7] Therefore, only local revenue is used in calculating the monetary contribution of community members to each library. Several factors used in the calculation of the return on investment are driving a remarkably high ROI ratio for CPL.

Cortez Public Library (CPL) is established and funded as a municipal library, meaning the city of Cortez is considered its legal service area. Therefore, CPL is funded almost exclusively by city general funds totaling $315,128. In addition, CPL receives $11,000 in county general funds. The residents of Cortez fund the library at a rate of $36.86 per capita, and those of unincorporated Montezuma County fund it at a rate of 77¢ per capita.

Though the library is funded primarily by the city, more than half of its registered borrowers (55%) reside outside of Cortez. Additionally, CPL has an unusually high number of visits for a library of its size. This, combined with its small Legal Service Area population in relation to the number of people it actually serves, gives them a visits per capita ratio of 21.6. This is the highest ratio in CPL's population range (5,000 to 9,999) and higher than all other non-resort public libraries serving more than 1,500 people in Colorado.

Due to this discrepancy between funding and use as well as the high visit ratio, CPL has an exceptionally high return on investment figure in comparison to other libraries that participated in this survey, which tended toward a number around $5.

---

[5] 2006 Colorado Public Library Annual Report (accessible at www.LRS.org).
[6] Per capita is figured using legal service area (LSA) population (accessible at http://www.lrs.org/pub_stats.php).
[7] A library's community is defined as the legal service area as specified in the library's establishment documents.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

CORTEZ PUBLIC LIBRARY

SURVEY RESULTS

Library Use

Once through the doors, visitors to Cortez Public Library tend to be heavy users of library resources. Of the library visitors who responded to the ROI survey, more than half of them had visited the library 25 times or more over the last twelve months; essentially, these patrons come to the library at least every other week (see Chart 1). Another third had visited on about a monthly basis over the previous year - between 10 and 24 times. Only 3 percent of respondents said that they visited the library fewer than 5 times in the previous 12 months.

Chart 1

Return on Investment - Cortez Public Library:
Respondent's Number of Visits to the Library in the Last 12 Months

---
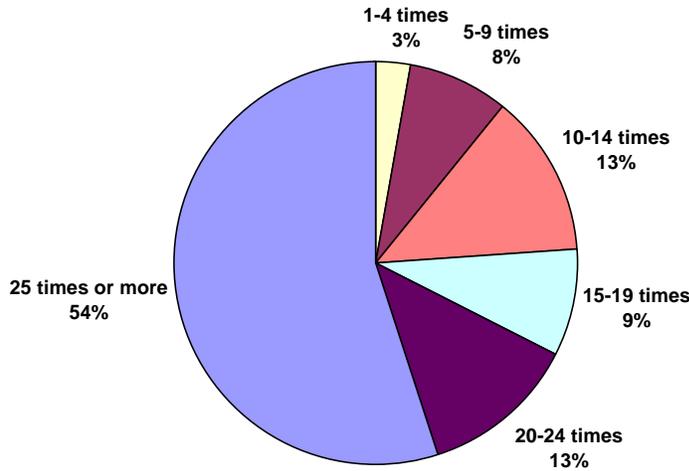
Cortez Public Library
Helping Businesses Succeed

Marcy Cummins, Executive Director of the Cortez Chamber of Commerce, praises the library for its role in the community, "The chamber utilizes the library for a business planning course called LEAD. As a part of the class, students walk over to the library (about a block and a half from the Chamber) to do research and learn what resources are available to the local business person. Because of lack of funding, the business section of the library is not extensive, but they will order anything the students want, which arrive quickly. There are publications too costly for individual businesses to own that can be accessed through the library.

Many of our members do not have Internet access and use the library for that purpose. We have several areas of our county that only have dial-up Internet access, which is unworkable for most people…We also use the library's conference room for community meetings."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

CORTEZ PUBLIC LIBRARY

In 2006, there were 184,800 visits to the Cortez Public Library. Despite the changing ways in which the public uses libraries, checking out materials remains the primary reason for library visits. Over four-fifths of these visits (159,125) resulted in the library user checking out a book (see Chart 2). Additionally, the concept of "library as place" remains strong. A large percentage of respondent visits included reading a book (19%) or periodical (29%) in the library, and programs and instruction still draw a considerable number of people into the library. However, for many of these visits, library use patterns are changing, as computer use has grown to encompass a large part of the library user's experience. Based on responses to the survey, during over a quarter (26%) of these visits the visitor accessed the Internet on a library computer. Accessing databases and software via library computers is a large part of use as well.

Chart 2

**Return on Investment - Cortez Public Library:
Number of Visits During Which Users Performed Specific Activities**

Activity	Number of Visits
Checked out book	159,125
Checked out CD/tape	73,777
Checked out DVD/VHS	60,875
Read periodical in the library	53,289
Accessed Internet on library computer	47,277
Asked librarian to help find information	43,363
Used print reference materials	43,361
Read book in the library	35,803
Accessed databases on library computer	25,498
Accessed software on library computer	19,687
Attended lecture, class or other program	18,549
Received technology instruction	6,361
Attended literacy instruction class	3,381
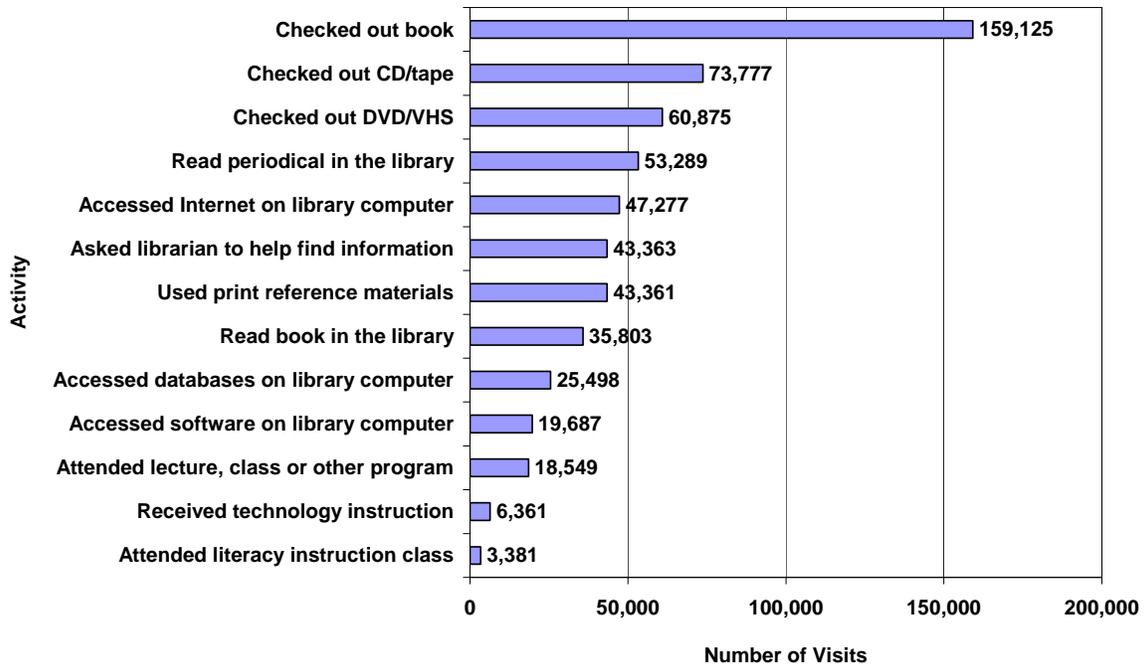
**Cortez Public Library
Helping Businesses Succeed**

The geographic placement of Cortez makes the library even more critical to the community. Ms. Cummins points out, "The kinds of things we access [at the library] are available for people via bookstores or the library by Fort Lewis College in Durango, CO (50 miles away). Most of the people taking our classes are also running their own businesses. Making a trip to Durango to access that library would be difficult. The Cortez Area Chamber of Commerce is a small organization serving the needs of businesses that have only limited funds for dues. Because of that, we would have to do without rather than purchase the business stacks ourselves."

continued…

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

CORTEZ PUBLIC LIBRARY

The majority of respondents (77%) reported coming to the library primarily for personal interests and/or recreational purposes (see Chart 3). In addition, respondents came to the library for educational purposes (6%), meeting their needs as students, educators, and home-schooling parents. Job-related reasons also attracted visitors to the library (7%).

Chart 3

**Return on Investment - Cortez Public Library:
Primary Reason for Respondent's Trip to Library**

Related to a current job
1%

Related to a job search
4%

Related to establishing/running a business
2%

Other
9%

As an educator/educational administrator
2%

As a home-schooling parent
3%

Education
6%

As a student
2%

For personal interests and/or recreational purposes
77%
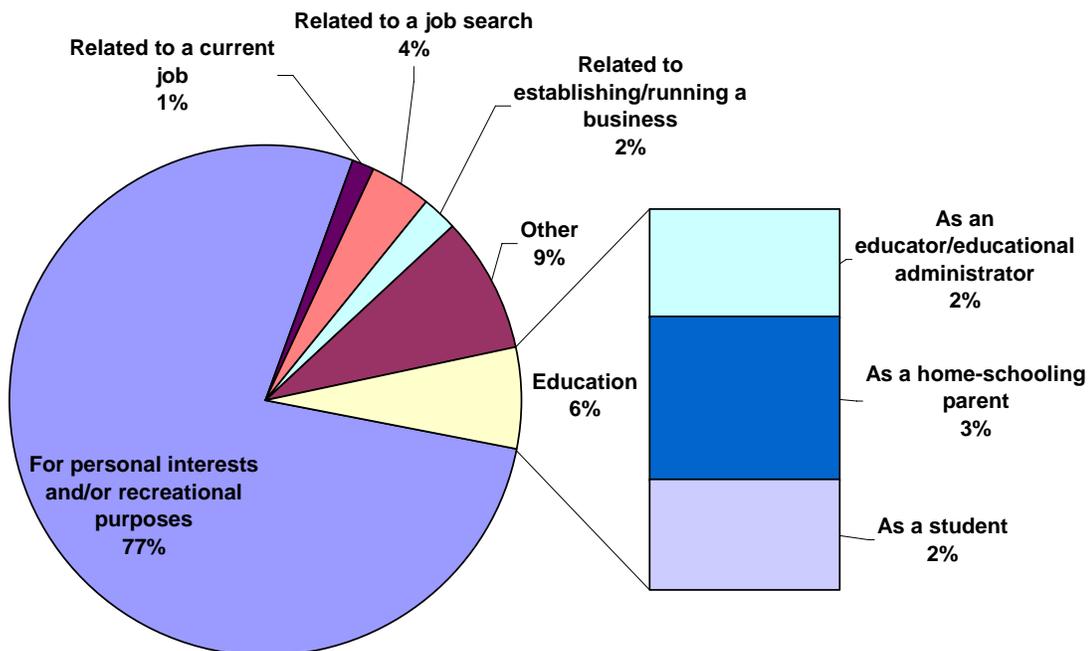
Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100%.

**Cortez Public Library
Serving the Community**

Cortez Public Library reaches out to patrons of all ages. In 2006, kids logged 14,800 hours of reading during their Summer Reading Program. A weekly pre-school story hour draws younger children. Each year all 7th graders and kindergartners visit the library to get library cards. The library's Thursday programs featuring professional performers draw an average of 260 people. It is the official academic library for Pueblo Community College's branch in Cortez.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

CORTEZ PUBLIC LIBRARY

Alternatives to Library Use

When asked what they would do to meet their information needs if the library did not exist, a majority of respondents (52%) said that they would have tried to get the information elsewhere (see Chart 4). However, 21 percent would not have known where else to go to get the information they received at the library, and another 7 percent would not have tried to get the information from another source. Without the library, the information needs of these users would not have been met.

Chart 4

Return on Investment - Cortez Public Library:
Respondent's Alternative Strategy for Meeting Information Needs
If Library Did Not Exist

Other
20%

I would have tried to
get the information
from another source
52%

I would **not** have tried
to get the information
from another source
7%

I would **not** have
known where else to
go to get the
information
21%
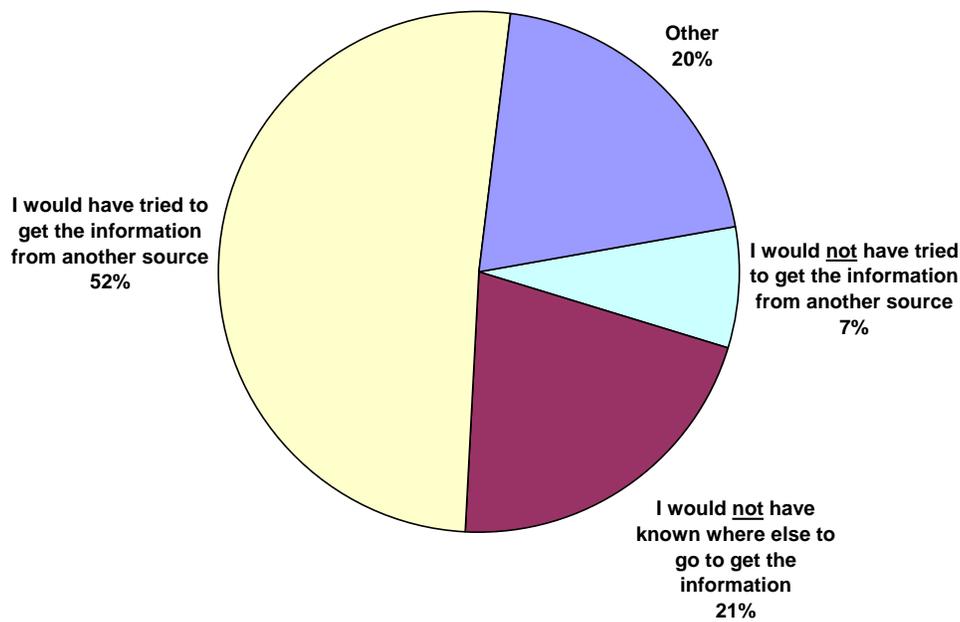
Cortez Public Library
Patron Comments

"Libraries are an important part of a society. The form libraries take may change over time, but access to credible information for a society is crucial."

"It's very essential for many reasons to have library access and near to where I live. I use the library every week for one purposes or another and could not afford to resort to purchasing books because of lack of resources in libraries!"

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

CORTEZ PUBLIC LIBRARY

Obtaining the information received during library visits would be expensive if acquired through alternative means. Respondents who would have tried to meet their information needs using an alternative source were asked to estimate how much money they would have spent using the other source. Two-thirds (66%) of Cortez Public Library respondents said that they would have spent at least $20 to have their information needs met elsewhere. Fewer than one in ten (8%) said that they would not have needed to spend any money to meet their information needs with an alternative source (see Chart 5).

Chart 5

Return on Investment - Cortez Public Library:
Respondent's Estimated Cost of Alternatives to Library Resources

$10-$19
15%

$20 or more
66%

Less than $10
11%

No money required
8%
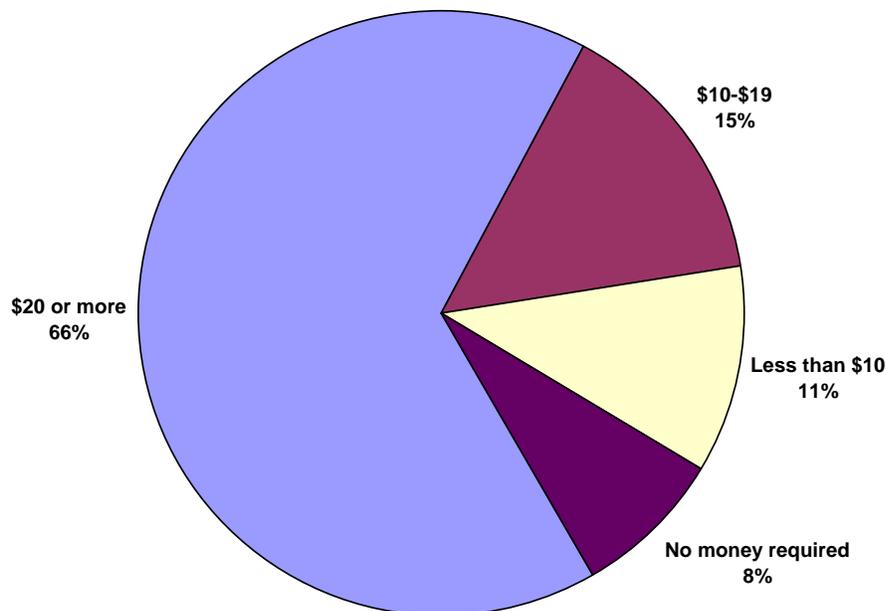
Cortez Public Library
Patron Comments

"Libraries should not be evaluated in financial terms. They are worth more to us as people than money can every buy. My library card is worth a fortune but only because it's free!"

"Our library is a vital resource in our rural area."

"I think of the many things that taxes are used for, our public libraries and universities are essential uses of tax dollars as hallmarks of advanced cultures."

CORTEZ PUBLIC LIBRARY

Many respondents to the survey reported doing other activities or errands during the same trip as their visit to the library. The most likely peripheral activity, with 61 percent of respondents, was shopping (see Chart 6). Many respondents also reported attending to personal business during their trip (34%), going to the bank (27%), or stopping by the post office (26%). More than one in ten said they visited a restaurant or coffee shop (17%) or went to a medical appointment (14%).[8]

Chart 6

Return on Investment - Cortez Public Library:
Activities Performed by Respondent on the Same Trip as Library Visit

---
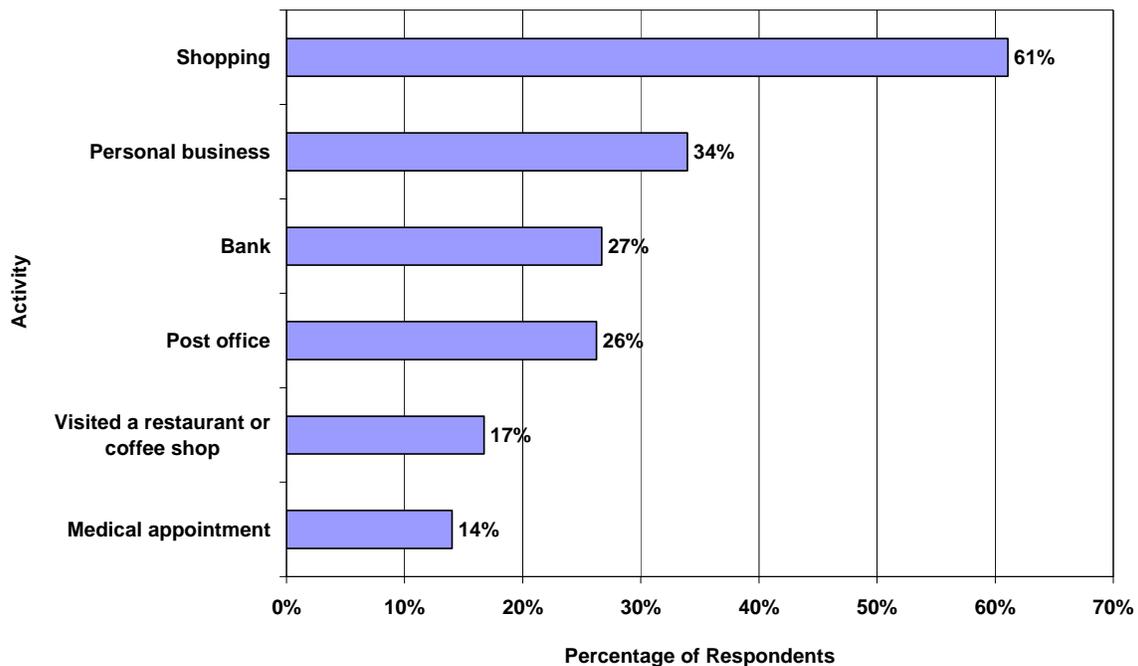
Cortez Public Library
Patron Comments

"My public library helps me be more human - or a better human. Fills a need beyond books - reflects a more interesting community."

"One of my favorite stops in town. Great asset to the community."

"An important asset to Cortez (Rate A+)."

---

[8] As noted in the section on methodology, a U.K. study reported that a portion of the spending on these "halo" activities would not have occurred if the library were not available.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

CORTEZ PUBLIC LIBRARY

Cortez Public Library's computers are extremely popular with their users. Two out of three respondents (67%) reported having used a library computer at some point (see Chart 7). The fact that so many patrons are using computers suggests that Cortez Public Library is serving as a location to bridge the digital divide.

Chart 7

**Return on Investment - Cortez Public Library:
Percentage of Respondents Who Have Used a Library Computer**

Have not used a library
computer
33%

Have used a library
computer
67%
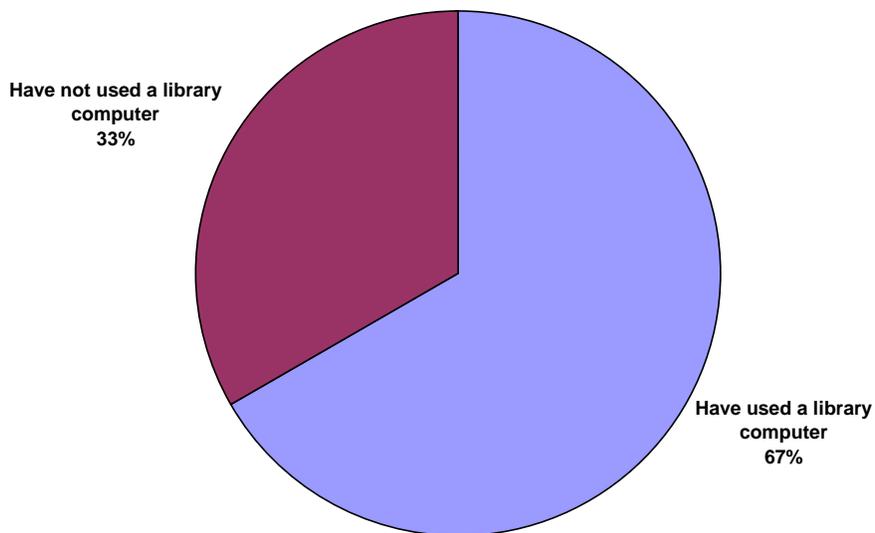
**Cortez Public Library
Patron Comments**

"The public library has been invaluable to me and my family. It is our main source of leisure time- reading that is. We seldom buy books but visit our library at least once a week. My husband uses the internet there. We are retired and can't imagine our lives without this wonderful source."

"Next to schools and hospitals, libraries are the most important service a community can provide to its residents."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

CORTEZ PUBLIC LIBRARY

In addition to in-library use, many of Cortez Public Library's users connect to libraries from home. One-third of the respondents to this survey (33%) had connected to a Colorado public library from a home computer in the past twelve months (See Chart 8). Most users connected to a library 1 to 9 times within the last 12 months. Not only is the library a place to visit in the community, it is a place to visit in cyberspace as well.

Chart 8

Return on Investment - Cortez Public Library:
Number of Times Respondent Connected to a Colorado Public Library
from a Home Computer in Last 12 Months

Never connected remotely
67%

Connected remotely at least once
33%

1-9 times
20%

10-19 times
8%

20 or more times
5%
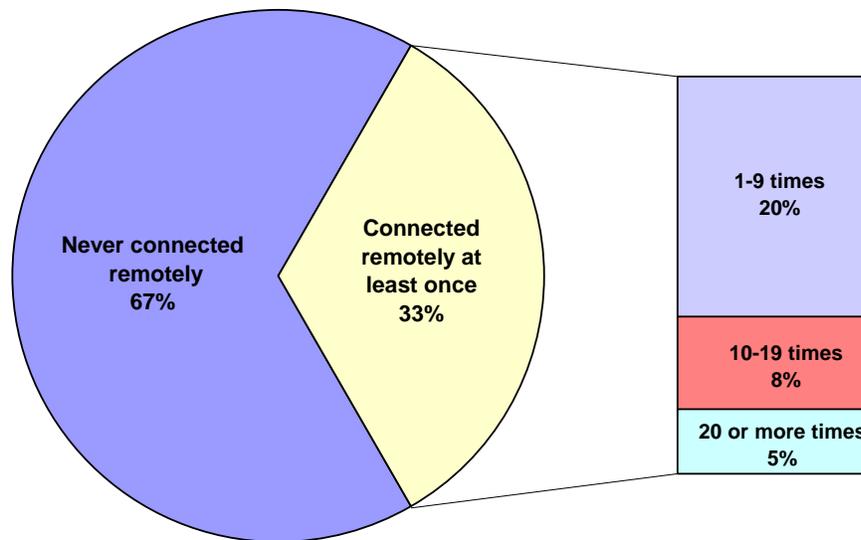
Cortez Public Library
Public Comments

"The Cortez Library is extremely good for this community. I see students on computers and in the book and audio aisles every time I am in the Library. I find the selection appropriate, the staff knowledgeable and helpful. Our library is an asset to this town and is being used and appreciated frequently by all types of residents of Cortez, young, older, students, homemakers and those seeking to use the books available."

"Our public library is operating on a TINY budget, but still manages to have incredible services and materials."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

CORTEZ PUBLIC LIBRARY

Demographics

The following five charts illustrate the demographics of the respondents to the Cortez Public Library ROI patron survey. Demographic data includes gender, age, highest level of education, race and ethnicity, and personal and household income.

Chart 9

**Return on Investment - Cortez Public Library:
Respondents by Gender**

Male
25%

Female
75%

Chart 10

**Return on Investment - Cortez Public Library:
Respondents by Age**

Chart 11

**Return on Investment - Cortez Public Library:
Respondents by Highest Level of Education**

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

CORTEZ PUBLIC LIBRARY

Chart 12

**Return on Investment - Cortez Public Library:
Respondents by Race and Ethnicity**

Respondents could choose more than one race/ethnicity.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

CORTEZ PUBLIC LIBRARY

Chart 13

**Return on Investment - Cortez Public Library:
Respondent's Personal and Household Income**

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT
DENVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

$5

$1 Invested Yields $5 Return

$1
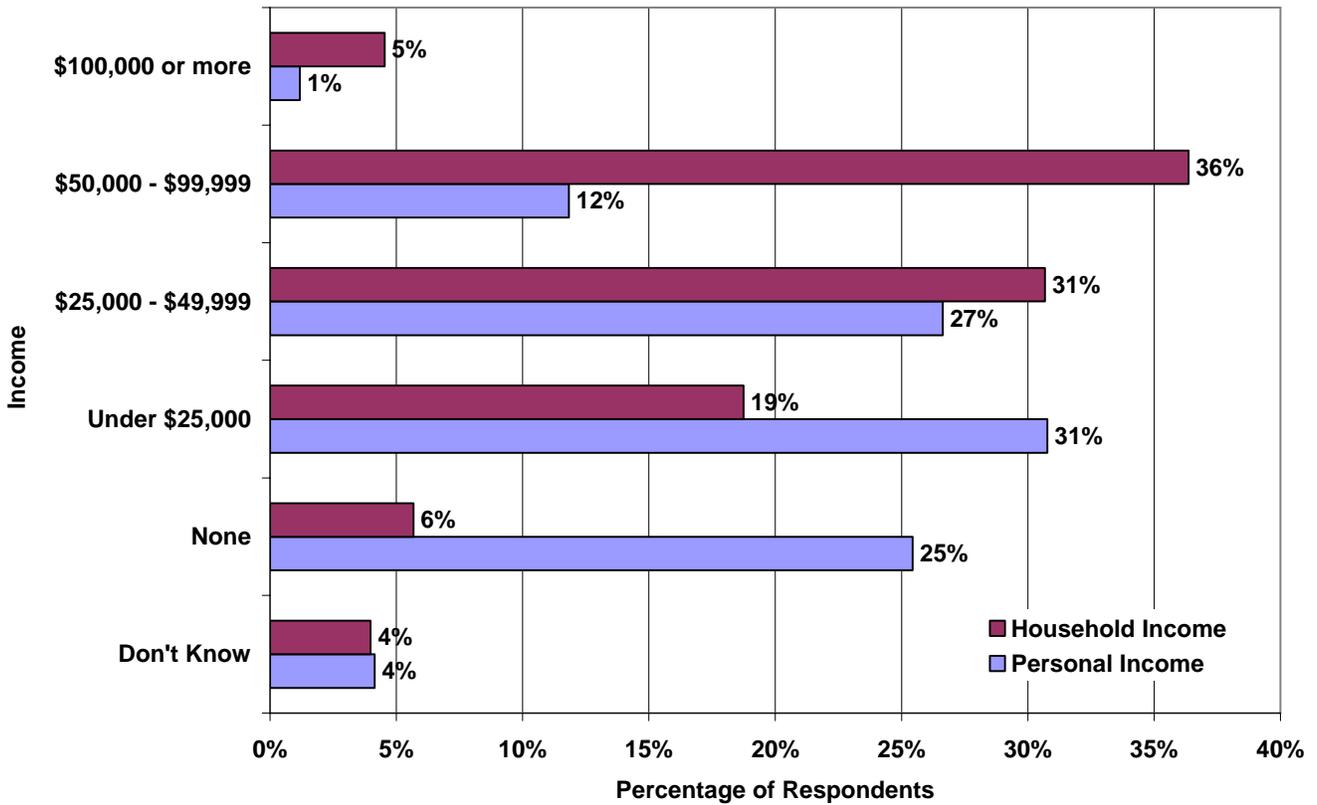
Denver Public Library recently participated in a Return on Investment study conducted by the Library Research Service at the Colorado State Library. This study found a substantial return for taxpayers when investing in their local library. **For every $1.00 invested in Denver Public Library, $4.96 of value is returned to the community.**[1]

Returns on Investment
Denver Public Library[2]

66%   Two-thirds of Denver Public Library patrons come to the library over 25 times per year.

52%   Over half of Denver Public Library patrons said they would have spent $20 or more getting their information from another source if the library did not exist.

2.8 million   Patrons came to Denver Public Library specifically to check out books nearly 3 million times in the previous 12 months.

56%   More than half of Denver Public Library patrons connected to a Colorado public library from a home computer in the previous 12 months.

83%   Four out of five Denver Public Library patrons have used a library computer.

---

[1] Data was compiled from surveys of the individual libraries, the 2006 Colorado Public Library Report (accessible at www.LRS.org), and a survey in which library users were asked to estimate their cost of using alternative sources to meet their library-related needs, as well as their non-library expenditures.
[2] Based on responses to the ROI patron survey.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT
DENVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Why Return on Investment?

In the spring of 2006 a need was identified in Colorado to describe the variety of benefits delivered by public libraries to their patrons and to quantify the return on investment to taxpayers for monies invested in public libraries. To provide this data, the Library Research Service (LRS) undertook "What's It Worth to You? A Return on Investment Study of Selected Colorado Public Libraries" (ROI) in May 2006. Using a multiple case study approach, this research was designed to create such information for eight public libraries, representing geographically diverse regions of Colorado. Data were gathered using a combination of questionnaires, key informant interviews, and available data sources.

ROI Methodology

This study follows a model of contingent valuation that has been used in similar studies to determine ROI for public libraries. Contingent valuation is an economic technique often used for the valuation of non-market resources. This figure was calculated by examining the ramifications of not having a public library for the communities served. It includes:

- **Cost to Use Alternatives:** The estimated amount of money that would have been spent using an alternative information source.
- **Lost Use:** The estimated value of the lost information for users who would not have tried to attain the information elsewhere.
- **Direct Local Expenditures:** Contributions made by the library to community businesses and individuals in the form of purchasing goods and services.
- **Compensation for Library Staff:** Library staff would not receive compensation and unemployment would be a factor for at least some period of time.
- **Halo Spending:** Purchases made by library users from vendors and business that are located close to the library. A recent study found that approximately 23 percent of these purchases would not occur if the library did not exist.[3]

Table 1

Return on Investment Factors – Denver Public Library[4]

Cost to Use Alternatives	$105,197,986
Lost Use	$5,332,429
Direct Local Expenditures	$1,718,488
Compensation for Library Staff	$21,940,734
Halo Spending	$7,463,041
Total Return on Investment	**$141,652,678**
Total Local Investment	÷ $28,533,200
Return per Dollar Invested	**$4.96**

---

[3] Proctor, Richard, Bob Usherwood, and Gill Sobczyk. *What Happens When a Public Library Service Closes Down?* Library Management 18, no. 1 (1997): 59-64.
[4] Data were compiled from surveys of the individual libraries, the 2006 Colorado Public Library Report (accessible at www.LRS.org), and a survey in which library users were asked to estimate their cost of using alternative sources to meet their library-related needs, as well as their non-library expenditures. Estimates for alternative costs are conservative, as they do not include the value of extra time that might have been necessary to meet their needs elsewhere.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

DENVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Denver Public Library at a Glance

Denver Public Library is located on the Rocky Mountain Front Range. It is organized as a municipal library to serve residents of Colorado's capital city.[5] It also has the state's largest legal service area population for a public library at 571,848. With a total of 23 outlets, Denver Public Library has a central library located in downtown Denver, 22 branches throughout the city, and one bookmobile. The collection includes over 2 million print volumes, 137,000 audios, 250,000 videos, and 5,500 periodicals. To access the many electronic resources, it also has over five hundred public access computers.

Table 2
Selected Statistics for
Denver Public Library[6]

Description	Total		Ratio[7]
Circulation	9,244,353		16.2 per capita
Visits	3,762,490		6.6 per capita
Library Programs	15,945	657	program attendees per 1,000 served
Public Access Computers	524		.92 per 1,000 served

Funded primarily through local revenue (89.4%), DPL receives $28.5 million in city general funds, $147,400 in federal funds, and $3.2 million in other operating revenue.[8] Local revenue per capita is $49.90. Because this study examines the return on investment for each library's community[9], only local revenue is used in calculating the monetary contribution of community members to each library.

---

[5] Metropolitan status, legal basis, and geographic area are defined by the Federal-State Cooperative System for Public Library Data and the National Center of Education Statistics (accessible at http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/libraries/public.asp). These definitions are also used in the Colorado Public Library Annual Report (accessible at www.LRS.org).

[6] 2006 Colorado Public Library Annual Report (accessible at www.LRS.org).

[7] Per capita is figured using legal service area (LSA) population (accessible at http://www.lrs.org/pub_stats.php).

[8] 2006 Colorado Public Library Annual Report. "Other operating revenue" refers to funds not reported under local, state or federal revenue and may include, but are not limited to, monetary gifts, donations, and grants (accessible at www.LRS.org).

[9] A library's community is defined as the legal service area as specified in the library's establishment documents.

# PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

DENVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

SURVEY RESULTS

Library Use
Once through the doors, visitors to Denver Public Library tend to be heavy users of library resources. Of the library visitors who responded to the ROI survey, two-thirds of them had visited the library 25 times or more over the last twelve months; essentially, these patrons come to the library at least every other week (see Chart 1). One in five had visited on about a monthly basis over the previous year - between 10 and 24 times. Only 1 out of 20 respondents said that they visited the library fewer than 5 times in the previous 12 months.

Chart 1

**Return on Investment - Denver Public Library:
Respondent's Number of Visits to the Library in the Last 12 Months**
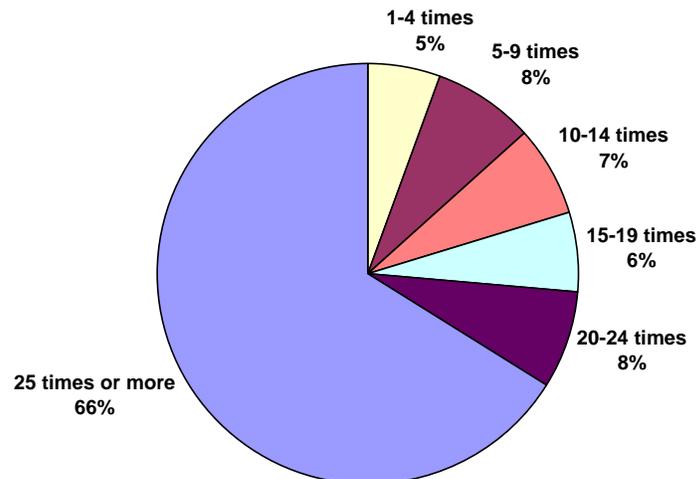
**Denver Public Library
Helping Businesses Succeed**

Chuck Hahn, City of Aurora Small Business Specialist, always takes his business workshop participants to Denver Public Library. With the help of Dixie Malone, Adult Outreach Librarian, participants learn how to use databases and reference materials to help them construct successful business plans. Mr. Hahn believes the "library is a fundamental component…absolutely vital" in business planning. He also believes what the participants learn at the library will be "information they can use throughout the life of their business". When asked about the value of libraries and librarians to his work and to those starting a business, he emphasized that they provide a "tremendous amount of value" by accelerating the process of getting the right information to the right person and if you had to pay someone to do that, it would be very expensive.

continued…

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

DENVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

In 2006, there were 3,762,490 visits to the Denver Public Library. Despite the changing ways in which the public uses libraries, checking out materials remains the primary reason for library visits. Nearly three-quarters of these visits (2,804,456) resulted in the library user checking out a book (see Chart 2). Additionally, the concept of "library as place" remains strong. Over one-quarter of respondent visits included reading a book (28%) or periodical (30%) in the library, and programs and instruction still draw a considerable number of people into the library. However, for many of these visits, library use patterns are changing, as computer use has grown to encompass a large part of the library user's experience. Based on responses to the survey, during 39 percent of these visits the visitor accessed the Internet on a library computer. Accessing databases and software via library computers is a large part of use as well.

Chart 2

Return on Investment - Denver Public Library:
Number of Visits During Which Users Performed Specific Activities

Activity	Number of Visits
Checked out book	2,804,456
Checked out DVD/VHS	2,058,832
Checked out CD/tape	1,922,077
Accessed Internet on library computer	1,466,074
Read periodical in the library	1,143,571
Asked librarian to help find information	1,072,545
Used print reference materials	1,043,801
Read book in the library	1,032,201
Accessed databases on library computer	998,079
Accessed software on library computer	549,501
Attended lecture, class or other program	463,592
Received technology instruction	260,436
Attended literacy instruction class	172,514
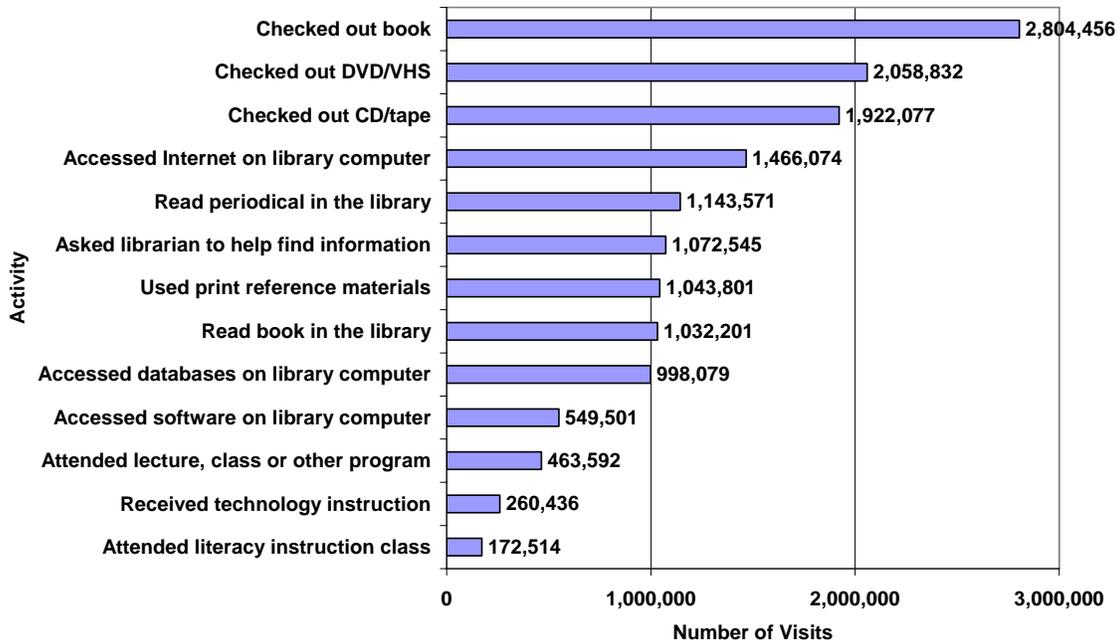
Denver Public Library
Helping Businesses Succeed

DPL's Dixie Malone reaches out to business all over the metro area. As an Adult Outreach Librarian, she helps patrons understand business research. Her philosophy: "Business research is looking for numbers" and more credibility is given to resources that provide the data needed to start and operate a business. Ms. Malone said, "People don't necessarily equate a public library with business," but she added that this perception may be changing as even large corporations that typically rely upon their in-house resources are becoming aware of what DPL can do for them. Regardless of how she's interacting with patrons, she emphasized the importance of DPL's policy to "never say no" to a patron who may request assistance in learning how to use business reference materials or to a business group that wishes to tour the library and learn about its services.

continued…

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

DENVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

The majority of respondents (59%) reported coming to the library primarily for personal interests and/or recreational purposes (see Chart 3). In addition, a large percentage of respondents came to the library for educational purposes (17%), meeting their needs as students, educators, and home-schooling parents. Job-related reasons also attracted visitors to the library (10%).

Chart 3

**Return on Investment - Denver Public Library:
Primary Reason for Respondent's Trip to Library**
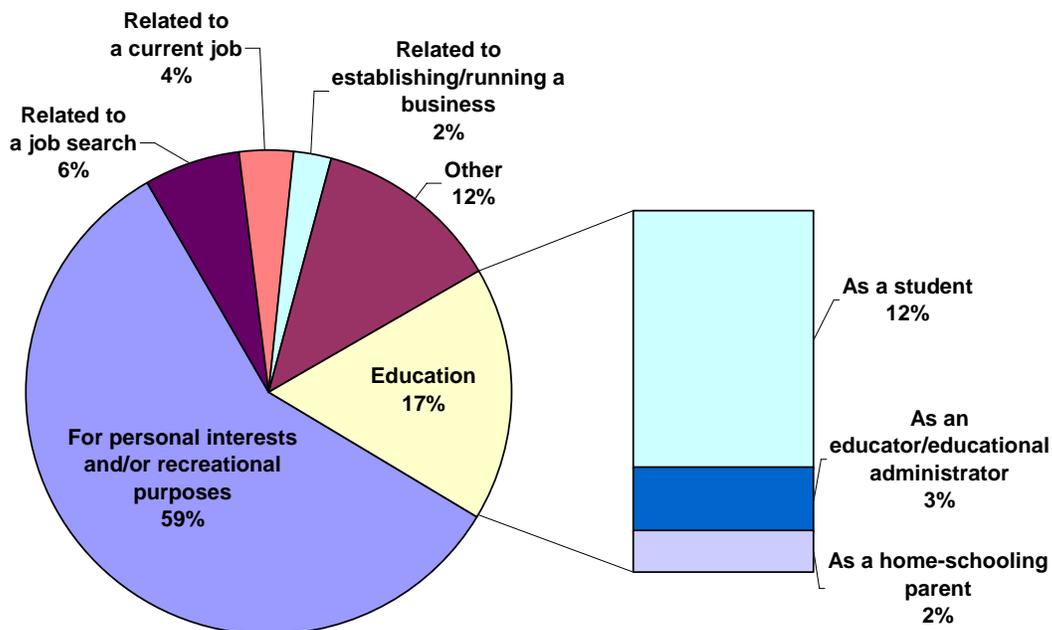
**Denver Public Library
Helping Businesses Succeed**

DPL offers many resources and services to Denver's business community, like one-on-one reference services and business-specific databases available anywhere with an Internet connection. It also offers workshops and group instruction, including working with SCORE and NxLeveL, organizations that help people start up and run their small businesses. Special events for business are another way DPL reaches out to business. The 8th Annual Small Business Resource Fair took place this August, bringing together the organizations that help small or micro-businesses get started and keep running.

Alternatives to Library Use

When asked what they would do to meet their information needs if the library did not exist, a majority of respondents (60%) said that they would have tried to get the information elsewhere (see Chart 4). However, 19 percent would not have known where else to go to get the information they received at the library, and another 10 percent would not have tried to get the information from another source. Without the library, the information needs of these users would not have been met.

Chart 4

**Return on Investment - Denver Public Library:
Respondent's Alternative Strategy for Meeting Information Needs
If Library Did Not Exist**

Other
11%

I would <u>not</u> have tried
to get the information
from another source
10%

I would have tried to
get the information
from another source
60%

I would <u>not</u> have
known where else to
go to get the
information
19%
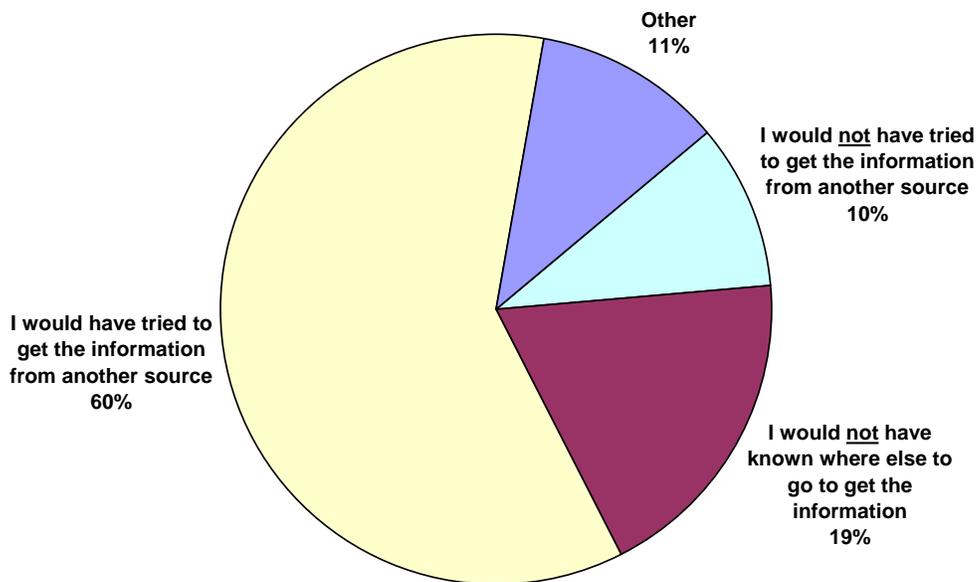
**Denver Public Library
Patron Comments**

"Often it is the only source of information!"

"It's my favorite part about living in Denver. All of the world is at my fingertips."

"I love, adore, value and respect every brick and hunk of mortar in every DPL building and feel every library staffer needs to make 50 percent more than they are currently earning! Between DPL, Prospector and WorldCat, I have at my computer keyboard ... the world."

"DPL libraries allow me to engage in a much wider world that would not be possible without this much appreciated and valued resource."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

DENVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Obtaining the information received during library visits would be expensive if acquired through alternative means. Respondents who would have tried to meet their information needs using an alternative source were asked to estimate how much money they would have spent using the other source. Over half (52%) of Denver Public Library respondents said that they would have spent at least $20 to have their information needs met elsewhere. Fewer than one in five (18%) said that they would not have needed to spend any money to meet their information needs with an alternative source (see Chart 5).

Chart 5

Return on Investment - Denver Public Library:
Respondent's Estimated Cost of Alternatives to Library Resources

- $10-$19 — 14%
- $20 or more — 52%
- Less than $10 — 16%
- No money required — 18%
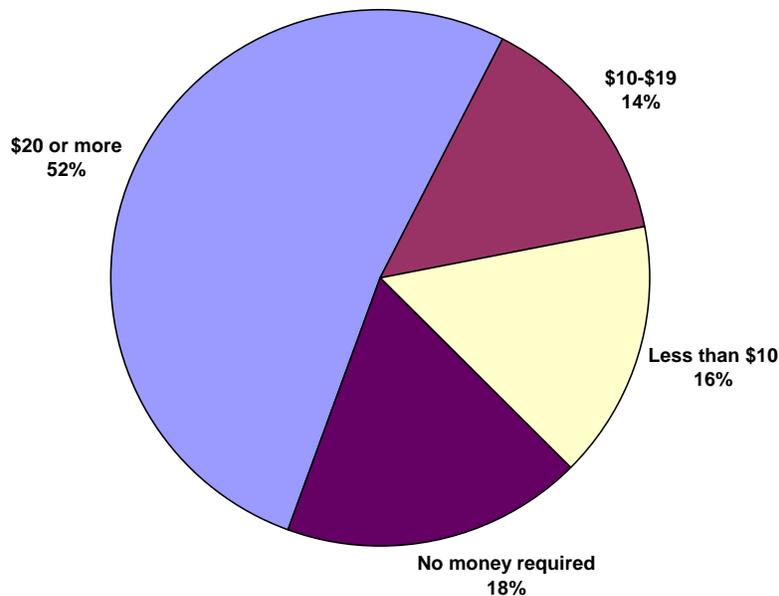
Denver Public Library
Patron Comments

"The single most important card in my wallet is my Denver Public library card. There is nothing better than having all those resources and materials available to you."

"It's essential to the intellectual, social, and even spiritual lifeblood of the community. The good it does for every member of the community, *whether they use it or not* is incalculable."

"I get so much benefit from the library that I find it almost impossible to exaggerate"

"It's a value to me that I cannot calculate in terms of money. It's essential to my work."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

DENVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Many respondents to the survey reported doing other activities or errands during the same trip as their visit to the library. The most likely peripheral activity, with 30 percent of respondents, was shopping (see Chart 6). Many respondents also reported going to a restaurant or coffee shop (16%) and attending to personal business during their trip (23%). More than one in ten said they went to the post office (12%) and/or the bank (11%).[10]

Chart 6

**Return on Investment - Denver Public Library:
Activities Performed by Respondent on the Same Trip as Library Visit**
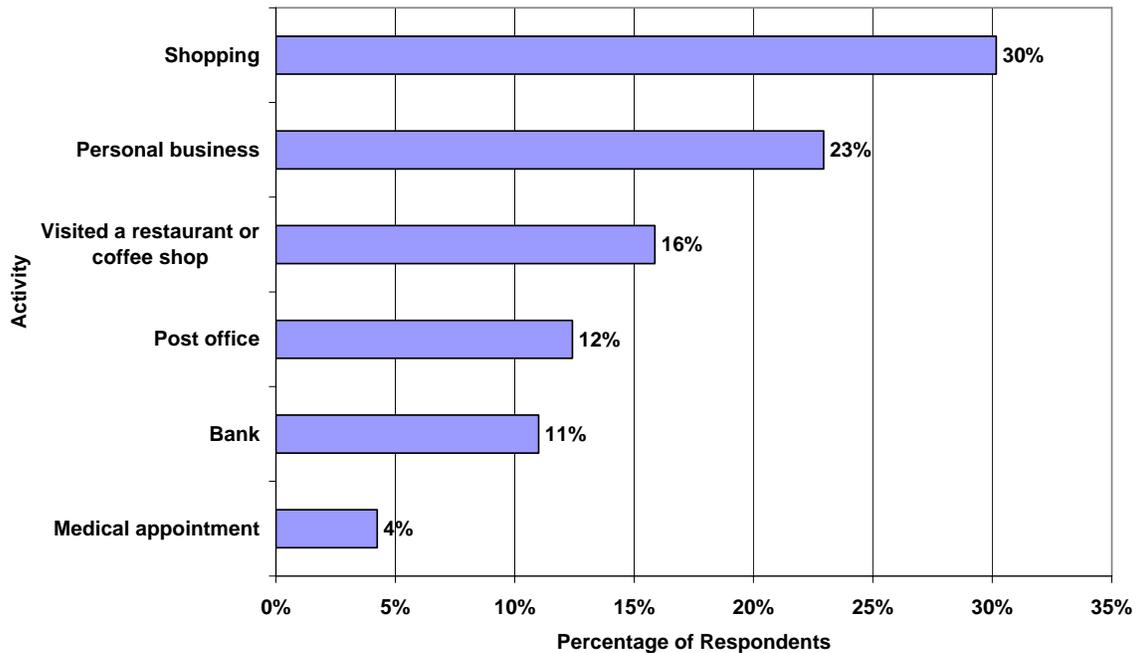
**Denver Public Library
Patron Comments**

"One of the best things about Denver is its library system."

"We LOVE our public library. While we were home-schooling, we visited weekly and we continue to do so. Our librarians have become friends and are very helpful when seeking additional resources. As an educator, I utilize the library to support my classroom library and the topics of study.   I cannot say enough about our library!"

"The best value for the dollar of all city/county services."

---

[10] As noted in the section on methodology, a U.K. study reported that a portion of the spending on these "halo" activities would not have occurred if the library were not available.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

DENVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Denver Public Library's computers are extremely popular with their users. More than four out of five respondents (83%) reported having used a library computer at some point (see Chart 7). The fact that so many patrons are using computers suggests that DPL is serving as a location to bridge the digital divide.

Chart 7

**Return on Investment - Denver Public Library:
Percentage of Respondents Who Have Used a Library Computer**

Have not used a
library computer
17%

Have used a library
computer
83%
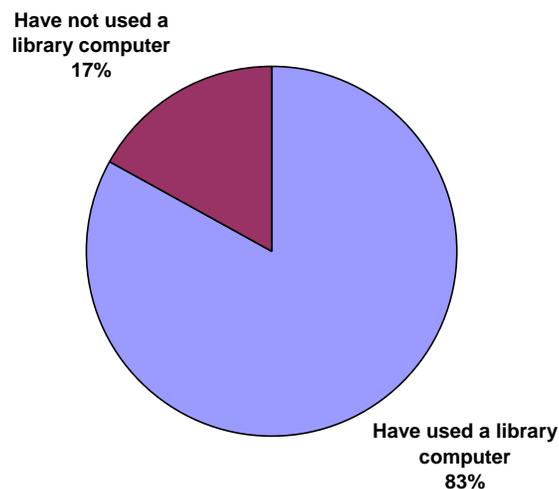
**Denver Public Library
Patron Comments**

"The public library is one of the most visible benefits of government and also one of the most user-friendly. It helps level the playing field for those who cannot afford internet access at home or do not have disposable income to spend on the latest novel or nonfiction book. All of these are essential to having a cohesive local and national culture and contribute to our unity and American "fair play" ideal."

"The public library is the best investment any government could make. An educated public is the best guarantee for a genuine democracy. Long live the DPL!!"

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

DENVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

In addition to in-library use, Denver Public Library's users appear to frequently connect to libraries from home. More than half of the respondents to this survey (56%) had connected to a Colorado public library from a home computer in the past twelve months (See Chart 8). As with visits, those that connect do so often. Nearly one-third of the respondents (30%) had connected to a public library from home at least 20 times within the last year. Not only is the library a place to visit in the community, it is a place to visit in cyberspace as well.

Chart 8

**Return on Investment - Denver Public Library:
Number of Times Respondent Connected to a Colorado Public Library
from a Home Computer in Last 12 Months**

Never connected remotely 44%

Connected remotely at least once 56%

1-9 times 16%

10-19 times 10%

20 or more times 30%
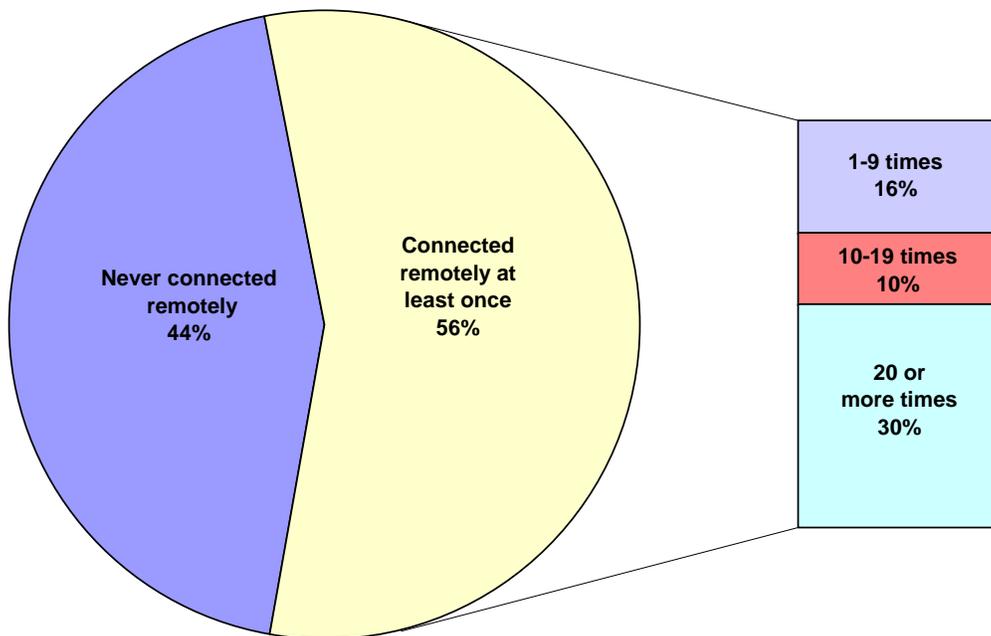
**Denver Public Library
Patron Comments**

"I love using the online system to put books on hold and find out their status- when they come in, when they are due, and renewing online. Although I rarely go to my branch, I am on the online system putting books on hold or checking my status almost daily."

"I love, love, love my public library. It provides me with endless enjoyment. I love how easy it is to access things. I love being able to cruise the library catalog from my home computer. The Denver Library is one of the HUGE reasons I remain a Denver resident."

Demographics

The following five charts illustrate the demographics of the respondents to the Denver Public Library ROI patron survey. Demographic data includes gender, age, highest level of education, race and ethnicity, and personal and household income.

Chart 9

**Return on Investment - Denver Public Library:
Respondents by Gender**

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

DENVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Chart 10

**Return on Investment - Denver Public Library:
Respondents by Age**

Chart 11

**Return on Investment - Denver Public Library:
Respondents by Highest Level of Education**

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

DENVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Chart 12

**Return on Investment - Denver Public Library:
Respondents by Race and Ethnicity**

Respondents could choose more than one race/ethnicity.

Chart 13

**Return on Investment - Denver Public Library:
Respondent's Personal and Household Income**

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT
DOUGLAS COUNTY LIBRARIES

$5

$1 Invested Yields $5 Return

$1

Douglas County Libraries recently participated in a Return on Investment study conducted by the Library Research Service at the Colorado State Library. This study found a substantial return for taxpayers when investing in their local library. **For every $1.00 invested in Douglas County Libraries, $5.02 of value is returned to the community.**[1]

Returns on Investment
Douglas County Libraries[2]

65% Nearly two-thirds of Douglas County Libraries' patrons come to the library over 25 times per year.

63% Over half of Douglas County Libraries' patrons said they would have spent $20 or more getting their information from another source if the library did not exist.

1.4 million Patrons came to Douglas County Libraries specifically to check out books over 1 million times in the previous 12 months.

74% Almost three-fourths of Douglas County Libraries' patrons connected to a Colorado public library from a home computer in the previous 12 months.

77% Three out of four Douglas County Libraries patrons have used a library computer.

---

[1] Data was compiled from surveys of the individual libraries, the 2006 Colorado Public Library Report (accessible at www.LRS.org), and a survey in which library users were asked to estimate their cost of using alternative sources to meet their library-related needs, as well as their non-library expenditures.
[2] Based on responses to the ROI patron survey.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT
DOUGLAS COUNTY LIBRARIES

Why Return on Investment?
In the spring of 2006 a need was identified in Colorado to describe the variety of benefits delivered by public libraries to their patrons and to quantify the return on investment to taxpayers for monies invested in public libraries. To provide this data, the Library Research Service (LRS) undertook "What's It Worth to You? A Return on Investment Study of Selected Colorado Public Libraries" (ROI) in May 2006. Using a multiple case study approach, this research was designed to create such information for eight public libraries, representing geographically diverse regions of Colorado. Data were gathered using a combination of questionnaires, key informant interviews, and available data sources.

ROI Methodology
This study follows a model of contingent valuation that has been used in similar studies to determine ROI for public libraries. Contingent valuation is an economic technique often used for the valuation of non-market resources. This figure was calculated by examining the ramifications of not having a public library for the communities served. It includes:

- **Cost to Use Alternatives:** The estimated amount of money that would have been spent using an alternative information source.
- **Lost Use:** The estimated value of the lost information for users who would not have tried to attain the information elsewhere.
- **Direct Local Expenditures:** Contributions made by the library to community businesses and individuals in the form of purchasing goods and services.
- **Compensation for Library Staff:** Library staff would not receive compensation and unemployment would be a factor for at least some period of time.
- **Halo Spending:** Purchases made by library users from vendors and business that are located close to the library. A recent study found that approximately 23percent of these purchases would not occur if the library did not exist.[3]

Table 1

Return on Investment Factors – Douglas County Libraries[4]

Cost to Use Alternatives	$66,283,529
Lost Use	$2,965,705
Direct Local Expenditures	$582,830
Compensation for Library Staff	$10,042,081
Halo Spending	$5,362,720
Total Return on Investment	**$85,236,865**
Total Local Investment	÷ $16,983,799
Return per Dollar Invested	**$5.02**

---

[3] Proctor, Richard, Bob Usherwood, and Gill Sobczyk. *What Happens When a Public Library Service Closes Down?* Library Management 18, no. 1 (1997): 59-64.
[4] Data were compiled from surveys of the individual libraries, the 2006 Colorado Public Library Report (accessible at www.LRS.org), and a survey in which library users were asked to estimate their cost of using alternative sources to meet their library-related needs, as well as their non-library expenditures. Estimates for alternative costs are conservative, as they do not include the value of extra time that might have been necessary to meet their needs elsewhere.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

DOUGLAS COUNTY LIBRARIES

Douglas County Libraries at a Glance
Douglas County Libraries (DCL) are located on the Rocky Mountain Front Range. Organized as a library district, DCL serves residents of Colorado's fastest-growing suburban county.[5] It has a legal service area population of 251,418. Douglas County Libraries has 5 branches throughout the county and a bookmobile. The collection includes over 500,000 print volumes, 58,000 audios, 71,000 videos, and 1,300 periodicals. To access its many electronic resources, DCL also has 95 public access computers.

Table 2
Selected Statistics for
Douglas County Libraries[6]

Description	Total		Ratio[7]
Circulation	5,479,355		21.8 per capita
Visits	1,631,483		6.5 per capita
Library Programs	4,454	446	Program attendees per 1,000 served
Public Access Computers	95		0.38 per 1,000 served

Funded primarily through local revenue (93.4%), DCL receives nearly $17 million from a district mill levy and $1.2 million in other operating revenue.[8] Local revenue per capita is $67.55. Because this study examines the return on investment for each library's community[9], only local revenue is used in calculating the monetary contribution of community members to each library.

---

[5] Metropolitan status, legal basis, and geographic area are defined by the Federal-State Cooperative System for Public Library Data and the National Center of Education Statistics (accessible at http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/libraries/public.asp). These definitions are also used in the Colorado Public Library Annual Report (accessible at www.LRS.org).
[6] 2006 Colorado Public Library Annual Report (accessible at www.LRS.org).
[7] Per capita is figured using legal service area (LSA) population (accessible at http://www.lrs.org/pub_stats.php).
[8] 2006 Colorado Public Library Annual Report. "Other operating revenue" refers to funds not reported under local, state or federal revenue and may include, but are not limited to, monetary gifts, donations, and grants (accessible at www.LRS.org).
[9] A library's community is defined as the legal service area as specified in the library's establishment documents.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

DOUGLAS COUNTY LIBRARIES

SURVEY RESULTS

Library Use
Once through the doors, visitors to Douglas County Libraries tend to be heavy users of library resources. Of the library visitors who responded to the ROI survey, nearly two-thirds of them had visited the library 25 times or more over the last twelve months; essentially, these patrons come to the library at least every other week (see Chart 1). Another quarter had visited on about a monthly basis over the previous year - between 10 and 24 times. Only 1 out of 20 respondents said that they visited the library fewer than 5 times in the previous 12 months.

Chart 1

**Return on Investment - Douglas County Libraries:
Respondent's Number of Visits to the Library in the Last 12 Months**

- 1-4 times 4%
- 5-9 times 6%
- 10-14 times 7%
- 15-19 times 10%
- 20-24 times 8%
- 25 times or more 65%
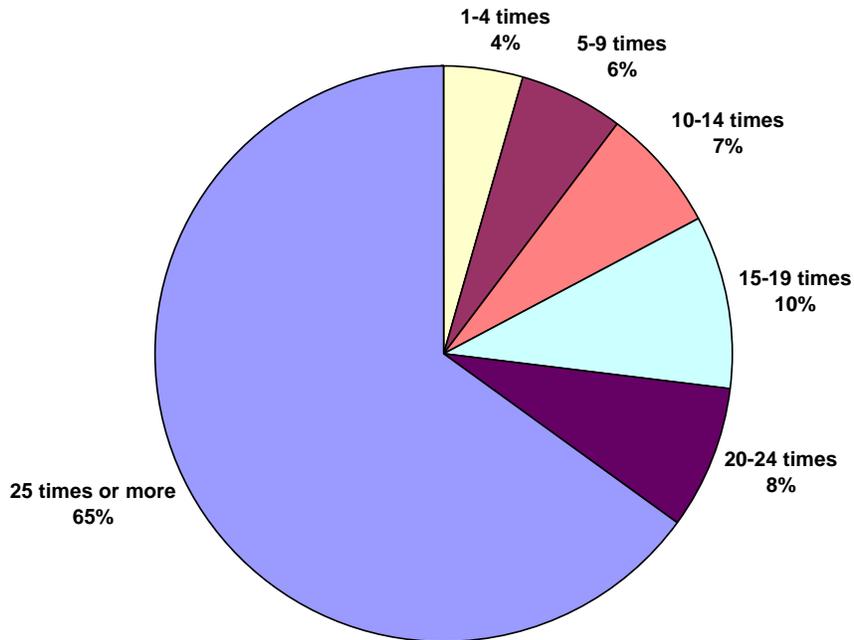
**Douglas County Libraries
Helping Businesses Succeed**

Douglas County Libraries is heavily engaged in the business development of their community. In addition to library staff being involved in the Chamber of Commerce, some DCL librarians contribute to the community by attending Economic Development Council meetings in Castle Rock. Notably, librarians were able to participate in the development of the new Castle Rock Community Center.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

DOUGLAS COUNTY LIBRARIES

In 2006, there were 1,631,483 visits to the Douglas County Libraries. Despite the changing ways in which the public uses libraries, checking out materials remains the primary reason for library visits. More than four-fifths of these visits (1,398,461) resulted in the library user checking out a book (see Chart 2). Additionally, the concept of "library as place" remains strong. Nearly one-quarter of respondent visits included reading a book (23%) or periodical (24%) in the library, and programs and instruction still draw a considerable number of people into the library. However, for many of these visits, library use patterns are changing, as computer use has grown to encompass a large part of the library user's experience. Based on responses to the survey, during 22 percent of these visits the visitor accessed the Internet on a library computer. Accessing databases and software via library computers is a large part of use as well.

Chart 2

**Return on Investment - Douglas County Libraries:
Number of Visits During Which Users Performed Specific Activities**

Activity	Number of Visits
Checked out book	1,398,461
Checked out DVD/VHS	940,367
Checked out CD/tape	832,420
Asked librarian to help find information	409,527
Read periodical in the library	386,000
Read book in the library	367,545
Used print reference materials	356,086
Accessed Internet on library computer	351,557
Accessed databases on library computer	267,942
Attended lecture, class or other program	192,988
Accessed software on library computer	131,011
Attended literacy instruction class	46,172
Received technology instruction	44,129

**Douglas County Libraries
Helping Businesses Succeed**

DCL provides a site for the SCORE (Service Core of Retired Executives) Program, a series of classes on starting a new business taught by retired business people in the community. The library also provides Job Search Seminars that meet every Tuesday. Each seminar has a different theme related to the job search, such as resume writing or interviewing skills. In addition, library staff conducts training on business databases like Morningstar and Value Line.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

DOUGLAS COUNTY LIBRARIES

The majority of respondents (69%) reported coming to the library primarily for personal interests and/or recreational purposes (see Chart 3). In addition, a large percentage of respondents came to the library for educational purposes (14%), meeting their needs as students, educators, and home-schooling parents. Job-related reasons also attracted visitors to the library (7%).

Chart 3

**Return on Investment - Douglas County Libraries:
Primary Reason for Respondent's Trip to Library**
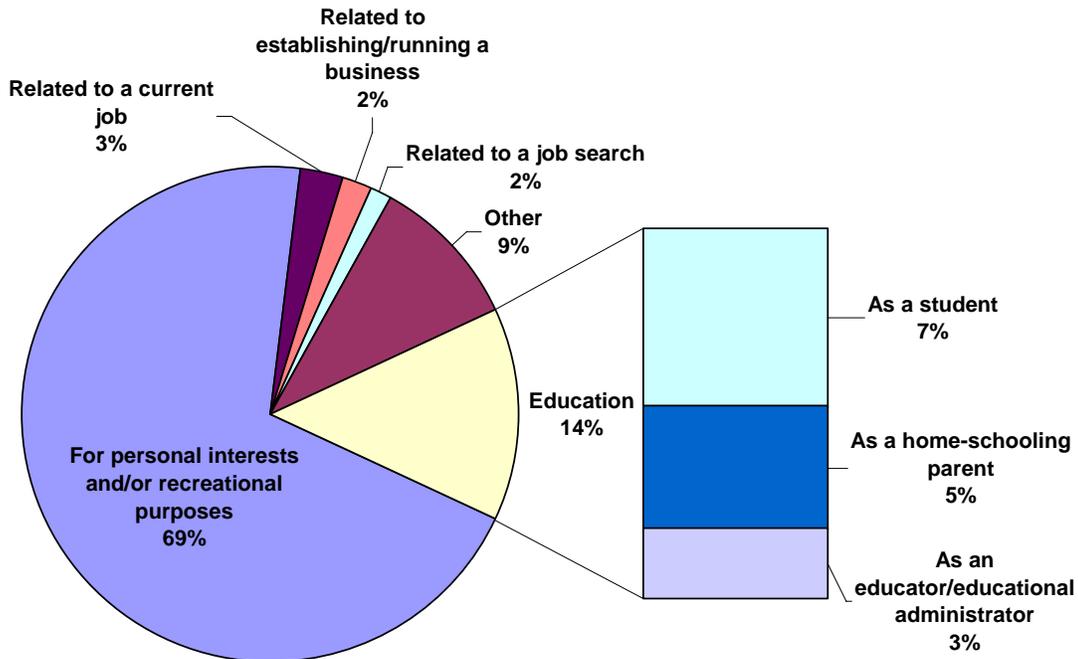
Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100%.

**Douglas County Libraries
Patron Comments**

"My library is terrific! I love the online catalog and ability to reserve from home. I use the library for my kids and their homework, for family movies and music travel and consumer information and materials for substitute teaching."

"Libraries have been a major source of my educational and business research. Thank goodness for libraries and all they offer."

"Almost our entire curriculum is based on library resources. The wealth of information in our library resulted in my children excelling in school and graduating with scholarships. Thank you for public libraries!"

Alternatives to Library Use

When asked what they would do to meet their information needs if the library did not exist, a majority of respondents (66%) said that they would have tried to get the information elsewhere (see Chart 4). However, 14 percent would not have known where else to go to get the information they received at the library, and another 8 percent would not have tried to get the information from another source. Without the library, the information needs of these users would not have been met.

Chart 4

**Return on Investment - Douglas County Libraries:
Respondent's Alternative Strategy for Meeting Information Needs
If Library Did Not Exist**

Other
12%

I would **not** have known where else to go to get the information
14%

I would have tried to get the information from another source
66%

I would **not** have tried to get the information from another source
8%
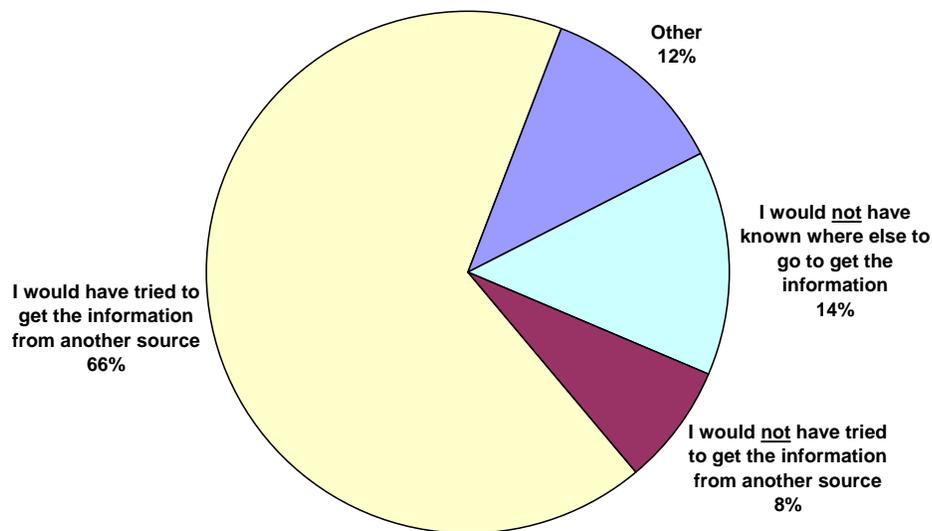
**Douglas County Libraries
Patron Comments**

"The libraries are invaluable. Without them I would struggle with school."

"Public libraries with free access are a part of America and our country that make it great. If you go to a library in any city with a large immigrant base, they rely on these resources to learn, integrate, and advance themselves to become solid contributing members of our society. If you travel to countries that do not provide this service, poverty and ignorance keep the country and its citizens from improving their circumstances."

"It is one of the greatest resources in our community. A good library with many outreach programs for the community members increases the value of our community and the educational opportunities for children and adults."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

DOUGLAS COUNTY LIBRARIES

Obtaining the information received during library visits would be expensive if acquired through alternative means. Respondents who would have tried to meet their information needs using an alternative source were asked to estimate how much money they would have spent using the other source. Over half (63%) of Douglas County Libraries respondents said that they would have spent at least $20 to have their information needs met elsewhere. Fewer than one in five (13%) said that they would not have needed to spend any money to meet their information needs with an alternative source (see Chart 5).

Chart 5

**Return on Investment - Douglas County Libraries:
Respondent's Estimated Cost of Alternatives to Library Resources**

**$10-$19
15%**

**Less than $10
9%**

**No money required
13%**

**$20 or more
63%**
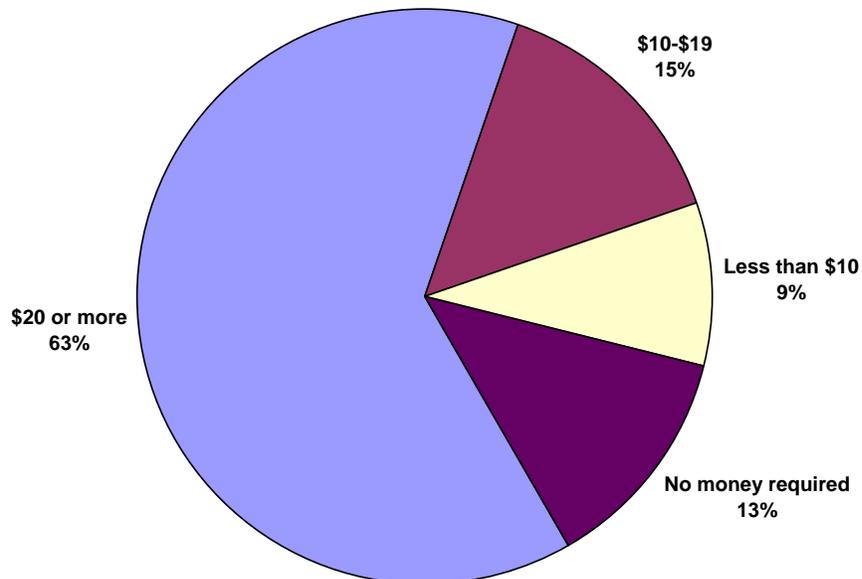
**Douglas County Libraries
Patron Comments**

"The library is an excellent use of our tax dollars and a huge bargain. Keep up the good work!"

"The library is a very valuable resource. Saves my company thousands per year."

"I have learned more about my world through the library than I could have any other way."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

DOUGLAS COUNTY LIBRARIES

Many respondents to the survey reported doing other activities or errands during the same trip as their visit to the library. The most likely peripheral activity, with 48 percent of respondents, was shopping (see Chart 6). Many respondents also reported attending to personal business (21%) and going to the bank (20%) during their trip. Additionally, many reported going to a restaurant or coffee shop (19%) or the post office (19%).[10]

Chart 6

**Return on Investment - Douglas County Libraries:
Activities Performed by Respondent on the Same Trip as Library Visit**

Activity	Percentage
Shopping	48%
Personal business	21%
Bank	20%
Visited a restaurant or coffee shop	19%
Post office	19%
Medical appointment	5%

Percentage of Respondents
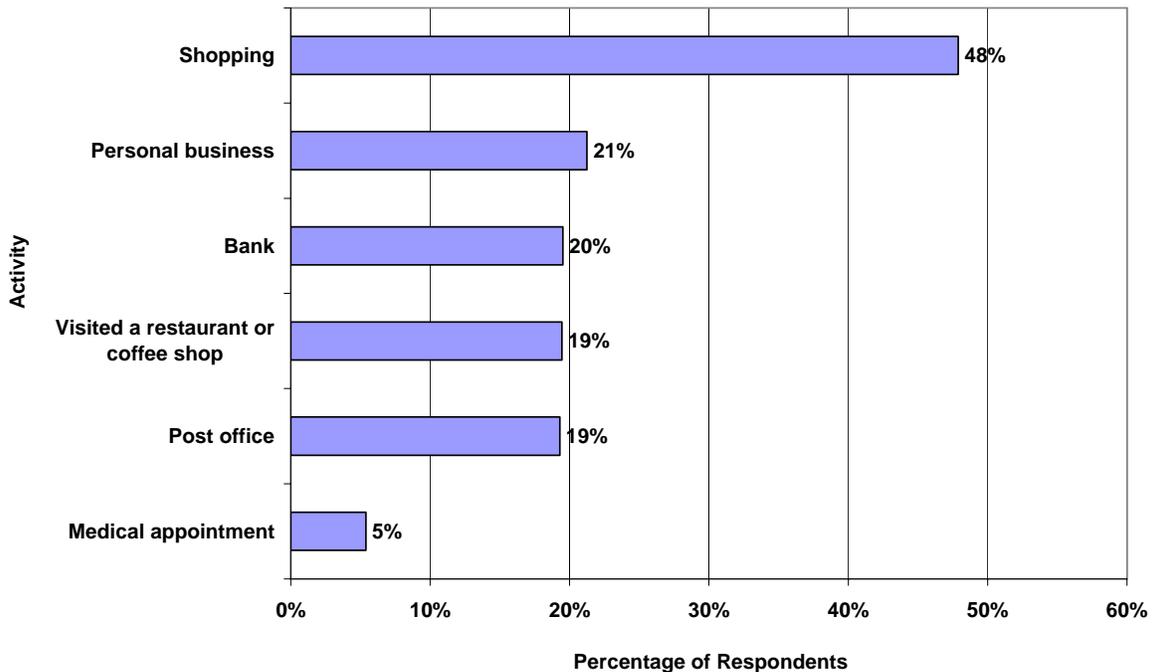
**Douglas County Libraries
Patron Comments**

"It is a central part of our family and community life."

"A public library is an investment in our citizens!"

"We LOVE the Douglas County libraries. I do all of my holds and renewals online. We check out music, movies, books and magazines. I am an artist and I can check out art instruction books to my hearts content."

---

[10] As noted in the section on methodology, a U.K. study reported that a portion of the spending on these "halo" activities would not have occurred if the library were not available.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

DOUGLAS COUNTY LIBRARIES

Douglas County Libraries' computers are extremely popular with their users. More than three out of four respondents (77%) reported having used a library computer at some point (see Chart 7). The fact that so many patrons are using computers suggests that DCL is serving as a location to bridge the digital divide.

Chart 7

**Return on Investment - Douglas County Libraries:
Percentage of Respondents Who Have Used a Library Computer**

Have not used a
library computer
23%

Have used a library
computer
77%
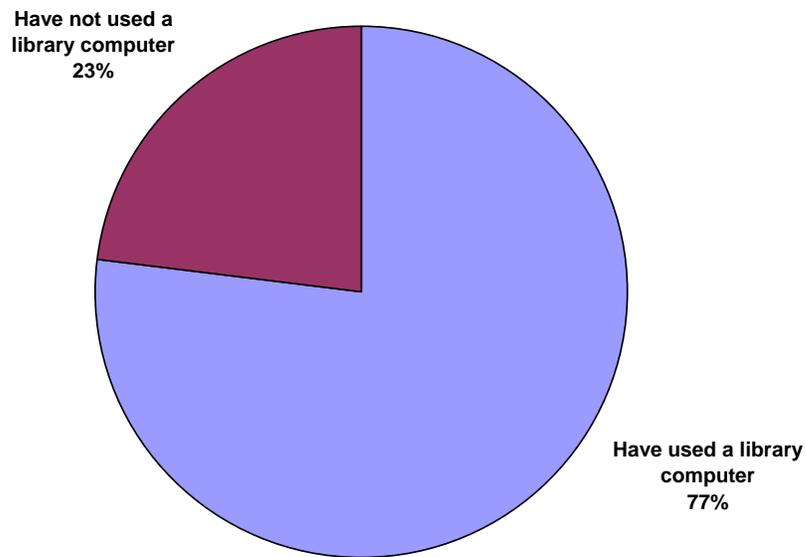
**Douglas County Libraries
Patron Comments**

"I love the online (Internet) access - I search the catalog, reserve materials, and renew them all using the Internet. I occasionally read magazines and do research in Consumer Reports."

"Public libraries are one of the most essential institutions a government/civil society can provide."

In addition to in-library use, Douglas County Libraries' users appear to frequently connect to libraries from home. Almost three-quarters of the respondents to this survey (74%) had connected to a Colorado public library from a home computer in the past twelve months (See Chart 8). As with visits, those that connect do so often. Over two-fifths of the respondents (41%) had connected to a public library from home at least 20 times within the last year. Not only is the library a place to visit in the community, it is a place to visit in cyberspace as well.

Chart 8

**Return on Investment - Douglas County Libraries:
Number of Times Respondent Connected to a Colorado Public Library
from a Home Computer in Last 12 Months**

Never connected remotely
26%

Connected remotely at least once
74%

1-9 times
20%

10-19 times
13%

20 or more times
41%
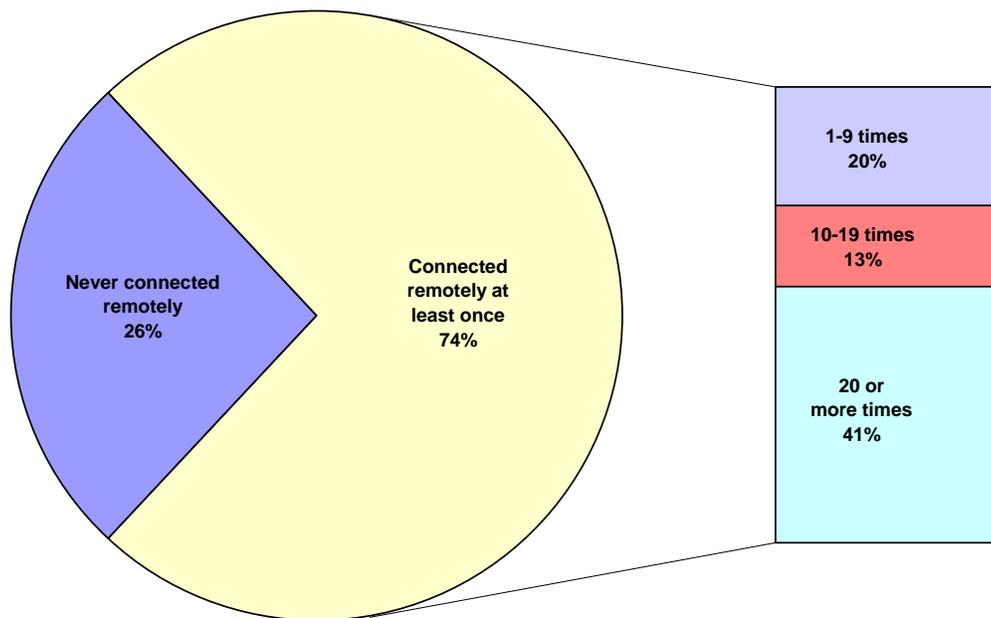
**Douglas County Libraries
Patron Comments**

"I love the ability to log on at home, search the database, reserve books/materials and then only have to run into the library and pick them off the holds shelf and do self check out. It is very efficient and a time saver for a mom of three."

"I reserve books to be held for pick-up and I MUST say this is THE most convenient way to go. I am in and out of the library in less than one minute."

Demographics

The following five charts illustrate the demographics of the respondents to the Douglas County Libraries ROI patron survey. Demographic data includes gender, age, highest level of education, race and ethnicity, and personal and household income.

Chart 9

**Return on Investment - Douglas County Libraries:
Respondents by Gender**

Male
26%

Female
74%
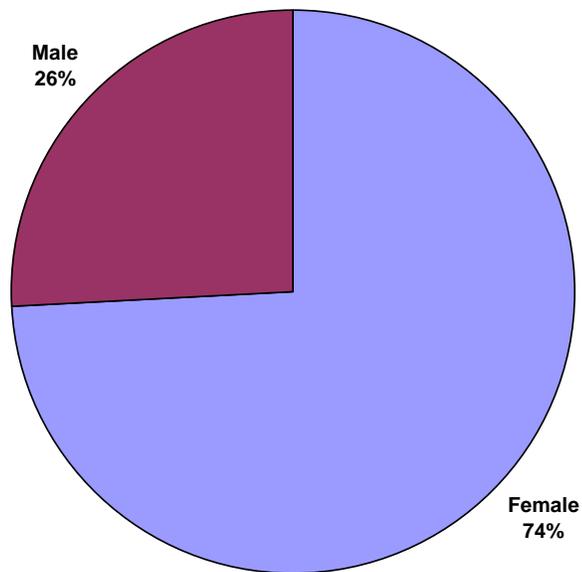
PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

DOUGLAS COUNTY LIBRARIES

Chart 10
Return on Investment - Douglas County Libraries:
Respondents by Age
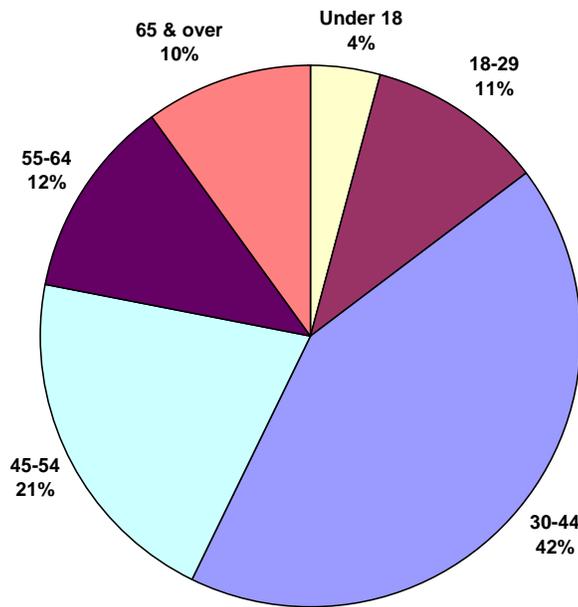
Chart 11

Return on Investment - Douglas County Libraries:
Respondents by Highest Level of Education
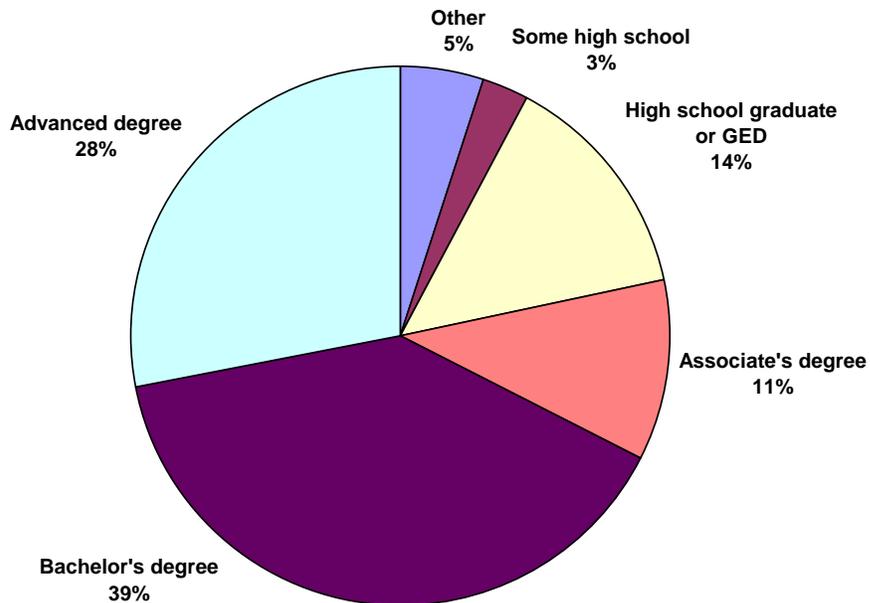
Chart 12

**Return on Investment - Douglas County Libraries:
Respondents by Race and Ethnicity**

Respondents could choose more than one race/ethnicity.
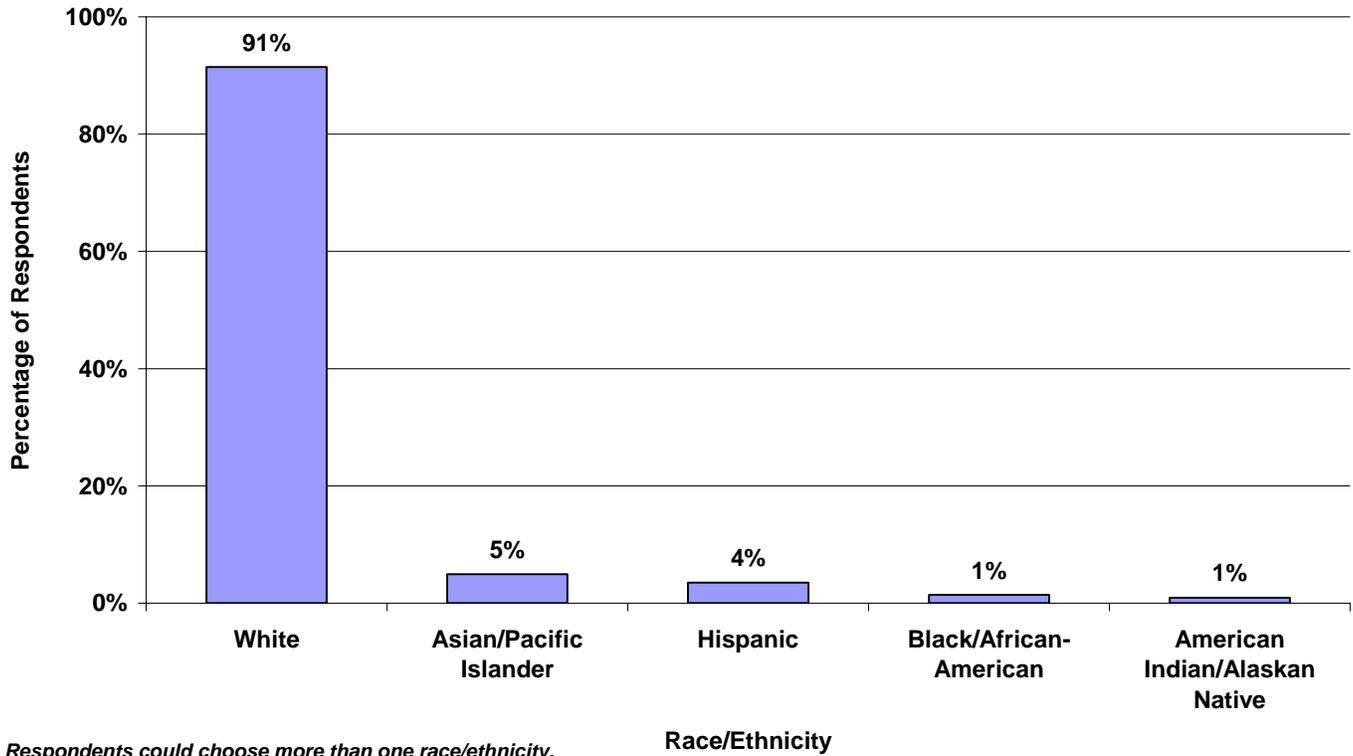
PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

DOUGLAS COUNTY LIBRARIES

Chart 13

**Return on Investment - Douglas County Libraries:
Respondent's Personal and Household Income**
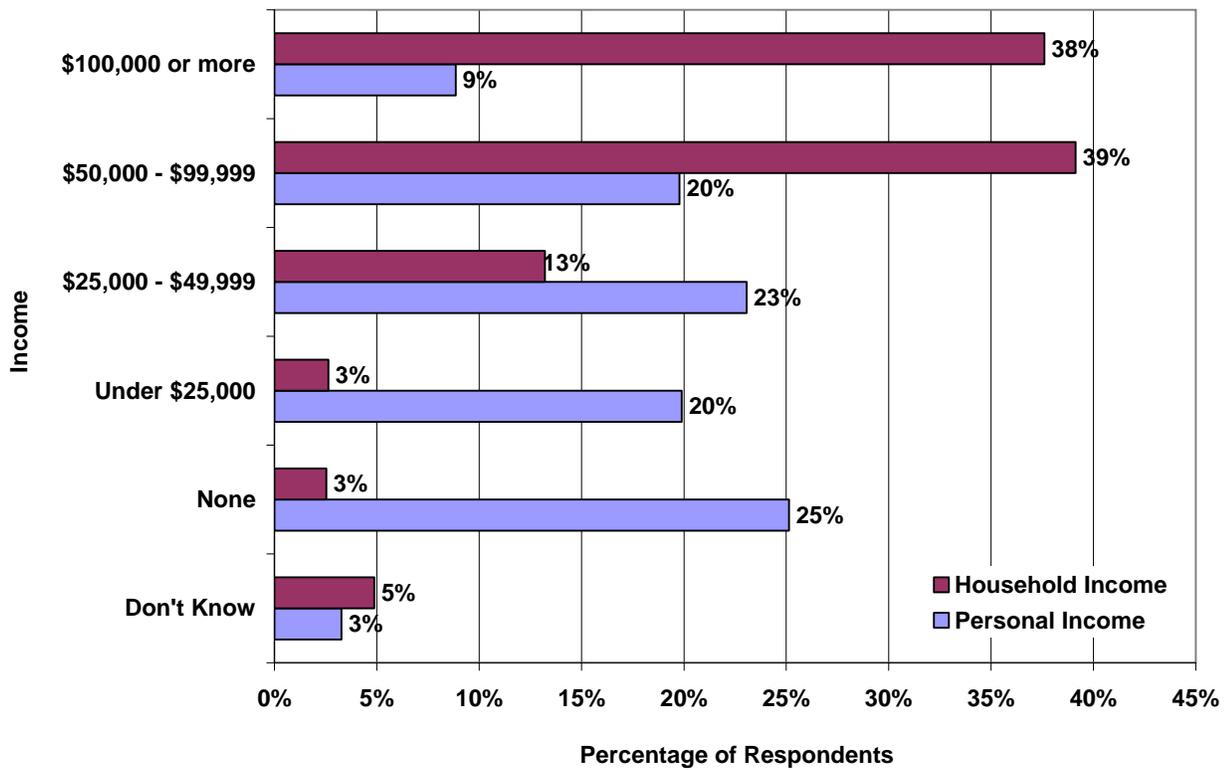
PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT
EAGLE VALLEY LIBRARY DISTRICT

$**4**$**28**

$1 Invested Yields $4.28 Return

$**1**

Eagle Valley Library District recently participated in a Return on Investment study conducted by the Library Research Service at the Colorado State Library. This study found a substantial return for taxpayers when investing in their local library. **For every $1.00 invested in Eagle Valley Library District, $4.28 of value is returned to the community.**[1]

Returns on Investment
Eagle Valley Library District[2]

70% — Over two-thirds of Eagle Valley Library District patrons said they would have spent $20 or more getting their information from another source if the library did not exist.

77% — Three out of four Eagle Valley Library District patrons have used a library computer.

293,365 — Patrons came to Eagle Valley Library District specifically to check out books nearly 300,000 times in the previous 12 months.

62% — Nearly two-thirds of Eagle Valley Library District patrons come to the library over 25 times per year.

44% — Almost half of Eagle Valley Library District patrons connected to a Colorado public library from a home computer in the previous 12 months.

---

[1] Data was compiled from surveys of the individual libraries, the 2006 Colorado Public Library Report (accessible at www.LRS.org), and a survey in which library users were asked to estimate their cost of using alternative sources to meet their library-related needs, as well as their non-library expenditures.
[2] Based on responses to the ROI patron survey.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

EAGLE VALLEY LIBRARY DISTRICT

Why Return on Investment?

In the spring of 2006 a need was identified in Colorado to describe the variety of benefits delivered by public libraries to their patrons and to quantify the return on investment to taxpayers for monies invested in public libraries. To provide this data, the Library Research Service (LRS) undertook "What's It Worth to You? A Return on Investment Study of Selected Colorado Public Libraries" (ROI) in May 2006. Using a multiple case study approach, this research was designed to create such information for eight public libraries, representing geographically diverse regions of Colorado. Data were gathered using a combination of questionnaires, key informant interviews, and available data sources.

ROI Methodology

This study follows a model of contingent valuation that has been used in similar studies to determine ROI for public libraries. Contingent valuation is an economic technique often used for the valuation of non-market resources. This figure was calculated by examining the ramifications of not having a public library for the communities served. It includes:

- **Cost to Use Alternatives:** The estimated amount of money that would have been spent using an alternative information source.
- **Lost Use:** The estimated value of the lost information for users who would not have tried to attain the information elsewhere.
- **Direct Local Expenditures:** Contributions made by the library to community businesses and individuals in the form of purchasing goods and services.
- **Compensation for Library Staff:** Library staff would not receive compensation and unemployment would be a factor for at least some period of time.
- **Halo Spending:** Purchases made by library users from vendors and business that are located close to the library. A recent study found that approximately 23 percent of these purchases would not occur if the library did not exist.[3]

Table 1

Return on Investment Factors – Eagle Valley Library District[4]

Cost to Use Alternatives	$14,187,431
Lost Use	$780,482
Direct Local Expenditures	$284,704
Compensation for Library Staff	$2,135,617
Halo Spending	$895,959
Total Return on Investment	**$18,284,193**
Total Local Investment	÷ $4,275,823
Return per Dollar Invested	**$4.28**

---

[3] Proctor, Richard, Bob Usherwood, and Gill Sobczyk. *What Happens When a Public Library Service Closes Down?* Library Management 18, no. 1 (1997): 59-64.

[4] Data were compiled from surveys of the individual libraries, the 2006 Colorado Public Library Report (accessible at www.LRS.org), and a survey in which library users were asked to estimate their cost of using alternative sources to meet their library-related needs, as well as their non-library expenditures. Estimates for alternative costs are conservative, as they do not include the value of extra time that might have been necessary to meet their needs elsewhere.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

EAGLE VALLEY LIBRARY DISTRICT

Eagle Valley Library District at a Glance

Eagle Valley Library District is located in the heart of the Colorado Rocky Mountains. It is organized as a library district and has a legal service area population of 40,107.[5] It consists of three branches located in Avon, Eagle, and Gypsum. The collection includes over 128,000 print volumes, 7,000 audios, 9,000 videos, and 500 periodicals. To access electronic resources, it also has 42 public access computers.

Table 2
Selected Statistics for
Eagle Valley Library District[6]

Description	Total		Ratio[7]
Circulation	124,920		9.3 per capita
Visits	345,353		8.6 per capita
Library Programs	1,957	698	Program attendees per 1,000 served
Public Access Computers	42		1.05 per 1,000 served

Funded primarily through local revenue (93.7%), Eagle Valley Library District receives $4.3 million in funds from a district mill levy and just over $287,000 in other operating revenue.[8] Local revenue per capita is $106.61. Because this study examines the return on investment for each library's community[9], only local revenue is used in calculating the monetary contribution of community members to each library.

---

[5] Metropolitan status, legal basis, and geographic area are defined by the Federal-State Cooperative System for Public Library Data and the National Center of Education Statistics (accessible at http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/libraries/public.asp). These definitions are also used in the Colorado Public Library Annual Report (accessible at www.LRS.org).
[6] 2006 Colorado Public Library Annual Report (accessible at www.LRS.org).
[7] Per capita is figured using legal service area (LSA) population (accessible at http://www.lrs.org/pub_stats.php).
[8] 2006 Colorado Public Library Annual Report. "Other operating revenue" refers to funds not reported under local, state or federal revenue and may include, but are not limited to, monetary gifts, donations, and grants (accessible at www.LRS.org).
[9] A library's community is defined as the legal service area as specified in the library's establishment documents.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

EAGLE VALLEY LIBRARY DISTRICT

SURVEY RESULTS

Library Use

Once through the doors, visitors to Eagle Valley Library District tend to be heavy users of library resources. Of the library visitors who responded to the ROI survey, nearly two-thirds of them had visited the library 25 times or more over the last twelve months; essentially, these patrons come to the library at least every other week (see Chart 1). Another 31 percent had visited on about a monthly basis over the previous year - between 10 and 24 times. Only 2 percent of respondents said that they visited the library fewer than 5 times in the previous 12 months.

Chart 1

Return on Investment - Eagle Valley Library District:
Respondent's Number of Visits to the Library in the Last 12 Months
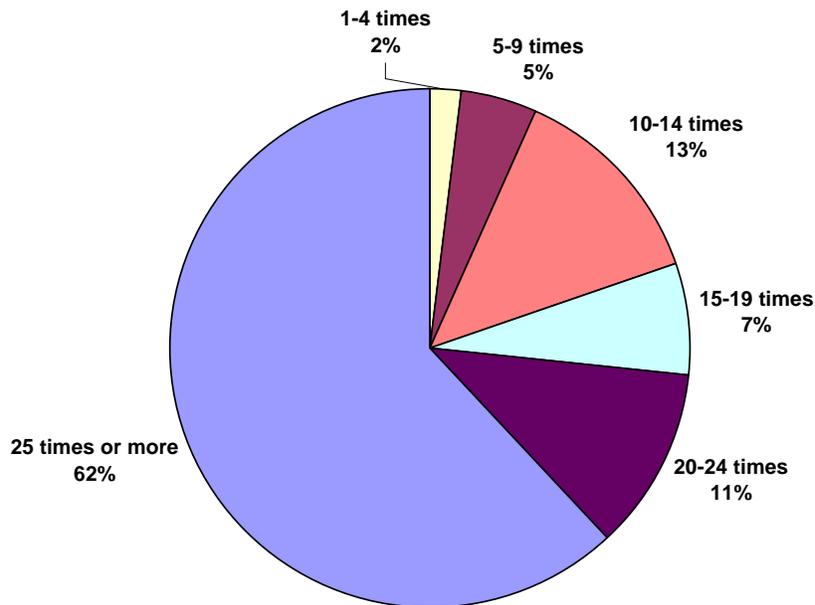
Eagle Valley Library District
Patron Comments

"I read voraciously and eclectically. I wouldn't know what to do without the library. I make use of the research database and interlibrary loan as well as checking out books. It would easily cost me $1000 per year (even at used book store prices and trading with friends) for the 150 or so books I read each year."

"My children and I use the library resource several times weekly and find it to be priceless."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

EAGLE VALLEY LIBRARY DISTRICT

In 2006, there were 345,353 visits to the Eagle Valley Library District. Despite the changing ways in which the public uses libraries, checking out materials remains the primary reason for library visits. Over three-quarters of these visits (293,365) resulted in the library user checking out a book (see Chart 2). Additionally, the concept of "library as place" remains strong. At least one-quarter of respondent visits included reading a book (25%) or periodical (30%) in the library, and programs and instruction still draw a considerable number of people into the library. However, for many of these visits, library use patterns are changing, as computer use has grown to encompass a large part of the library user's experience. Based on responses to the survey, during 26 percent of these visits the visitor accessed the Internet on a library computer. Accessing databases and software via library computers is a large part of use as well.

Chart 2

**Return on Investment - Eagle Valley Library District:
Number of Visits During Which Users Performed Specific Activities**

Activity	Number of Visits
Checked out book	293,365
Checked out DVD/VHS	198,095
Checked out CD/tape	168,929
Read periodical in the library	102,254
Accessed Internet on library computer	89,979
Read book in the library	85,577
Asked librarian to help find information	83,519
Used print reference materials	77,731
Accessed databases on library computer	64,886
Attended lecture, class or other program	47,617
Accessed software on library computer	37,275
Attended literacy instruction class	15,508
Received technology instruction	11,337
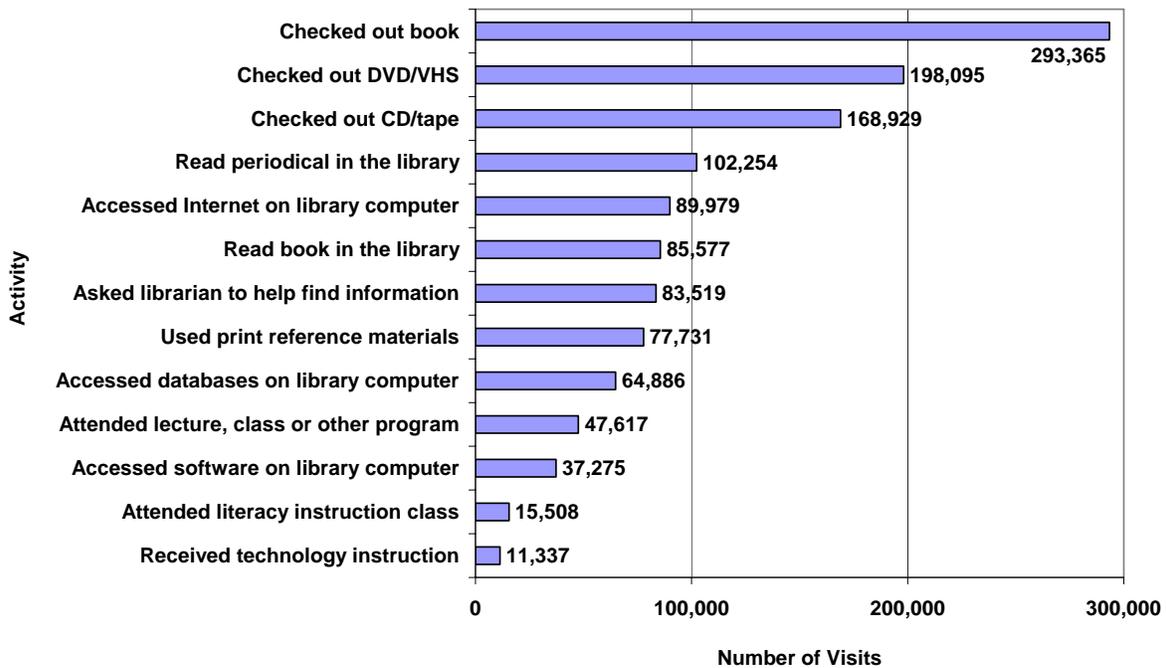
**Eagle Valley Library District
Patron Comments**

"Our libraries serve so many needs. There are always kids, teenagers using the facilities for study homework and a safe place for after school. It is also a place where non-English speakers can find material and classes. Some provide free baby sitting while the parents attend ESL classes. I am very impressed with our library district."

"The Gypsum Public [branch] library is a wonderful and irreplaceable entity in our community...It is the community's host to learning, teaching, & gathering together. It is our core."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

EAGLE VALLEY LIBRARY DISTRICT

The majority of respondents (63%) reported coming to the library primarily for personal interests and/or recreational purposes (see Chart 3). In addition, a large percentage of respondents came to the library for educational purposes (17%), meeting their needs as students, educators, and home-schooling parents. Job-related reasons also attracted visitors to the library (7%).

Chart 3

**Return on Investment - Eagle Valley Library District:
Primary Reason for Respondent's Trip to Library**
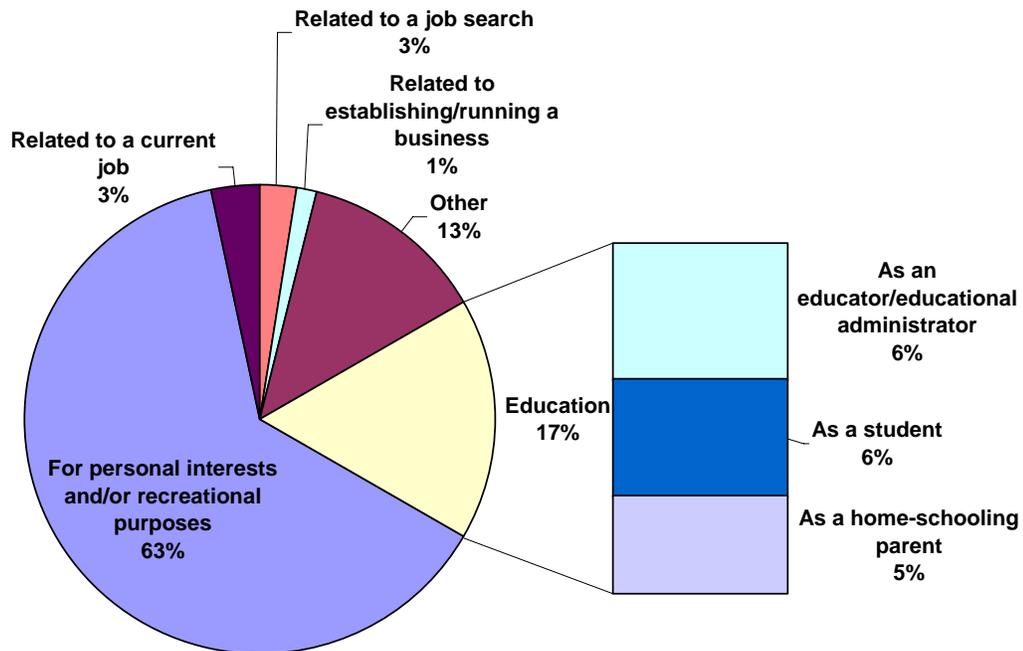
**Eagle Valley Library District
Patron Comments**

"They are incredibly helpful - I did most of my PhD research with their help as a mountain community resident, they saved me numerous trips to Denver."

"I value it both from a personal perspective and an educator's."

"I love the library and can't imagine being without this library. I know whatever information or book I need, I am able to get it through the library."

Alternatives to Library Use

When asked what they would do to meet their information needs if the library did not exist, a majority of respondents (58%) said that they would have tried to get the information elsewhere (see Chart 4). However, 19 percent would not have known where else to go to get the information they received at the library, and another 3 percent would not have tried to get the information from another source. Without the library, the information needs of these users would not have been met.

Chart 4

**Return on Investment - Eagle Valley Library District:
Respondent's Alternative Strategy for Meeting Information Needs
If Library Did Not Exist**

Other
20%

I would **not** have tried
to get the information
from another source
3%

I would have tried to
get the information
from another source
58%

I would **not** have
known where else to
go to get the
information
19%
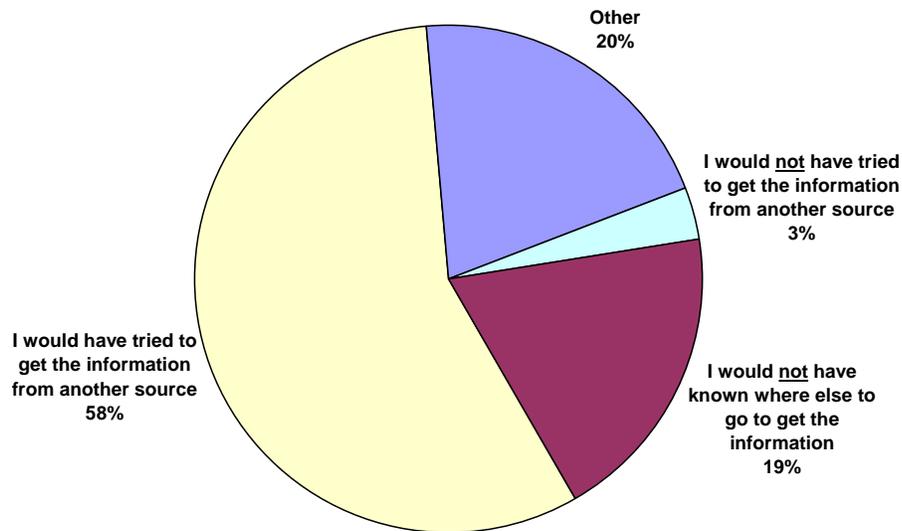
**Eagle Valley Library District
Patron Comments**

"An invaluable and irreplaceable resource."

"Libraries are indispensable to me...I am always amazed that my library has always gotten every book I've requested"

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

EAGLE VALLEY LIBRARY DISTRICT

Obtaining the information received during library visits would be expensive if acquired through alternative means. Respondents who would have tried to meet their information needs using an alternative source were asked to estimate how much money they would have spent using the other source. Over two-thirds (70%) of Eagle Valley Library District respondents said that they would have spent at least $20 to have their information needs met elsewhere. Just over one in ten (11%) said that they would not have needed to spend any money to meet their information needs with an alternative source (see Chart 5).

Chart 5

**Return on Investment - Eagle Valley Library District:
Respondent's Estimated Cost of Alternatives to Library Resources**

$20 or more
70%

$10-$19
11%

Less than $10
8%

No money required
11%
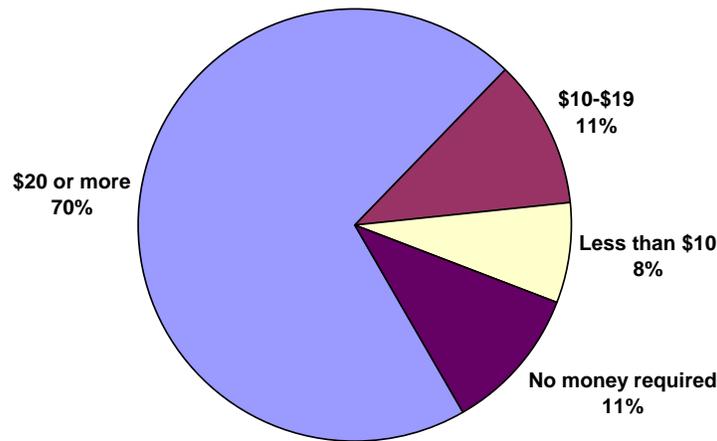
**Eagle Valley Library District
Patron Comments**

"You can't possibly put a monetary value on the benefits our public libraries provide."

"We LOVE our library! It is without a doubt the most valuable tax supported entity available to the mass public."

"It is a vital part of the community, and a huge bargain to the taxpayers."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

EAGLE VALLEY LIBRARY DISTRICT

Many respondents to the survey reported doing other activities or errands during the same trip as their visit to the library. The most likely peripheral activity, with 40 percent of respondents, was going to the post office (see Chart 6). Shopping was next most popular with 34 percent of respondents. Many respondents also reported going to the bank (22%) and attending to personal business during their trip (20%). More than one in ten said they also visited a restaurant or coffee shop (11%).[10]

Chart 6

**Return on Investment - Eagle Valley Library District:
Activities Performed by Respondent on the Same Trip as Library Visit**
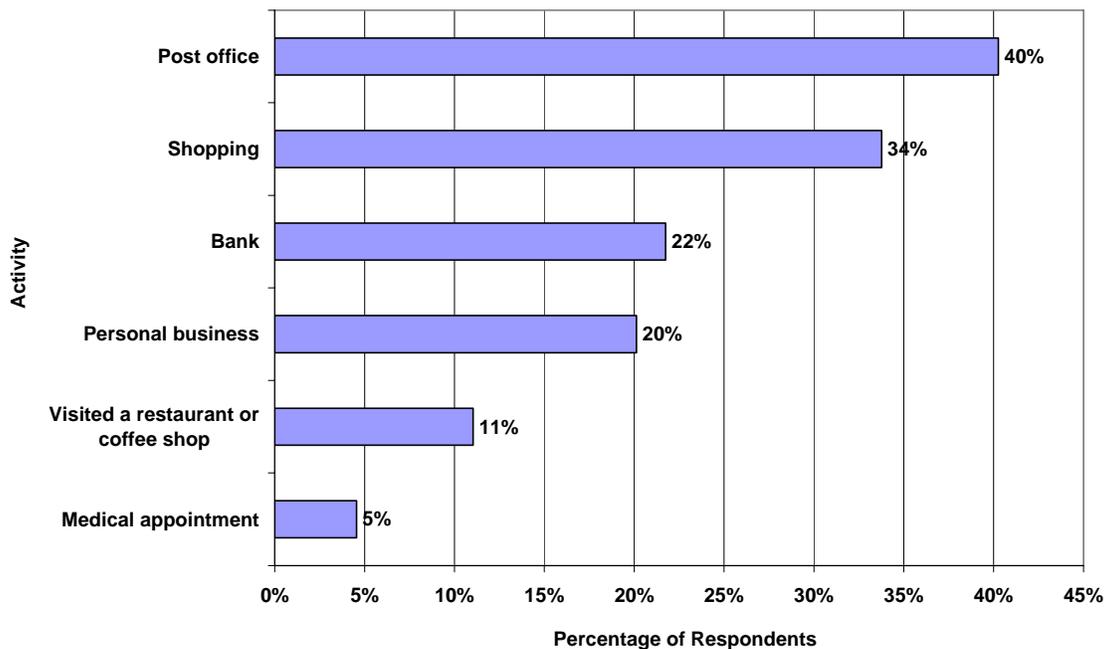
**Eagle Valley Library District
Patron Comments**

"I believe that it is the best public program we have."

"I love it. Part of my consideration when I bought my home was how far away the library was."

---

[10] As noted in the section on methodology, a U.K. study reported that a portion of the spending on these "halo" activities would not have occurred if the library were not available.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

EAGLE VALLEY LIBRARY DISTRICT

Eagle Valley Library District's computers are extremely popular with their users. More than three out of four respondents (77%) reported having used a library computer at some point (see Chart 7). The fact that so many patrons are using computers suggests that Eagle Valley is serving as a location to bridge the digital divide.

Chart 7

**Return on Investment - Eagle Valley Library District:
Percentage of Respondents Who Have Used a Library Computer**

Have not used a
library computer
23%

Have used a library
computer
77%
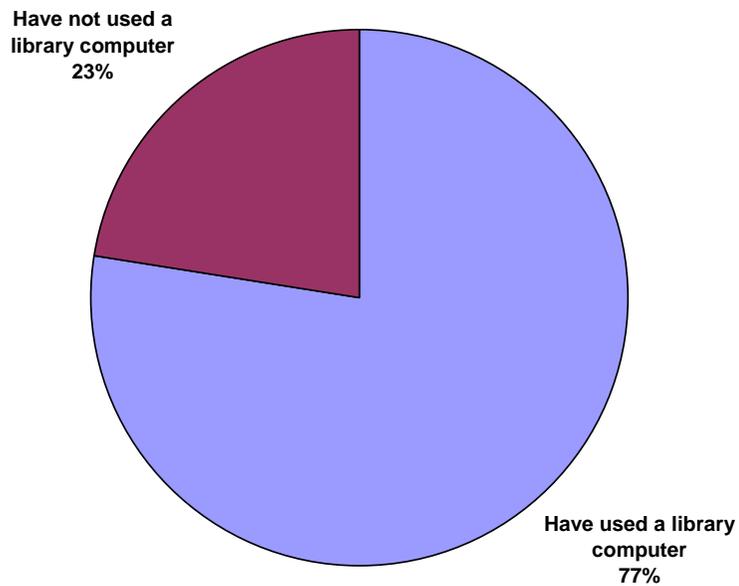
PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

EAGLE VALLEY LIBRARY DISTRICT

In addition to in-library use, Eagle Valley Library District's users connect to libraries from home. Nearly half of the respondents to this survey (44%) had connected to a Colorado public library from a home computer in the past twelve months (See Chart 8). Not only is the library a place to visit in the community, it is a place to visit in cyberspace as well.

Chart 8

**Return on Investment - Eagle Valley Library District:
Number of Times Respondent Connected to a Colorado Public Library
from a Home Computer in Last 12 Months**
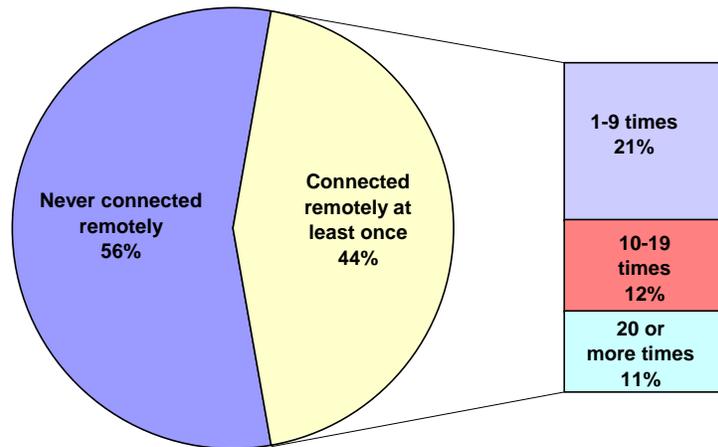
PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

EAGLE VALLEY LIBRARY DISTRICT

Demographics
The following five charts illustrate the demographics of the respondents to the Eagle Valley Library District ROI patron survey. Demographic data includes gender, age, highest level of education, race and ethnicity, and personal and household income.

Chart 9

**Return on Investment - Eagle Valley Library District:
Respondents by Gender**

Male
23%

Female
77%

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

EAGLE VALLEY LIBRARY DISTRICT

Chart 10

**Return on Investment - Eagle Valley Library District:
Respondents by Age**

Under 18
1%

18-29
12%

30-44
39%

45-54
19%

55-64
19%

65 & over
10%

Chart 11

**Return on Investment - Eagle Valley Library District:
Respondents by Highest Level of Education**

Other
4%

Some high school
2%

High school graduate
or GED
11%

Associate's degree
13%

Bachelor's degree
40%

Advanced degree
30%

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

EAGLE VALLEY LIBRARY DISTRICT

Chart 12

**Return on Investment - Eagle Valley Library District:
Respondents by Race and Ethnicity**

Respondents could choose more than one race/ethnicity.

Chart 13

**Return on Investment - Eagle Valley Library District:
Respondent's Personal and Household Income**

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT
FORT MORGAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

$9

**$1 Invested
Yields
$9 Return**

$1

Fort Morgan Public Library recently participated in a Return on Investment study conducted by the Library Research Service at the Colorado State Library. This study found a substantial return for taxpayers when investing in their local library. **For every $1.00 invested in Fort Morgan Public Library, $8.80 of value is returned to the community.**[1]

Returns on Investment
Fort Morgan Public Library[2]

64% Almost two out of three Fort Morgan Public Library patrons have used a library computer.

54% Over half of Fort Morgan Public Library patrons said they would have spent $20 or more getting their information from another source if the library did not exist.

44% Nearly half of Fort Morgan Public Library patrons come to the library over 25 times per year.

71,744 Patrons came to Fort Morgan Public Library specifically to check out books nearly 72,000 times in the previous 12 months.

32% Nearly a third of Fort Morgan Public Library patrons connected to a Colorado public library from a home computer in the previous 12 months.

---

[1] Data was compiled from surveys of the individual libraries, the 2006 Colorado Public Library Report (accessible at www.LRS.org), and a survey in which library users were asked to estimate their cost of using alternative sources to meet their library-related needs, as well as their non-library expenditures.
[2] Based on responses to the ROI patron survey.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

FORT MORGAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Why Return on Investment?
In the spring of 2006 a need was identified in Colorado to describe the variety of benefits delivered by public libraries to their patrons and to quantify the return on investment to taxpayers for monies invested in public libraries. To provide this data, the Library Research Service (LRS) undertook "What's It Worth to You? A Return on Investment Study of Selected Colorado Public Libraries" (ROI) in May 2006. Using a multiple case study approach, this research was designed to create such information for eight public libraries, representing geographically diverse regions of Colorado. Data were gathered using a combination of questionnaires, key informant interviews, and available data source.

ROI Methodology
This study follows a model of contingent valuation that has been used in similar studies to determine ROI for public libraries. Contingent valuation is an economic technique often used for the valuation of non-market resources. This figure was calculated by examining the ramifications of not having a public library for the communities served. It includes:

- **Cost to Use Alternatives:** The estimated amount of money that would have been spent using an alternative information source.
- **Lost Use:** The estimated value of the lost information for users who would not have tried to attain the information elsewhere.
- **Direct Local Expenditures:** Contributions made by the library to community businesses and individuals in the form of purchasing goods and services.
- **Compensation for Library Staff:** Library staff would not receive compensation and unemployment would be a factor for at least some period of time.
- **Halo Spending:** Purchases made by library users from vendors and business that are located close to the library. A recent study found that approximately 23 percent of these purchases would not occur if the library did not exist.[3]

Table 1

Return on Investment Factors – Fort Morgan Public Library[4]

Cost to Use Alternatives	$3,101,256
Lost Use	$145,169
Direct Local Expenditures	$21,015
Compensation for Library Staff	$326,423
Halo Spending	$277,424
Total Return on Investment	**$3,871,287**
Total Local Investment	÷ $439,858
Return per Dollar Invested	**$8.80**

---

[3] Proctor, Richard, Bob Usherwood, and Gill Sobczyk. *What Happens When a Public Library Service Closes Down?* Library Management 18, no. 1 (1997): 59-64.
[4] Data were compiled from surveys of the individual libraries, the 2006 Colorado Public Library Report (accessible at www.LRS.org), and a survey in which library users were asked to estimate their cost of using alternative sources to meet their library-related needs, as well as their non-library expenditures. Estimates for alternative costs are conservative, as they do not include the value of extra time that might have been necessary to meet their needs elsewhere.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

FORT MORGAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Fort Morgan Public Library at a Glance

Fort Morgan Public Library is located on the eastern plains of Colorado. It is organized as a municipal library to serve residents of the town of Fort Morgan.[5] It has a legal service area population of 10,968. It consists of one central library to serve that population. The collection includes over 39,000 print volumes, 2,300 audios, 2,600 videos, and 90 periodicals. To access electronic resources, it also has seven public access computers.

Table 2
Selected Statistics for
Fort Morgan Public Library[6]

Description	Total		Ratio[7]
Circulation	$439,858		9.4 per capita
Visits	98,243		9.0 per capita
Library Programs	107	388	Program attendees per 1,000 served
Public Access Computers	7		.64 per 1,000 served

Funded almost exclusively through local revenue, Fort Morgan Public Library receives $439,858 in city general funds and $300 in other operating revenue.[8] Local revenue per capita is $40.10. Because this study examines the return on investment for each library's community[9], only local revenue is used in calculating the monetary contribution of community members to each library.

Though Fort Morgan Public Library is established and funded as a municipal library, it serves many of the residents of its county beyond the city limits. Nearly half of its registered borrowers (42%) reside outside the Legal Service Area of the library. Due to this discrepancy between funding and use, Fort Morgan has an exceptionally high Return on Investment figure in comparison to other libraries that participated in this survey, which tended toward a number around $5.

---

[5] Metropolitan status, legal basis, and geographic area are defined by the Federal-State Cooperative System for Public Library Data and the National Center of Education Statistics (accessible at http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/libraries/public.asp). These definitions are also used in the Colorado Public Library Annual Report (accessible at www.LRS.org).
[6] 2006 Colorado Public Library Annual Report (accessible at www.LRS.org).
[7] Per capita is figured using legal service area (LSA) population (accessible at http://www.lrs.org/pub_stats.php).
[8] 2006 Colorado Public Library Annual Report. "Other operating revenue" refers to funds not reported under local, state or federal revenue and may include, but are not limited to, monetary gifts, donations, and grants (accessible at www.LRS.org).
[9] A library's community is defined as the legal service area as specified in the library's establishment documents.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

FORT MORGAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

SURVEY RESULTS

Library Use

Once through the doors, visitors to Fort Morgan Public Library tend to be heavy users of library resources. Of the library visitors who responded to the ROI survey, 44 percent of them had visited the library 25 times or more over the last twelve months; essentially, these patrons come to the library at least every other week (see Chart 1). One in three had visited on about a monthly basis over the previous year - between 10 and 24 times. Only 13 percentage of respondents said that they visited the library fewer than 5 times in the previous 12 months.

Chart 1

**Return on Investment - Fort Morgan Public Library:
Respondent's Number of Visits to the Library in the Last 12 Months**
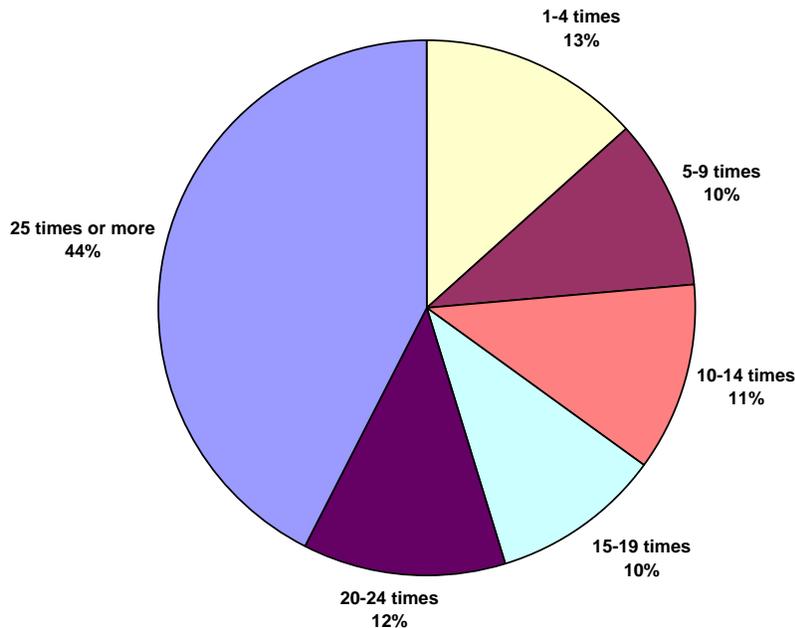
**Fort Morgan Public Library
Serving the Community's Educational Needs**

Fort Morgan Public Library is particularly active in adult education in its community. They work with Morgan Community College to provide program support for GED, ESL, and other Adult Education courses. The library provides workplace education in English and Spanish for employees of the Cargill Corporation, one of the largest employers in the county. In fact, Library Director Cathy Bosley goes to the worksite at Cargill to talk directly with employees about how the library can help them further their education. Library staff also works with Centennial BOCES in the development of their Migrant Education Program by providing Cinco de Mayo and Dia de los Muertos programs.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

FORT MORGAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

In 2006, there were 98,243 visits to the Fort Morgan Public Library. Despite the changing ways in which the public uses libraries, checking out materials remains the primary reason for library visits. Nearly three-quarters of these visits (71,774) resulted in the library user checking out a book (see Chart 2). Additionally, the concept of "library as place" remains strong. A high percentage of respondent visits included reading a book (23%) or periodical (30%) in the library, and programs and instruction still draw a considerable number of people into the library. However, for many of these visits, library use patterns are changing, as computer use has grown to encompass a large part of the library user's experience. Based on responses to the survey, during 27 percent of these visits the visitor accessed the Internet on a library computer. Accessing databases and software via library computers is a large part of use as well.

Chart 2

Return on Investment - Fort Morgan Public Library:
Number of Visits During Which Users Performed Specific Activities

Activity	Number of Visits
Checked out book	71,774
Checked out DVD/VHS	36,266
Checked out CD/tape	31,500
Read periodical in the library	29,956
Accessed Internet on library computer	26,178
Asked librarian to help find information	24,085
Used print reference materials	23,864
Read book in the library	22,761
Accessed databases on library computer	14,462
Attended lecture, class or other program	11,750
Accessed software on library computer	11,138
Received technology instruction	3,714
Attended literacy instruction class	3,635
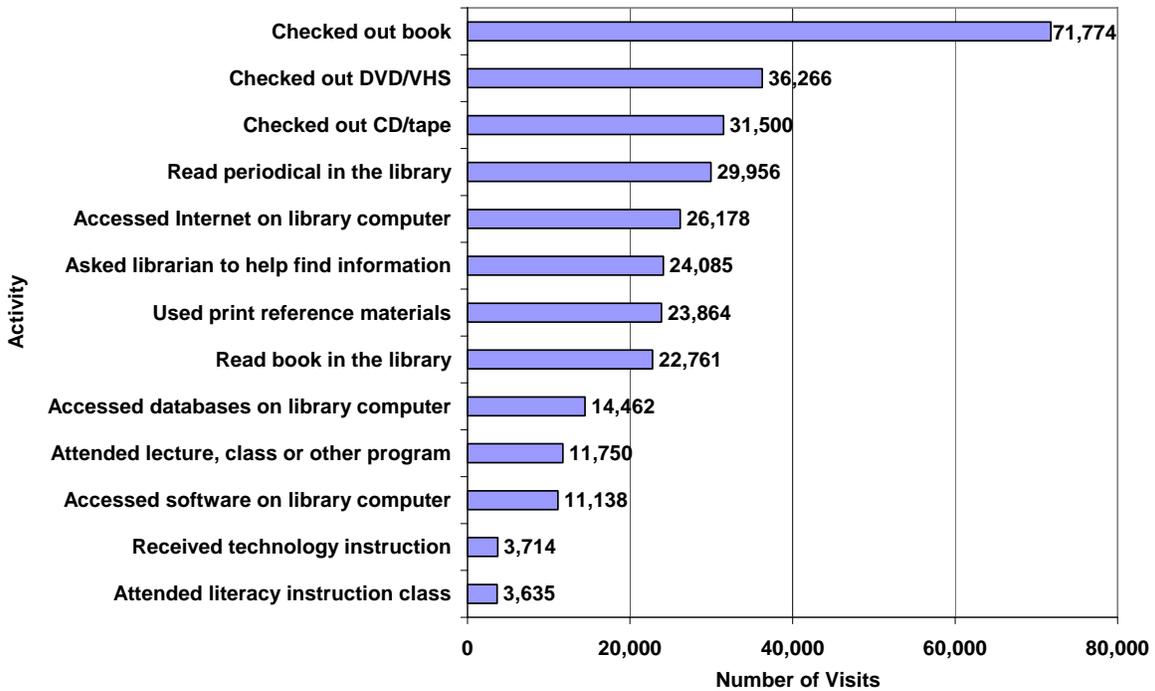
Fort Morgan Public Library
Serving the Community's Educational Needs

Ft. Morgan Public Library provides many resources for children's learning. Their Books for Kindergartners program includes a tour of the library, a craft project, and a book for the children to take home. The Books for Babies program uses board books provided by the local hospital to show new mothers how important it is to read to their children, and also provides preschool story time. Their 6-week Summer Reading program rewards kids for reading and allows them to participate in theme-related activities.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

FORT MORGAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

The majority of respondents (69%) reported coming to the library primarily for personal interests and/or recreational purposes (see Chart 3). In addition, a large percentage of respondents came to the library for educational purposes (10%), meeting their needs as students, educators, and home-schooling parents. Job-related reasons also attracted visitors to the library (8%).

Chart 3

Return on Investment - Fort Morgan Public Library:
Primary Reason for Respondent's Trip to Library

Related to a job search
3%

Related to a current job
4%

Related to establishing/running a business
1%

Other
12%

As a student
6%

Education
10%

As a home-schooling parent
3%

For personal interests and/or recreational purposes
69%

As an educator/educational administrator
2%
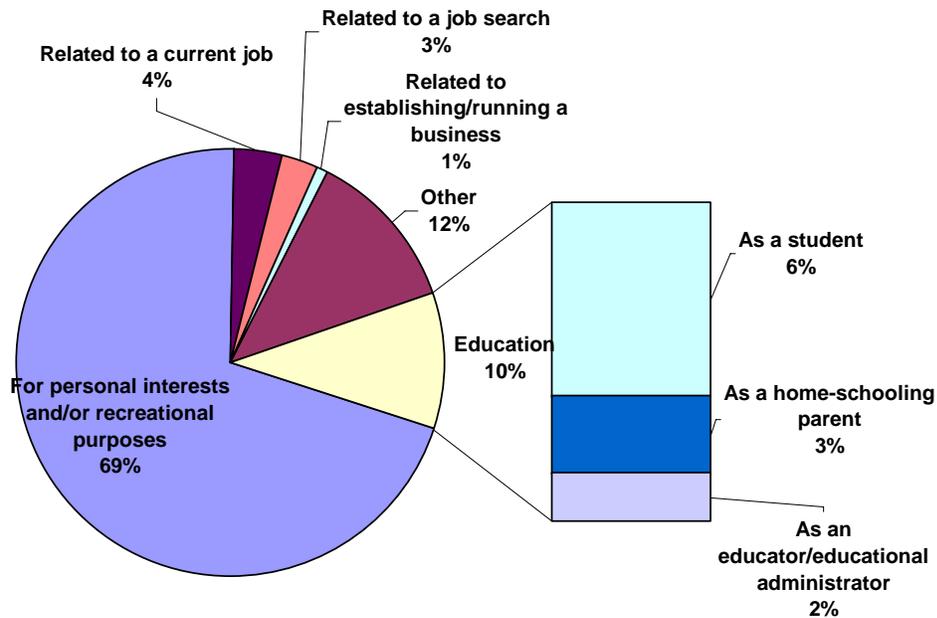
Due to rounding total may not equal 100%.

Fort Morgan Public Library
Patron Comments

"My children love to go to the library to pick out their "own" books to read. I am convinced they will have a better vocabulary and be better prepared for school because of the time spent reading the variety of books the library has to offer."

"As a home schooling family, we really appreciate our Fort Morgan Public Library! They have many good resources and are willing to try to accommodate our needs."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

FORT MORGAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Alternatives to Library Use

When asked what they would do to meet their information needs if the library did not exist, a majority of respondents (59%) said that they would have tried to get the information elsewhere (see Chart 4). However, 19 percent would not have known where else to go to get the information they received at the library, and another 8 percent would not have tried to get the information from another source. Without the library, the information needs of these users would not have been met.

Chart 4

**Return on Investment - Fort Morgan Public Library:
Respondent's Alternative Strategy for Meeting Information Needs
If Library Did Not Exist**

Other
14%

I would have tried to
get the information
from another source
59%

I would **not** have
known where else to
go to get the
information
19%

I would **not** have tried
to get the information
from another source
8%
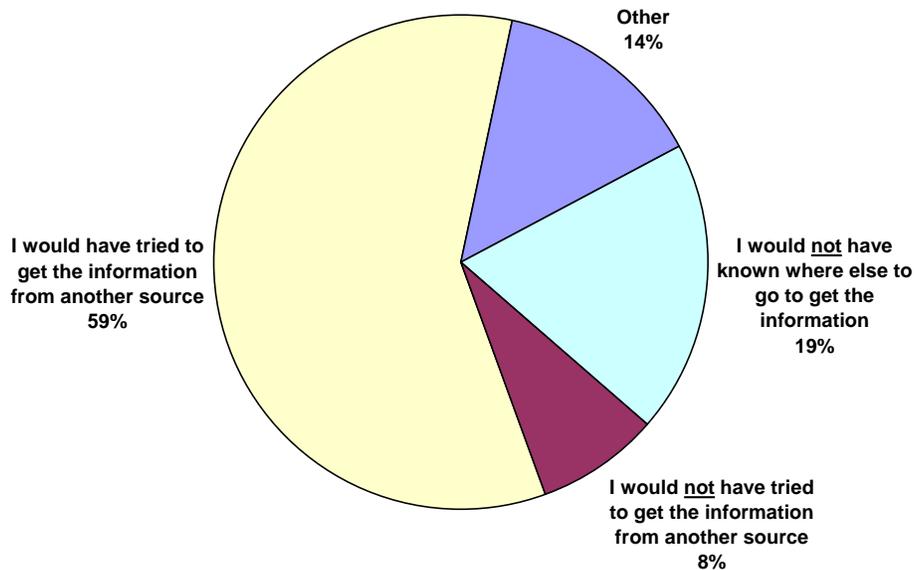
**Fort Morgan Public Library
Patron Comments**

"In our area - it is a must! We have no other resource for many materials."

"Our library is a marvelous asset to a smallish, semi-rural community...Its services are invaluable!"

"I believe the public library is a valuable source for information, job search, & other related purposes."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

FORT MORGAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Obtaining the information received during library visits would be expensive if acquired through alternative means. Respondents who would have tried to meet their information needs using an alternative source were asked to estimate how much money they would have spent using the other source. Over half (54%) of Fort Morgan Public Library respondents said that they would have spent at least $20 to have their information needs met elsewhere. Fewer than one in five (15%) said that they would not have needed to spend any money to meet their information needs with an alternative source (see Chart 5).

Chart 5

Return on Investment - Fort Morgan Public Library:
Respondent's Estimated Cost of Alternatives to Library Resources

$10-$19
16%

$20 or more
54%

Less than $10
15%

No money required
15%
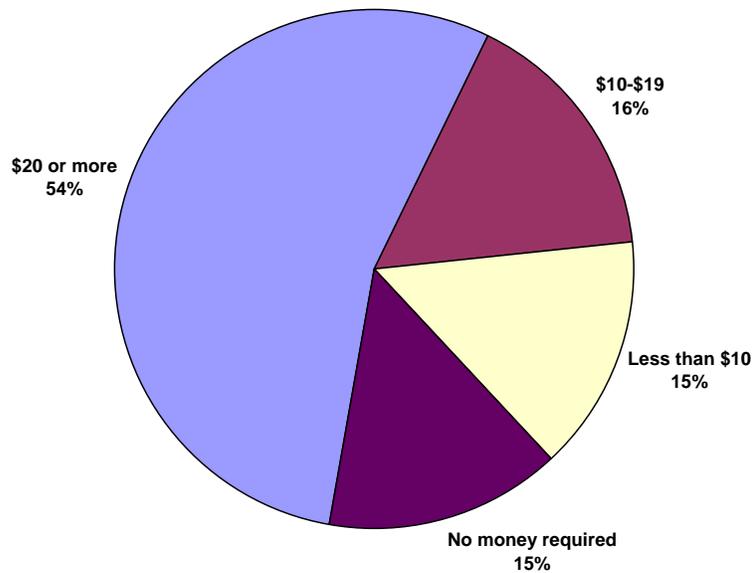
Fort Morgan Public Library
Patron Comments

"My children and I check out books and movies every week. We consider it a valuable resource that we never want to be without."

"The library is one of the greatest blessings of my life. I am so grateful to be able to have such a wonderful place where I can go and get free entertainment, check out best-selling books, find information from ample references, read my local newspapers, favorite magazines, and access the Internet. It's awesome!!!"

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

FORT MORGAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Many respondents to the survey reported doing other activities or errands during the same trip as their visit to the library. The most likely peripheral activity, with 43 percent of respondents, was shopping (see Chart 6). Many respondents also attended to personal business (33%) or went to the post office (32%) during their trip. Many reported going to the bank (27%) or going to a restaurant or coffee shop (19%).[10]

Chart 6

**Return on Investment - Fort Morgan Public Library:
Activities Performed by Respondent on the Same Trip as Library Visit**

Activity	Percentage of Respondents
Shopping	43%
Personal business	33%
Post office	32%
Bank	27%
Visited a restaurant or coffee shop	19%
Medical appointment	8%
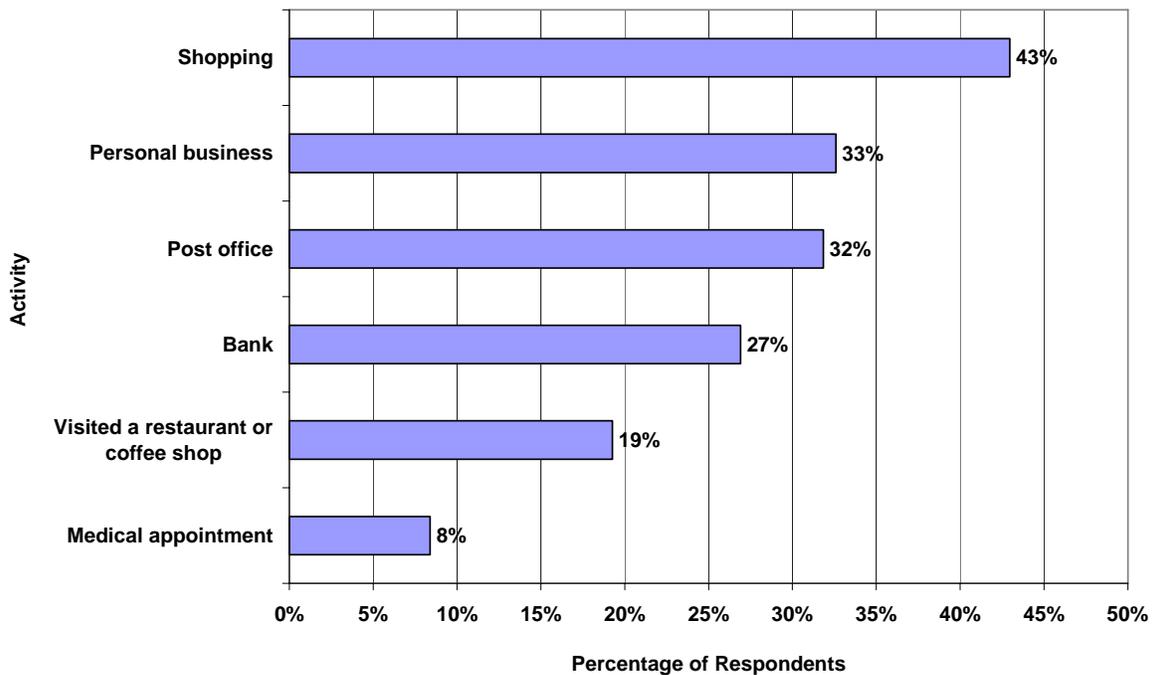
**Fort Morgan Public Library
Patron Comments**

"I enjoy using my public library very much, and consider it to be a valuable community resource."

"One of the best things about my community."

---

[10] As noted in the section on methodology, a U.K. study reported that a portion of the spending on these "halo" activities would not have occurred if the library were not available.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

FORT MORGAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Fort Morgan Public Library's computers are extremely popular with their users. Nearly two out of three respondents (64%) reported having used a library computer at some point (see Chart 7). The fact that so many patrons are using computers suggests that Fort Morgan Public Library is serving as a location to bridge the digital divide.

Chart 7

**Return on Investment - Fort Morgan Public Library:
Percentage of Respondents Who Have Used a Library Computer**

Have not used a
library computer
36%

Have used a library
computer
64%
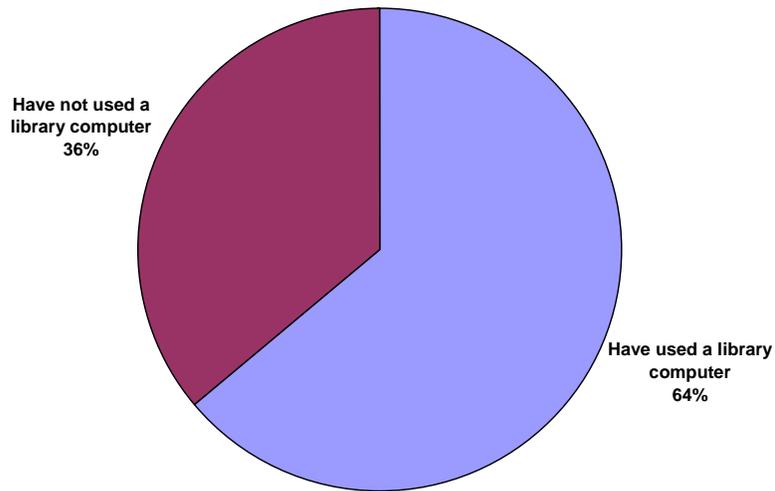
**Fort Morgan Public Library
Patron Comments**

"Great place to look for jobs via computers."

"It is one of the greatest assets of our community. My family could not live in a town without an active library"

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

FORT MORGAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

In addition to in-library use, Fort Morgan Public Library's users connect to libraries from home. Almost a third of the respondents to this survey (32%) had connected to a Colorado public library from a home computer in the past twelve months (See Chart 8).

Chart 8

Return on Investment - Fort Morgan Public Library:
Number of Times Respondent Connected to a Colorado Public Library
from a Home Computer in Last 12 Months
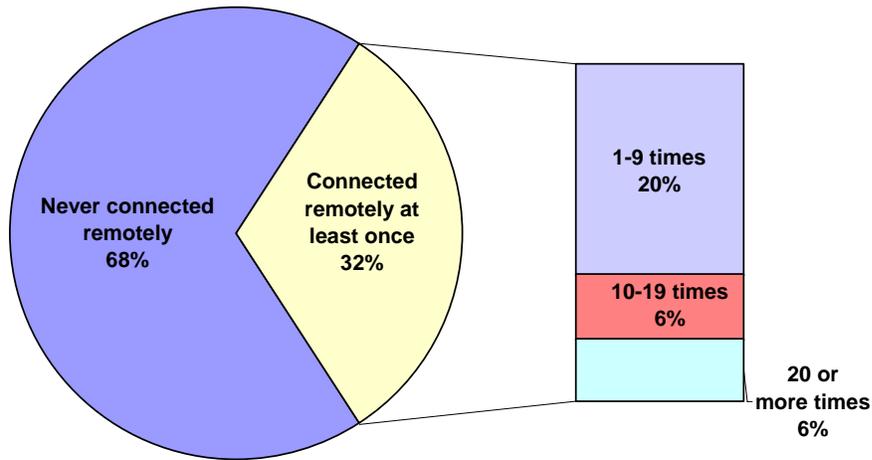
Fort Morgan Public Library
Patron Comments

"The library is like a piece of heaven here on earth. I can't imagine life without it."

"I love it, and I do not know what I'd do without it!"

Demographics

The following five charts illustrate the demographics of the respondents to the Fort Morgan Public Library ROI patron survey. Demographic data includes gender, age, highest level of education, race and ethnicity, and personal and household income.

Chart 9

**Return on Investment - Fort Morgan Public Library:
Respondents by Gender**

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

FORT MORGAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Chart 10

**Return on Investment - Fort Morgan Public Library:
Respondents by Age**

Under 18 5%
18-29 12%
30-44 22%
45-54 20%
55-64 17%
65 & over 24%

Chart 11

**Return on Investment - Fort Morgan Public Library:
Respondents by Highest Level of Education**

Other 11%
Some high school 3%
High school graduate or GED 39%
Associate's degree 14%
Bachelor's degree 20%
Advanced degree 13%

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

FORT MORGAN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Chart 12

**Return on Investment - Fort Morgan Public Library:
Respondents by Race and Ethnicity**

Respondents could choose more than one race/ethnicity.

Chart 13

**Return on Investment - Fort Morgan Public Library:
Respondent's Personal and Household Income**

A horizontal bar chart comparing Household Income and Personal Income percentages by income category. Y-axis labeled "Income", X-axis labeled "Percentage of Respondents" ranging from 0% to 45%.

Income	Household Income	Personal Income
$100,000 or more	6%	1%
$50,000 - $99,999	35%	10%
$25,000 - $49,999	36%	29%
Under $25,000	14%	38%
None	5%	19%
Don't Know	4%	4%

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT
MESA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

$4[57]

$1 Invested Yields $5 Return

$1

Mesa County Public Library District recently participated in a Return on Investment study conducted by the Library Research Service at the Colorado State Library. This study found a substantial return for taxpayers when investing in their local library. **For every $1.00 invested in Mesa County Public Library District, $4.57 of value is returned to the community.**[1]

Returns on Investment
Mesa County Public Library District[2]

61% Nearly two-thirds of Mesa County Public Library District patrons come to the library over 25 times per year.

50% Half of Mesa County Public Library District patrons said they would have spent $20 or more getting their information from another source if the library did not exist.

370,603 Patrons came to Mesa County Public Library District specifically to check out books over 300,000 times in the previous 12 months.

49% Almost half of Mesa County Public Library District patrons connected to a Colorado public library from a home computer in the previous 12 months.

76% Three out of four Mesa County Public Library District patrons have used a library computer.

---

[1] Data was compiled from surveys of the individual libraries, the 2006 Colorado Public Library Report (accessible at www.LRS.org), and a survey in which library users were asked to estimate their cost of using alternative sources to meet their library-related needs, as well as their non-library expenditures.
[2] Based on responses to the ROI patron survey.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT
MESA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

Why Return on Investment?
In the spring of 2006 a need was identified in Colorado to describe the variety of benefits delivered by public libraries to their patrons and to quantify the return on investment to taxpayers for monies invested in public libraries. To provide this data, the Library Research Service (LRS) undertook "What's It Worth to You? A Return on Investment Study of Selected Colorado Public Libraries" (ROI) in May 2006. Using a multiple case study approach, this research was designed to create such information for eight public libraries, representing geographically diverse regions of Colorado. Data were gathered using a combination of questionnaires, key informant interviews, and available data sources.

ROI Methodology
This study follows a model of contingent valuation that has been used in similar studies to determine ROI for public libraries. Contingent valuation is an economic technique often used for the valuation of non-market resources. This figure was calculated by examining the ramifications of not having a public library for the communities served. It includes:

- **Cost to Use Alternatives:** The estimated amount of money that would have been spent using an alternative information source.
- **Lost Use:** The estimated value of the lost information for users who would not have tried to attain the information elsewhere.
- **Direct Local Expenditures:** Contributions made by the library to community businesses and individuals in the form of purchasing goods and services.
- **Compensation for Library Staff:** Library staff would not receive compensation and unemployment would be a factor for at least some period of time.
- **Halo Spending:** Purchases made by library users from vendors and business that are located close to the library. A recent study found that approximately 23 percent of these purchases would not occur if the library did not exist.[3]

Table 1

Return on Investment Factors – Mesa County Public Library District[4]

Cost to Use Alternatives	$14,697,454
Lost Use	$494,690
Direct Local Expenditures	$1,114,478
Compensation for Library Staff	$2,339,897
Halo Spending	$1,365,269
Total Return on Investment	**$20,011,788**
Total Local Investment	÷ $4,377,983
Return per Dollar Invested	**$4.57**

---

[3] Proctor, Richard, Bob Usherwood, and Gill Sobczyk. *What Happens When a Public Library Service Closes Down?* Library Management 18, no. 1 (1997): 59-64.
[4] Data were compiled from surveys of the individual libraries, the 2006 Colorado Public Library Report (accessible at www.LRS.org), and a survey in which library users were asked to estimate their cost of using alternative sources to meet their library-related needs, as well as their non-library expenditures. Estimates for alternative costs are conservative, as they do not include the value of extra time that might have been necessary to meet their needs elsewhere.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MESA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

Mesa County Public Library District at a Glance
Mesa County Public Library District is located on the Western Slope of the Rocky Mountains in Colorado. It is organized as a library district to serve residents of Colorado's only metropolitan county on the Western Slope.[5] It has a legal service area of 130,662. With a total of 8 outlets, Mesa County Public Library District has a central library located in downtown Grand Junction and 7 branches throughout the county. The collection includes over 200,000 print volumes, 17,000 audios, 17,000 videos, and 300 periodicals. To access electronic resources, it also has 48 public access computers.

Table 2
Selected Statistics for
Mesa County Public Library District[6]

Description	Total		Ratio[7]
Circulation	765,507		5.9 per capita
Visits	487,668		3.8 per capita
Library Programs	1,338	334	Program attendees per 1,000 served
Public Access Computers	48		.37 per 1,000 served

Funded primarily through local revenue (92%), Mesa County Public Library District receives $4.4 million in district mill levy funds and just over $380,000 in other operating revenue.[8] Local revenue per capita is $33.51. Because this study examines the return on investment for each library's community[9], only local revenue is used in calculating the monetary contribution of community members to each library.

---

[5]Metropolitan status, legal basis, and geographic area are defined by the Federal-State Cooperative System for Public Library Data and the National Center of Education Statistics (accessible at http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/libraries/public.asp). These definitions are also used in the Colorado Public Library Annual Report (accessible at www.LRS.org).
[6] 2006 Colorado Public Library Annual Report (accessible at www.LRS.org).
[7] Per capita is figured using legal service area (LSA) population (accessible at http://www.lrs.org/pub_stats.php).
[8] 2006 Colorado Public Library Annual Report. "Other operating revenue" refers to funds not reported under local, state or federal revenue and may include, but are not limited to, monetary gifts, donations, and grants (accessible at www.LRS.org).
[9] A library's community is defined as the legal service area as specified in the library's establishment documents.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MESA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

SURVEY RESULTS

Library Use

Once through the doors, visitors to Mesa County Public Library District tend to be heavy users of library resources. Of the library visitors who responded to the ROI survey, three out of five of them had visited the library 25 times or more over the last twelve months; essentially, these patrons come to the library at least every other week (see Chart 1). Another one in four had visited on about a monthly basis over the previous year - between 10 and 24 times. Only 7 percent of respondents said that they visited the library fewer than 5 times in the previous 12 months.

Chart 1

Return on Investment - Mesa County Public Library District:
Respondent's Number of Visits to the Library in the Last 12 Months

Category	Percentage
1-4 times	7%
5-9 times	6%
10-14 times	6%
15-19 times	10%
20-24 times	10%
25 times or more	61%
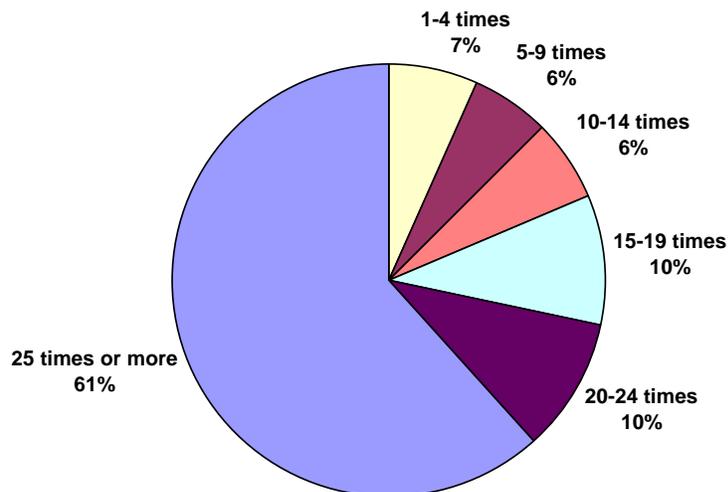
Mesa County Public Library District
Patron Comments

"I visit the library once a week - it is one of the most important buildings in Grand Junction."

"Public libraries are one of the single most important resources for a community. They are an invaluable tool for personal empowerment and knowledge."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MESA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

In 2006, there were 487,668 visits to the Mesa County Public Library District. Despite the changing ways in which the public uses libraries, checking out materials remains the primary reason for library visits. Over three-quarters of these visits (370,603) resulted in the library user checking out a book (see Chart 2). Additionally, the concept of "library as place" remains strong. At least one-quarter of respondent visits included reading a book (25%) or periodical (32%) in the library, and programs and instruction still draw a considerable number of people into the library. However, for many of these visits, library use patterns are changing, as computer use has grown to encompass a large part of the library user's experience. Based on responses to the survey, during 29 percent of these visits the visitor accessed the Internet on a library computer. Accessing databases and software via library computers is a large part of use as well.

Chart 2

**Return on Investment - Mesa County Public Library District:
Number of Visits During Which Users Performed Specific Activities**

Activity	Number of Visits
Checked out book	370,603
Checked out DVD/VHS	176,792
Checked out CD/tape	170,475
Read periodical in the library	158,310
Accessed Internet on library computer	143,286
Asked librarian to help find information	133,404
Used print reference materials	132,800
Read book in the library	120,993
Accessed databases on library computer	111,327
Accessed software on library computer	70,463
Attended lecture, class or other program	54,204
Received technology instruction	30,635
Attended literacy instruction class	23,564
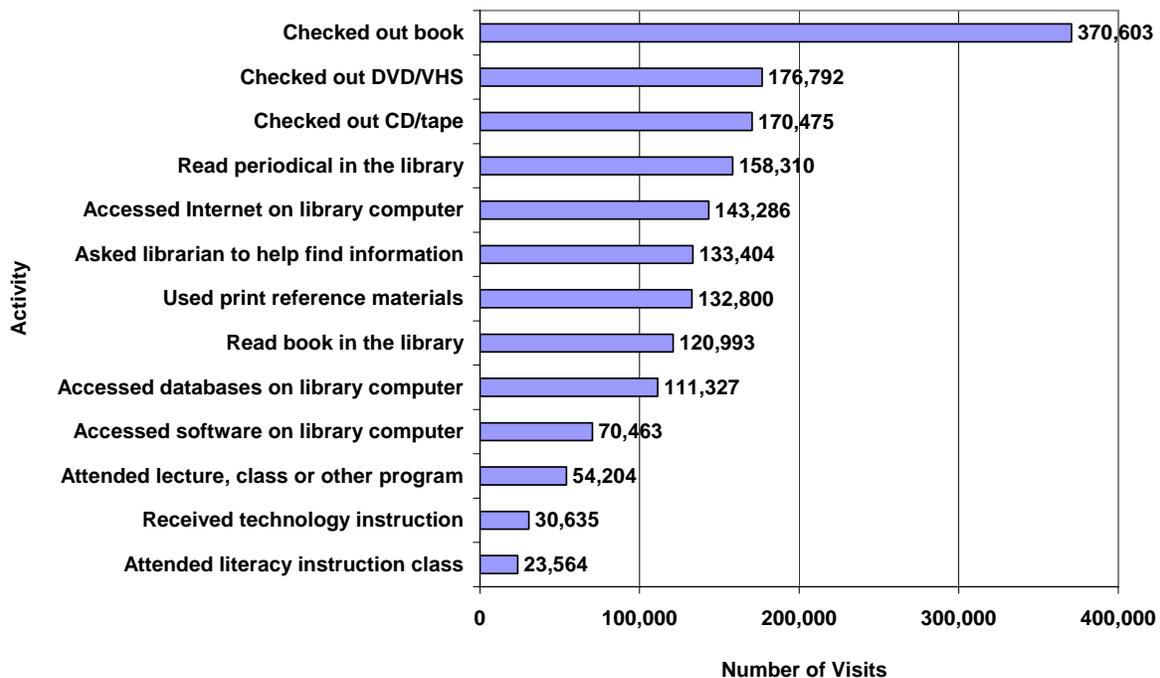
**Mesa County Public Library District
Patron Comments**

"Couldn't live without it! I tell everyone else about services/materials available to them at the library."

"The community would be lost without it. Children gain so much from the wonderful children's part. It helps so many people - books, computers, internet, reference, magazines, other programs, literacy programs. It is one of the best things in our whole town."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MESA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

The majority of respondents (63%) reported coming to the library primarily for personal interests and/or recreational purposes (see Chart 3). In addition, a large percentage of respondents came to the library for educational purposes (12%), meeting their needs as students, educators, and home-schooling parents. Job-related reasons also attracted visitors to the library (7%).

Chart 3

**Return on Investment - Mesa County Public Library District:
Primary Reason for Respondent's Trip to Library**

Related to a job search
2%

Related to establishing/running a business
1%

Related to a current job
4%

Other
19%

As a student
5%

Education
12%

As a home-schooling parent
3%

For personal interests and/or recreational purposes
63%

As an educator/educational administrator
3%
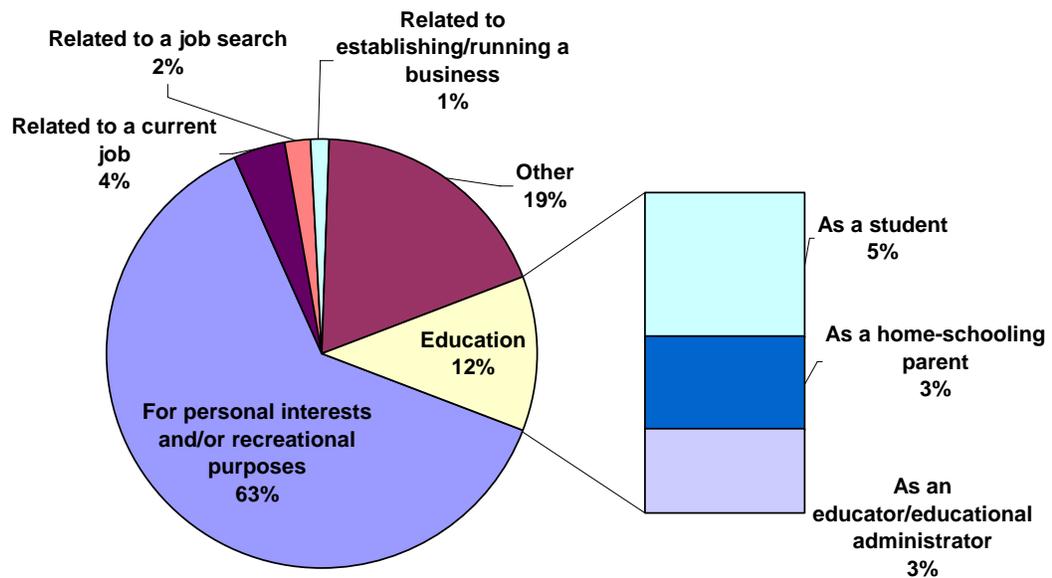
Note: Due to rounding percentages may not add up to 100%.

**Mesa County Public Library District
Patron Comments**

"I was a high school drop out but I loved to read. The library provided me with reading material that prepared me to pass a GED and to obtain background for college."

"One of the BEST POSSIBLE uses for tax dollars. Right there with education and medical care and roads and fire fighters and parks and art."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MESA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

Alternatives to Library Use

When asked what they would do to meet their information needs if the library did not exist, a majority of respondents (58%) said that they would have tried to get the information elsewhere (see Chart 4). However, 17 percent would not have known where else to go to get the information they received at the library, and another 6 percent would not have tried to get the information from another source. Without the library, the information needs of these users would not have been met.

Chart 4

Return on Investment - Mesa County Public Library District:
Respondent's Alternative Strategy for Meeting Information Needs
If Library Did Not Exist

Other
19%

I would have tried to
get the information
from another source
58%

I would <u>not</u> have tried
to get the information
from another source
6%

I would <u>not</u> have
known where else to
go to get the
information
17%
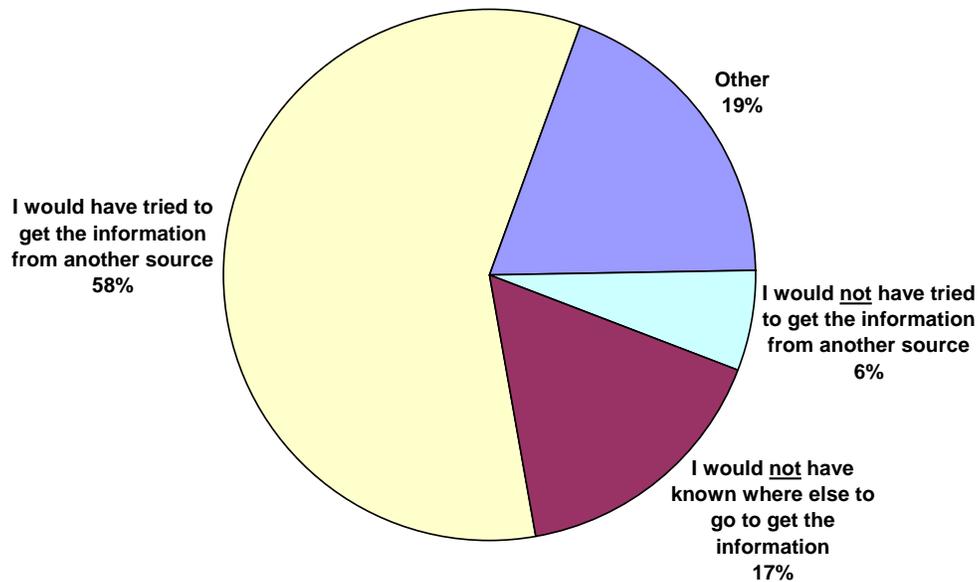
Mesa County Public Library District
Patron Comments

"It is an invaluable resource for people of all ages, races, genders and interests!"

"It is my resource in town."

"I think the success of a community is in correlation to a successful library."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MESA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

Obtaining the information received during library visits would be expensive if acquired through alternative means. Respondents who would have tried to meet their information needs using an alternative source were asked to estimate how much money they would have spent using the other source. Half (50%) of Mesa County Public Library District respondents said that they would have spent at least $20 to have their information needs met elsewhere. Fewer than one in five (18%) said that they would not have needed to spend any money to meet their information needs with an alternative source (see Chart 5).

Chart 5

**Return on Investment - Mesa County Public Library District:
Respondent's Estimated Cost of Alternatives to Library Resources**

- $10-$19 17%
- $20 or more 50%
- Less than $10 15%
- No money required 18%
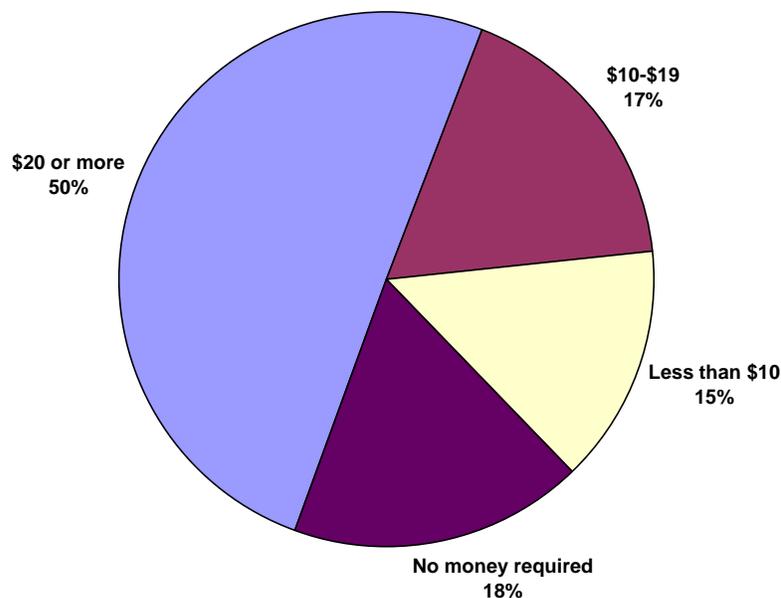
**Mesa County Public Library District
Patron Comments**

"Libraries are invaluable."

"The library is the best all round public service a government can provide."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MESA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

Many respondents to the survey reported doing other activities or errands during the same trip as their visit to the library. The most likely peripheral activity, with 42 percent of respondents, was shopping (see Chart 6). Many respondents also reported attending to personal business (28%) or going to the bank (23%) during their trip. At least one in five said they went to the post office (22%) and/or visited a restaurant or coffee shop (20%).[10]

Chart 6

Return on Investment - Mesa County Public Library District:
Activities Performed by Respondent on the Same Trip as Library Visit

---
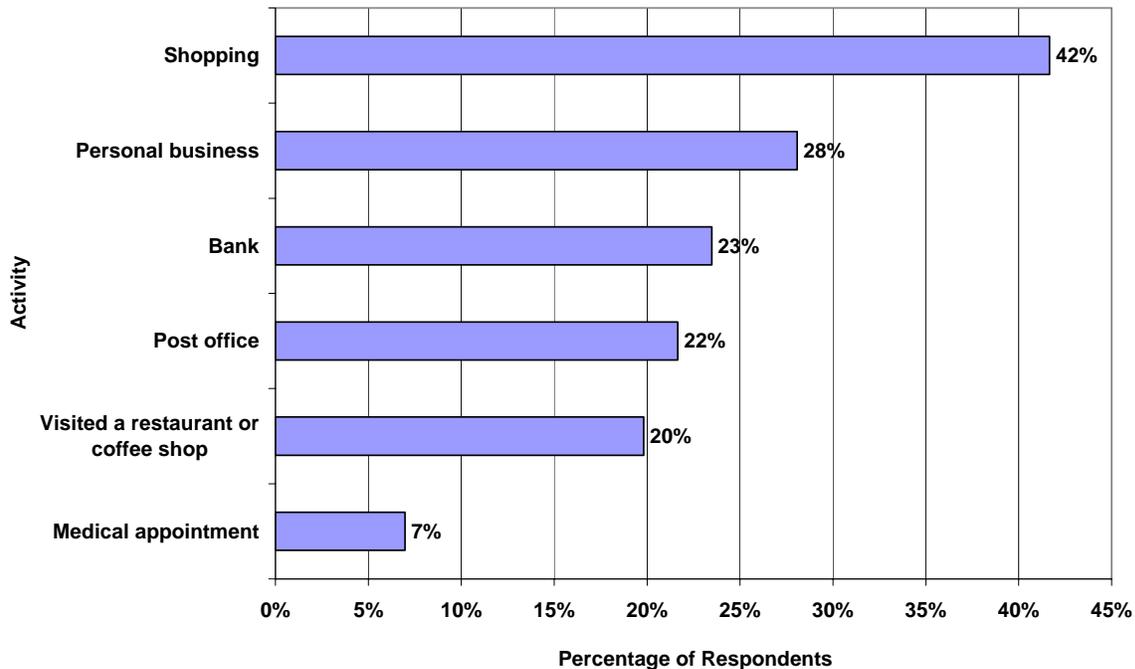
Mesa County Public Library District
Patron Comments

"The library is probably my main source of information and is my only source for use of internet and email"

"It is indispensable to this community."

---

[10] As noted in the section on methodology, a U.K. study reported that a portion of the spending on these "halo" activities would not have occurred if the library were not available.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MESA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

Mesa County Public Library District's computers are extremely popular with their users. More than three out of four respondents (76%) reported having used a library computer at some point (see Chart 7). The fact that so many patrons are using computers suggests that Mesa County Public Library District is serving as a location to bridge the digital divide.

Chart 7

Return on Investment - Mesa County Public Library District: Percentage of Respondents Who Have Used a Library Computer

Have not used a library computer 24%

Have used a library computer 76%
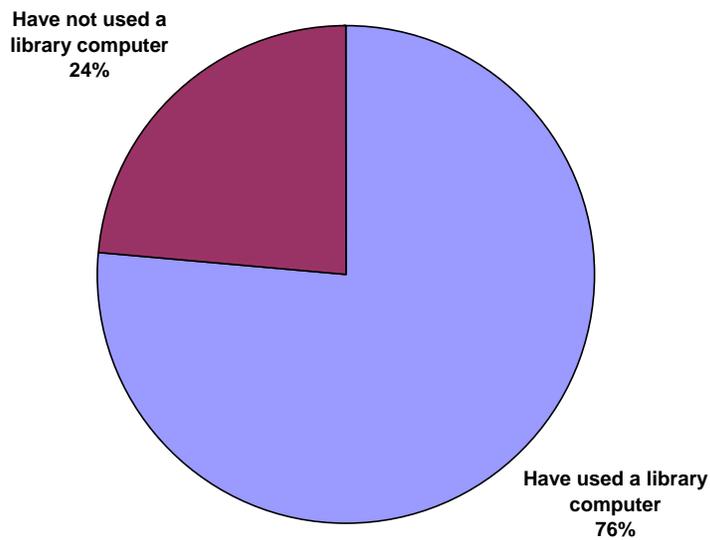
PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MESA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

In addition to in-library use, Mesa County Public Library District's users appear to frequently connect to libraries from home. Almost half of the respondents to this survey (49%) had connected to a Colorado public library from a home computer in the past twelve months (See Chart 8). As with visits, those that connect do so often. 14 percent of respondents had connected to a public library from home at least 20 times within the last year. Not only is the library a place to visit in the community, it is a place to visit in cyberspace as well.

Chart 8

**Return on Investment - Mesa County Public Library District:
Number of Times Respondent Connected to a Colorado Public Library
from a Home Computer in Last 12 Months**
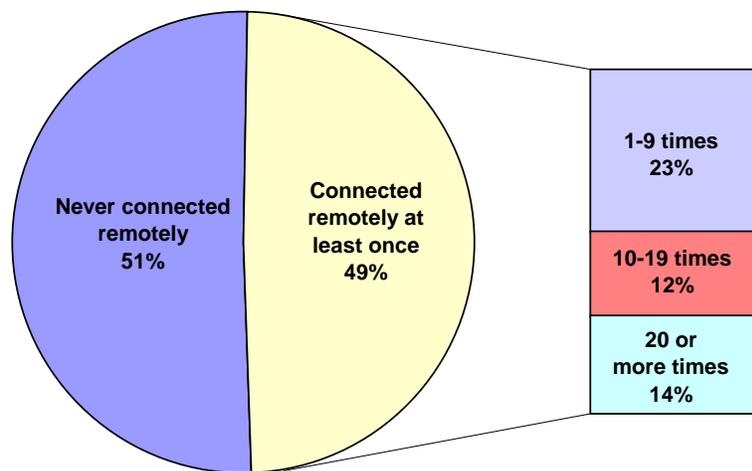
PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MESA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

Demographics

The following five charts illustrate the demographics of the respondents to the Mesa County Public Library District ROI patron survey. Demographic data includes gender, age, highest level of education, race and ethnicity, and personal and household income.

Chart 9

**Return on Investment - Mesa Country Public Library District:
Respondents by Gender**

Male 34%

Female 66%

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MESA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

Chart 10

**Return on Investment - Mesa Country Public Library District:
Respondents by Age**

Chart 11

**Return on Investment - Mesa Country Public Library District:
Respondents by Highest Level of Education**

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MESA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

Chart 12

**Return on Investment - Mesa Country Public Library District:
Respondents by Race and Ethnicity**

Respondents could choose more than one race/ethnicity.

Chart 13

**Return on Investment - Mesa Country Public Library District:
Respondent's Personal and Household Income**

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT
MONTROSE LIBRARY DISTRICT

$5

$1 Invested Yields $5 Return

$1

Montrose Library District recently participated in a Return on Investment study conducted by the Library Research Service at the Colorado State Library. This study found a substantial return for taxpayers when investing in their local library. **For every $1.00 invested in Montrose Library District, $5.33 of value is returned to the community.**[1]

Returns on Investment
Montrose Library District[2]

71% More than two out of three Montrose Library District patrons have used a library computer.

175,501 Patrons came to Montrose Library District specifically to check out books nearly 200,000 times in the previous 12 months.

54% More than half of Montrose Library District patrons come to the library over 25 times per year.

50% Half of Montrose Library District patrons said they would have spent $20 or more getting their information from another source if the library did not exist.

36% Over one-third of Montrose Library District patrons connected to a Colorado public library from a home computer in the previous 12 months.

---

[1] Data was compiled from surveys of the individual libraries, the 2006 Colorado Public Library Report (accessible at www.LRS.org), and a survey in which library users were asked to estimate their cost of using alternative sources to meet their library-related needs, as well as their non-library expenditures.
[2] Based on responses to the ROI patron survey.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT
MONTROSE LIBRARY DISTRICT

Why Return on Investment?

In the spring of 2006 a need was identified in Colorado to describe the variety of benefits delivered by public libraries to their patrons and to quantify the return on investment to taxpayers for monies invested in public libraries. To provide this data, the Library Research Service (LRS) undertook "What's It Worth to You? A Return on Investment Study of Selected Colorado Public Libraries" (ROI) in May 2006. Using a multiple case study approach, this research was designed to create such information for eight public libraries, representing geographically diverse regions of Colorado. Data were gathered using a combination of questionnaires, key informant interviews, and available data sources.

ROI Methodology

This study follows a model of contingent valuation that has been used in similar studies to determine ROI for public libraries. Contingent valuation is an economic technique often used for the valuation of non-market resources. This figure was calculated by examining the ramifications of not having a public library for the communities served. It includes:

- **Cost to Use Alternatives:** The estimated amount of money that would have been spent using an alternative information source.
- **Lost Use:** The estimated value of the lost information for users who would not have tried to attain the information elsewhere.
- **Direct Local Expenditures:** Contributions made by the library to community businesses and individuals in the form of purchasing goods and services.
- **Compensation for Library Staff:** Library staff would not receive compensation and unemployment would be a factor for at least some period of time.
- **Halo Spending:** Purchases made by library users from vendors and business that are located close to the library. A recent study found that approximately 23 percent of these purchases would not occur if the library did not exist.[3]

Table 1
Return on Investment Factors – Montrose Library District[4]

Cost to Use Alternatives	$5,408,539
Lost Use	$498,200
Direct Local Expenditures	$122,321
Compensation for Library Staff	$687,735
Halo Spending	$615,116
Total Return on Investment	**$7,331,911**
Total Local Investment	÷ $1,375,441
Return per Dollar Invested	**$5.33**

[3] Proctor, Richard, Bob Usherwood, and Gill Sobczyk. *What Happens When a Public Library Service Closes Down?* Library Management 18, no. 1 (1997): 59-64.

[4] Data were compiled from surveys of the individual libraries, the 2006 Colorado Public Library Report (accessible at www.LRS.org), and a survey in which library users were asked to estimate their cost of using alternative sources to meet their library-related needs, as well as their non-library expenditures. Estimates for alternative costs are conservative, as they do not include the value of extra time that might have been necessary to meet their needs elsewhere.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MONTROSE LIBRARY DISTRICT

Montrose Library District at a Glance

Montrose Library District is located on the Western Slope of the Colorado Rocky Mountains. It is organized as a district library to serve residents of Montrose County and has a legal service area population of 37,147.[5] It consists of a main branch in Montrose, as well as branches in Naturita and Paradox. The collection includes over 73,000 print volumes, 3,000 audios, 4,000 videos, and 150 periodicals. To access the many electronic resources, it also has nine public access computers.

Table 2
Selected Statistics for
Montrose Library District[6]

Description	Total		Ratio[7]
Circulation	251,805		6.8 per capita
Visits	217,292		5.9 per capita
Library Programs	413	212	Program attendees per 1,000 served
Public Access Computers	9		.24 per 1,000 served

Funded primarily through local revenue (90.7%), Montrose Library District receives $1.4 million in district mill levy funds, $6,492 in federal funds, and $135,357 in other operating revenue.[8] Local revenue per capita is $37.03. Because this study examines the return on investment for each library's community[9], only local revenue is used in calculating the monetary contribution of community members to each library.

---

[5]Metropolitan status, legal basis, and geographic area are defined by the Federal-State Cooperative System for Public Library Data and the National Center of Education Statistics (accessible at http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/libraries/public.asp). These definitions are also used in the Colorado Public Library Annual Report (accessible at www.LRS.org).
[6] 2006 Colorado Public Library Annual Report (accessible at www.LRS.org).
[7] Per capita is figured using legal service area (LSA) population (accessible at http://www.lrs.org/pub_stats.php).
[8] 2006 Colorado Public Library Annual Report. "Other operating revenue" refers to funds not reported under local, state or federal revenue and may include, but are not limited to, monetary gifts, donations, and grants (accessible at www.LRS.org).
[9] A library's community is defined as the legal service area as specified in the library's establishment documents.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MONTROSE LIBRARY DISTRICT

SURVEY RESULTS

Library Use

Once through the doors, visitors to Montrose Library District tend to be heavy users of library resources. Of the library visitors who responded to the ROI survey, more than half had visited the library 25 times or more over the last twelve months; essentially, these patrons come to the library at least every other week (see Chart 1). One in four had visited on about a monthly basis over the previous year - between 10 and 24 times. Fewer than one in ten respondents said that they visited the library fewer than 5 times in the previous 12 months.

Chart 1

**Return on Investment - Montrose Library District:
Respondent's Number of Visits to the Library in the Last 12 Months**

- 1-4 times 8%
- 5-9 times 10%
- 10-14 times 10%
- 15-19 times 7%
- 20-24 times 11%
- 25 times or more 54%
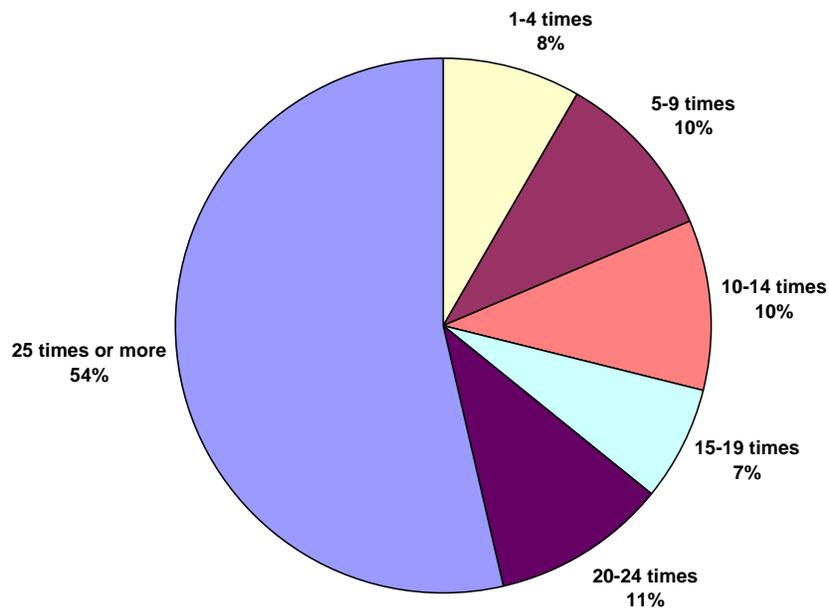
**Montrose Library District
Patron Comments**

"A great resource - an important point in deciding to move to Montrose."

"It is the single best public service and [a] second home in town!"

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MONTROSE LIBRARY DISTRICT

In 2006, there were 217,292 visits to the Montrose Library District. Despite the changing ways in which the public uses libraries, checking out materials remains the primary reason for library visits. Over four-fifths of these visits (175,501) resulted in the library user checking out a book (see Chart 2). Additionally, the concept of "library as place" remains strong. Around one-quarter of respondent visits included reading a book (24%) or periodical (28%) in the library, and programs and instruction still draw a considerable number of people into the library. However, for many of these visits, library use patterns are changing, as computer use has grown to encompass a large part of the library user's experience. Based on responses to the survey, during 23 percent of these visits the visitor accessed the Internet on a library computer. Accessing databases and software via library computers is a large part of use as well.

Chart 2

Return on Investment - Montrose Library District:
Number of Visits During Which Users Performed Specific Activities

Activity	Number of Visits
Checked out book	175,501
Checked out DVD/VHS	76,914
Checked out CD/tape	72,188
Read periodical in the library	61,324
Asked librarian to help find information	58,873
Read book in the library	52,919
Used print reference materials	49,945
Accessed Internet on library computer	49,126
Accessed databases on library computer	30,292
Attended lecture, class or other program	26,199
Accessed software on library computer	23,438
Received technology instruction	10,616
Attended literacy instruction class	5,844
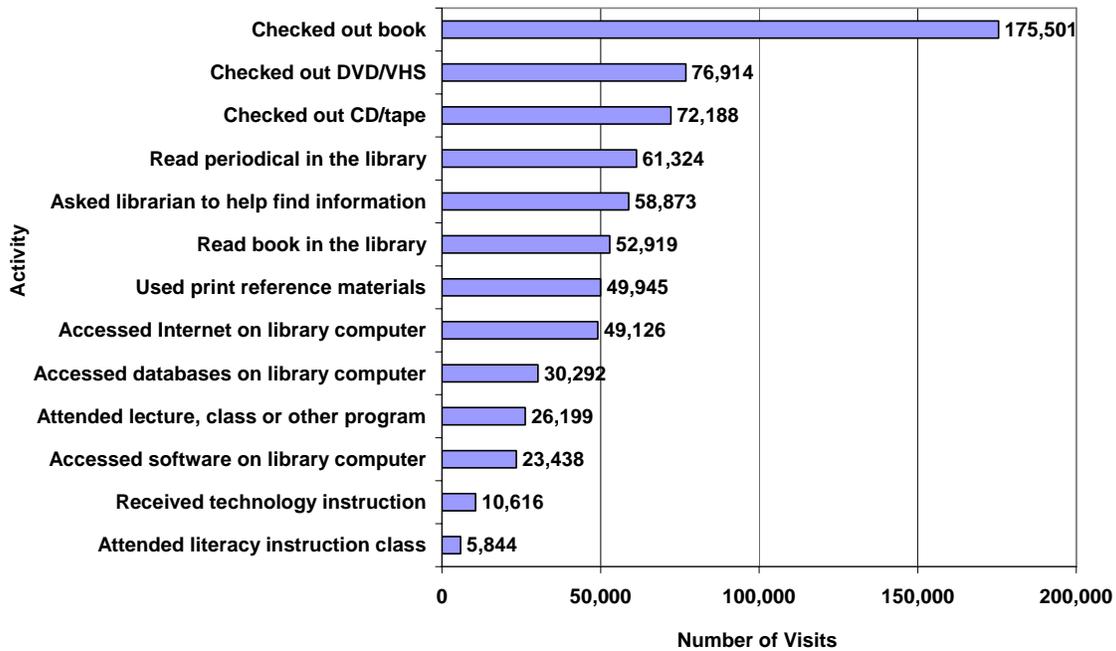
Montrose Library District
Patron Comments

"I have used public libraries since I was 6 yrs old. It is a very important part of my life. I was an impoverished child and if the library would not have been FREE I would not have read as much as I did and would not valued education enough to pursue a higher degree. I attribute a large part of my rise out of poverty to public libraries."

"It is an invaluable resource. I would prefer never to live in a place without a public library and Montrose's is excellent."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MONTROSE LIBRARY DISTRICT

The majority of respondents (59%) reported coming to the library primarily for personal interests and/or recreational purposes (see Chart 3). In addition, a large percentage of respondents came to the library for educational purposes (21%), meeting their needs as students, educators, and home-schooling parents. Job-related reasons also attracted visitors to the library (7%).

Chart 3

**Return on Investment - Montrose Library District:
Primary Reason for Respondent's Trip to Library**

Related to
establishing/running a
business
2%

Related to a job search
2%

Related to
a current job
3%

Other
14%

For personal interests
and/or recreational
purposes
59%

Education
21%

As a home-schooling
parent
8%

As a student
7%

As an
educator/educational
administrator
5%
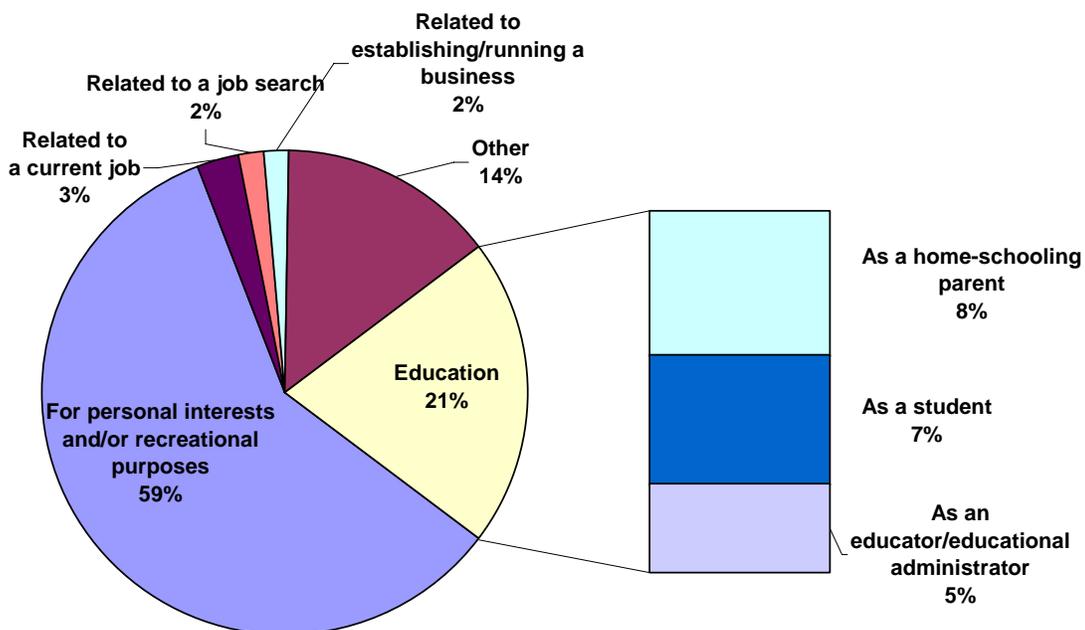
**Montrose Library District
Patron Comments**

"It is a wonderful place that my children love, and the summer programs they provide are priceless."

"This library is a necessary part of my life and a wealth of information, education, and entertainment."

Alternatives to Library Use

When asked what they would do to meet their information needs if the library did not exist, a majority of respondents (53%) said that they would have tried to get the information elsewhere (see Chart 4). However, 22 percent would not have known where else to go to get the information they received at the library, and another 10 percent would not have tried to get the information from another source. Without the library, the information needs of these users would not have been met.

Chart 4

Return on Investment - Montrose Library District:
Respondent's Alternative Strategy for Meeting Information Needs
If Library Did Not Exist

Other
15%

I would have tried to
get the information
from another source
53%

I would **not** have tried
to get the information
from another source
10%

I would **not** have
known where else to
go to get the
information
22%
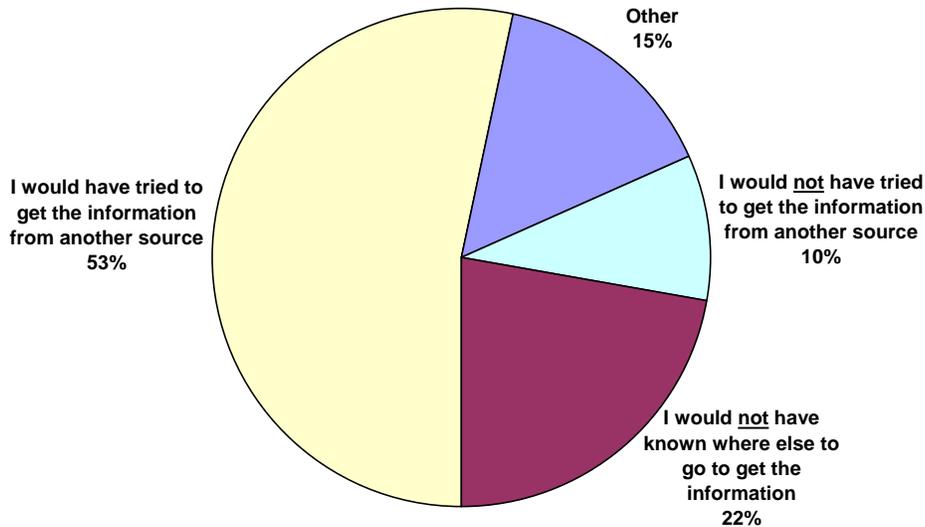
Montrose Library District
Patron Comments

"Very helpful. To use a college library I would have to travel 100 miles round trip and buy extra fuel."

"It is a most valuable place for me personally and for the community as a whole."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MONTROSE LIBRARY DISTRICT

Obtaining the information received during library visits would be expensive if acquired through alternative means. Respondents who would have tried to meet their information needs using an alternative source were asked to estimate how much money they would have spent using the other source. Half (50%) of Montrose Library District respondents said that they would have spent at least $20 to have their information needs met elsewhere. Fewer than one in six (15%) said that they would not have needed to spend any money to meet their information needs with an alternative source (see Chart 5).

Chart 5

**Return on Investment - Montrose Library District:
Respondent's Estimated Cost of Alternatives to Library Resources**

Pie chart segments:
- $10-$19: 20%
- $20 or more: 50%
- Less than $10: 15%
- No money required: 15%
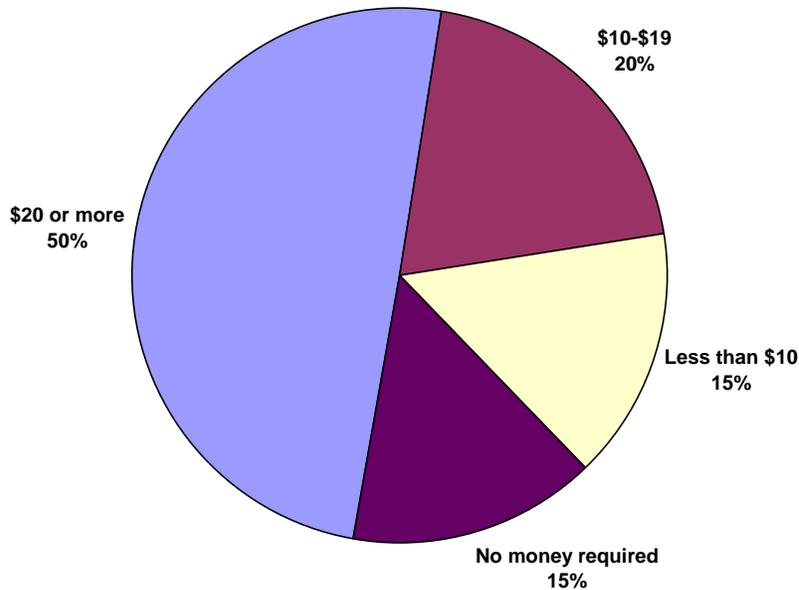
**Montrose Library District
Patron Comments**

"The library is an essential resource for research, continuing education and freedom of thought as well as unlimited entertainment- I NEED the library and am very grateful for it!"

"I feel the Public Library is one of the better services our tax money is spent on."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MONTROSE LIBRARY DISTRICT

Many respondents to the survey reported doing other activities or errands during the same trip as their visit to the library. The most likely peripheral activity, with 44 percent of respondents, was shopping (see Chart 6). Many respondents also reported attending to personal business (28%) or going to the post office (22%) during the trip. More than one in ten said they went to a restaurant or coffee shop (13%) and/or the bank (18%).[10]

Chart 6

Return on Investment - Montrose Library District:
Activities Performed by Respondent on the Same Trip as Library Visit

---
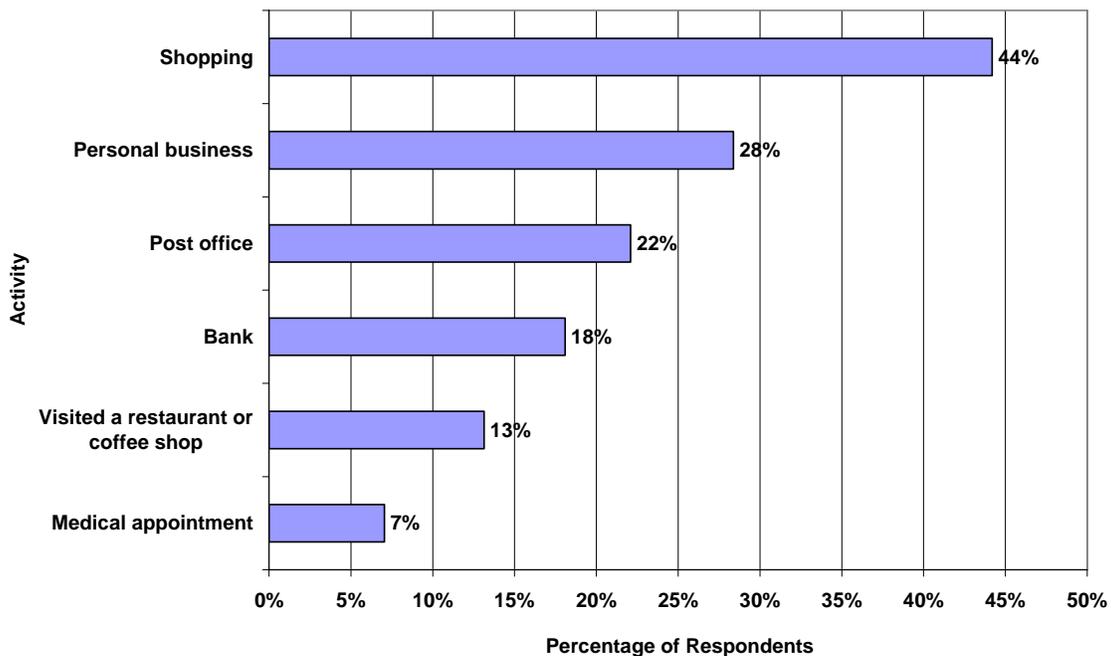
Montrose Library District
Patron Comments

"It is the best place to be - we are so lucky to have such an awesome library in Montrose!"

"I LOVE the public library. I am a stay at home mom with a very fixed income. The library has become our second home. We enjoyed storytime, coloring, puppet shows and guest authors. It fosters interaction with the community."

---

[10] As noted in the section on methodology, a U.K. study reported that a portion of the spending on these "halo" activities would not have occurred if the library were not available.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MONTROSE LIBRARY DISTRICT

Montrose Library District's computers are extremely popular with their users. More than two out of three respondents (71%) reported having used a library computer at some point (see Chart 7). The fact that so many patrons are using computers suggests that Montrose Library District is serving as a location to bridge the digital divide.

Chart 7

**Return on Investment - Montrose Library District:
Percentage of Respondents Who Have Used a Library Computer**

**Have not used a
library computer
29%**

**Have used a library
computer
71%**
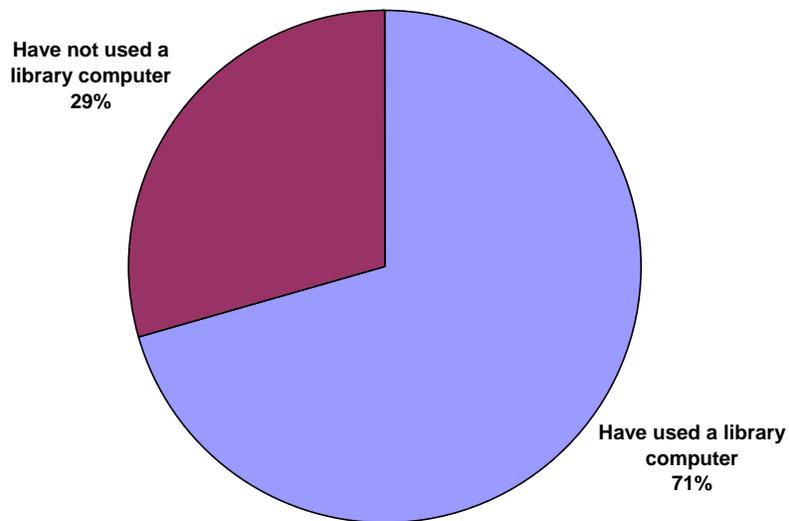
**Montrose Library District
Patron Comments**

"It's one of the most important resources in my community."

"It is a wealth of local historical information that can't be found elsewhere."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MONTROSE LIBRARY DISTRICT

In addition to in-library use, Montrose Library District's users connect to libraries from home. More than one-third of the respondents to this survey (36%) had connected to a Colorado public library from a home computer in the past twelve months (See Chart 8). Not only is the library a place to visit in the community, it is a place to visit in cyberspace as well.

Chart 8

**Return on Investment - Montrose Library District:
Number of Times Respondent Connected to a Colorado Public Library
from a Home Computer in Last 12 Months**
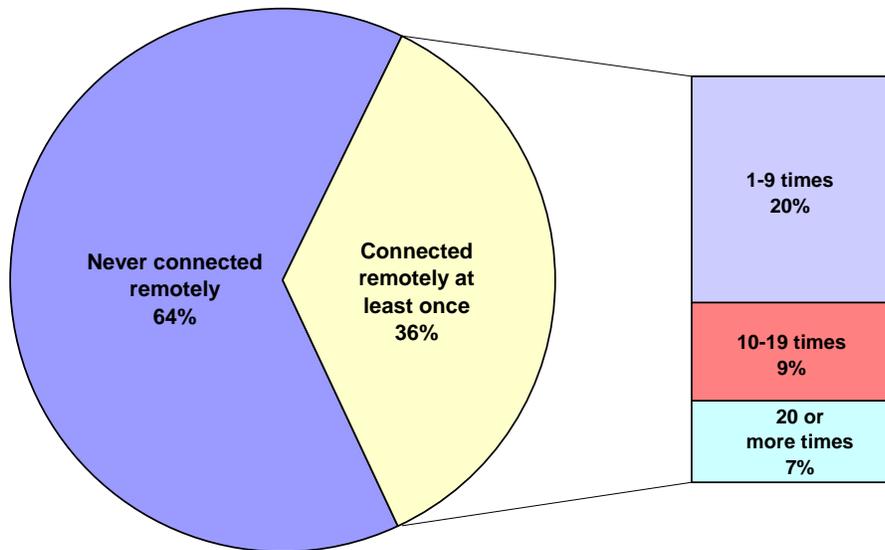
Demographics

The following five charts illustrate the demographics of the respondents to the Montrose Library District ROI patron survey. Demographic data includes gender, age, highest level of education, race and ethnicity, and personal and household income.

Chart 9

**Return on Investment - Montrose Library District:
Respondents by Gender**

Male
24%

Female
76%

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MONTROSE LIBRARY DISTRICT

Chart 10

**Return on Investment - Montrose Library District:
Respondents by Age**

Chart 11

**Return on Investment - Montrose Library District:
Respondents by Highest Level of Education**

Chart 12

Return on Investment - Montrose Library District:
Respondents by Race and Ethnicity

Respondents could choose more than one race/ethnicity.

Race/Ethnicity

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

MONTROSE LIBRARY DISTRICT

Chart 13

**Return on Investment - Montrose Library District:
Respondent's Personal and Household Income**

Horizontal bar chart. Y-axis: Income. X-axis: Percentage of Respondents (0% to 40%).

Income	Household Income	Personal Income
$100,000 or more	12%	2%
$50,000 - $99,999	30%	11%
$25,000 - $49,999	35%	27%
Under $25,000	13%	30%
None	6%	27%
Don't Know	3%	4%

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT
RANGEVIEW LIBRARY DISTRICT

$5

$1 Invested
Yields
$5 Return

$1
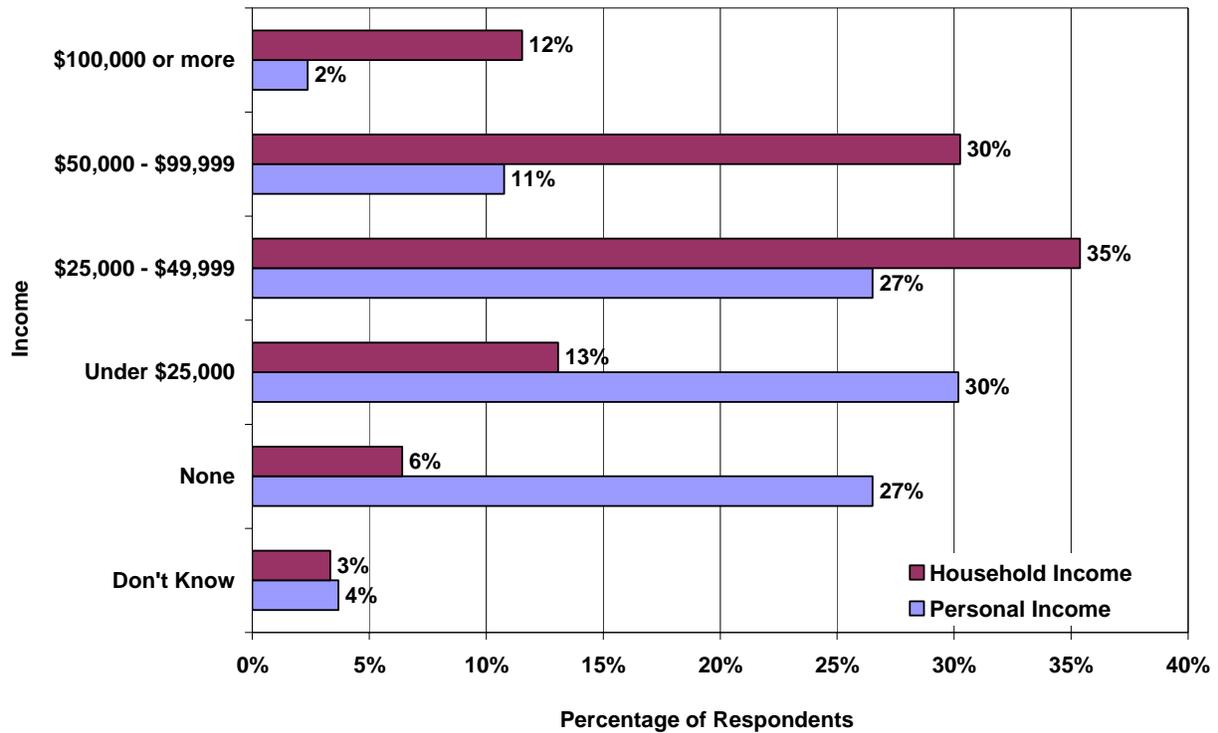
Rangeview Library District recently participated in a Return on Investment study conducted by the Library Research Service at the Colorado State Library. This study found a substantial return for taxpayers when investing in their local library. **For every $1.00 invested in Rangeview Library District, $4.81 of value is returned to the community.**[1]

Returns on Investment
Rangeview Library District[2]

60% Three out of five of Rangeview Library District patrons come to the library over 25 times per year.

52% Over half of Rangeview Library District patrons said they would have spent $20 or more getting their information from another source if the library did not exist.

438,800 Patrons came to Rangeview Library District specifically to check out books nearly a half-million times in the previous 12 months.

50% Half of Rangeview Library District patrons connected to a Colorado public library from a home computer in the previous 12 months.

69% More than two out of three Rangeview Library District patrons have used a library computer.

---

[1] Data was compiled from surveys of the individual libraries, the 2006 Colorado Public Library Report (accessible at www.LRS.org), and a survey in which library users were asked to estimate their cost of using alternative sources to meet their library-related needs, as well as their non-library expenditures.
[2] Based on responses to the ROI patron survey.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

RANGEVIEW LIBRARY DISTRICT

Why Return on Investment?

In the spring of 2006 a need was identified in Colorado to describe the variety of benefits delivered by public libraries to their patrons and to quantify the return on investment to taxpayers for monies invested in public libraries. To provide this data, the Library Research Service (LRS) undertook "What's It Worth to You? A Return on Investment Study of Selected Colorado Public Libraries" (ROI) in May 2006. Using a multiple case study approach, this research was designed to create such information for eight public libraries, representing geographically diverse regions of Colorado. Data were gathered using a combination of questionnaires, key informant interviews, and available data sources.

ROI Methodology

This study follows a model of contingent valuation that has been used in similar studies to determine ROI for public libraries. Contingent valuation is an economic technique often used for the valuation of non-market resources. This figure was calculated by examining the ramifications of not having a public library for the communities served. It includes:

- **Cost to Use Alternatives:** The estimated amount of money that would have been spent using an alternative information source.
- **Lost Use:** The estimated value of the lost information for users who would not have tried to attain the information elsewhere.
- **Direct Local Expenditures:** Contributions made by the library to community businesses and individuals in the form of purchasing goods and services.
- **Compensation for Library Staff:** Library staff would not receive compensation and unemployment would be a factor for at least some period of time.
- **Halo Spending:** Purchases made by library users from vendors and business that are located close to the library. A recent study found that approximately 23 percent of these purchases would not occur if the library did not exist.[3]

Table 1

Return on Investment Factors – Rangeview Library District[4]

Cost to Use Alternatives	$15,781,526
Lost Use	$446,891
Direct Local Expenditures	$243,252
Compensation for Library Staff	$2,877,485
Halo Spending	$1,481,713
Total Return on Investment	**$20,830,867**
Total Local Investment	÷ $4,330,322
Return per Dollar Invested	**$4.81**

---

[3] Proctor, Richard, Bob Usherwood, and Gill Sobczyk. *What Happens When a Public Library Service Closes Down?* Library Management 18, no. 1 (1997): 59-64.

[4] Data were compiled from surveys of the individual libraries, the 2006 Colorado Public Library Report (accessible at www.LRS.org), and a survey in which library users were asked to estimate their cost of using alternative sources to meet their library-related needs, as well as their non-library expenditures. Estimates for alternative costs are conservative, as they do not include the value of extra time that might have been necessary to meet their needs elsewhere.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

RANGEVIEW LIBRARY DISTRICT

Rangeview Library District at a Glance

Rangeview Library District is located on the Rocky Mountain Front Range. It is organized as a library district to serve residents of Adams County, Colorado and has a legal service area population of 302,907.[5] Rangeview Library District consists of six branches throughout the county and one bookmobile. The collection includes over 230,000 print volumes, 11,600 audios, 9,500 videos, and 600 periodicals. To access the many electronic resources, it also has 38 public access computers.

Table 2
Selected Statistics for
Rangeview Library District[6]

Description	Total		Ratio[7]
Circulation	680,538		2.3 per capita
Visits	560,080		1.9 per capita
Library Programs	1,275	75	Program attendees per 1,000 served
Public Access Computers	38		.13 per 1,000 served

Funded primarily through local revenue (94.6%), Rangeview Library District receives $4.3 million in district mill levy funds and $246,171 in other operating revenue.[8] Local revenue per capita is $14.30. Because this study examines the return on investment for each library's community[9], only local revenue is used in calculating the monetary contribution of community members to each library.

---

[5]Metropolitan status, legal basis, and geographic area are defined by the Federal-State Cooperative System for Public Library Data and the National Center of Education Statistics (accessible at http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/libraries/public.asp). These definitions are also used in the Colorado Public Library Annual Report (accessible at www.LRS.org).
[6] 2006 Colorado Public Library Annual Report (accessible at www.LRS.org).
[7] Per capita is figured using legal service area (LSA) population (accessible at http://www.lrs.org/pub_stats.php).
[8] 2006 Colorado Public Library Annual Report. "Other operating revenue" refers to funds not reported under local, state or federal revenue and may include, but are not limited to, monetary gifts, donations, and grants (accessible at www.LRS.org).
[9] A library's community is defined as the legal service area as specified in the library's establishment documents.

SURVEY RESULTS

Library Use

Once through the doors, visitors to Rangeview Library District tend to be heavy users of library resources. Of the library visitors who responded to the ROI survey, three out of five of them had visited the library 25 times or more over the last twelve months; essentially, these patrons come to the library at least every other week (see Chart 1). One in four had visited on about a monthly basis over the previous year - between 10 and 24 times. Less than 1 in 10 respondents said that they visited the library fewer than 5 times in the previous 12 months.

Chart 1

**Return on Investment - Rangeview Library District:
Respondent's Number of Visits to the Library in the Last 12 Months**

1-4 times
8%

5-9 times
6%

10-14 times
12%

15-19 times
5%

20-24 times
9%

25 times or more
60%
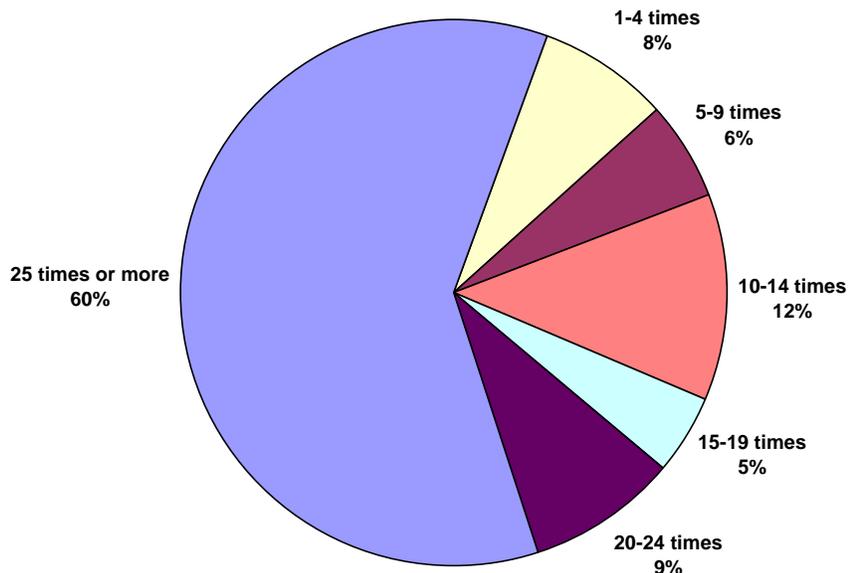
**Rangeview Library District
Serving the Community**

Georgia Neilsen is the Coordinator of the Perl Mack Genealogy Group in the Rangeview Library District. The group, free and open to all who are interested, began in September 2002 when some of the Perl Mack library patrons wanted more intensive assistance with their genealogy research. There are currently 28 active members. In 2004 Georgia and the group created their Genealogy and Western History Collection containing several hundred volumes of books and magazines, along with a continually developing "how-to" file of information on doing research.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

RANGEVIEW LIBRARY DISTRICT

In 2006, there were 560,080 visits to the Rangeview Library District. Despite the changing ways in which the public uses libraries, checking out materials remains the primary reason for library visits. Over three-quarters of these visits (438,800) resulted in the library user checking out a book (see Chart 2). Additionally, the concept of "library as place" remains strong. One-quarter of respondent visits included reading a book (25%) or periodical (27%) in the library, and programs and instruction still draw a considerable number of people into the library. However, for many of these visits, library use patterns are changing, as computer use has grown to encompass a large part of the library user's experience. Based on responses to the survey, during 36 percent of these visits the visitor accessed the Internet on a library computer. Accessing databases and software via library computers is a large part of use as well.

Chart 2

**Return on Investment - Rangeview Library District:
Number of Visits During Which Users Performed Specific Activities**

Activity	Number of Visits
Checked out book	438,800
Checked out DVD/VHS	222,927
Accessed Internet on library computer	199,669
Checked out CD/tape	196,356
Asked librarian to help find information	166,895
Read periodical in the library	149,333
Used print reference materials	148,933
Read book in the library	138,286
Accessed databases on library computer	132,781
Accessed software on library computer	94,167
Attended lecture, class or other program	69,883
Received technology instruction	23,209
Attended literacy instruction class	23,199
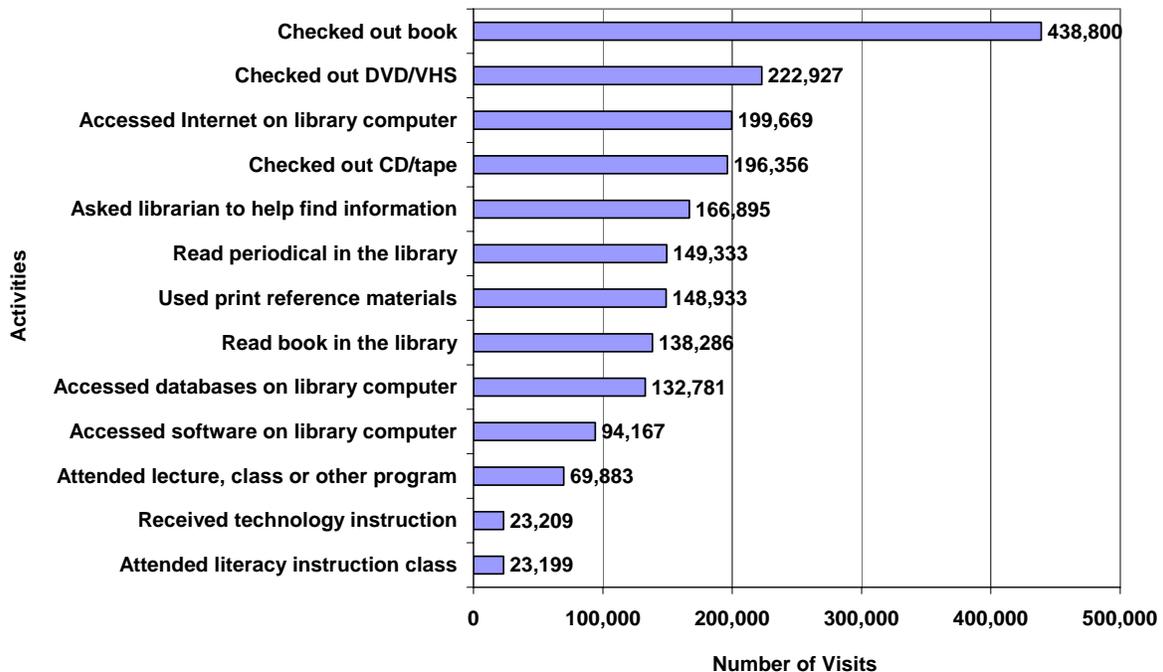
**Rangeview Library District
Serving the Community – Quotes from the Genealogy Group**

The genealogy group "gives me a chance to get more information, share with others and help work out problems in obtaining more data, it is my psychiatrist".

"The group is a source if information that novices like us have a hard time finding on our own…The group meets my needs by providing a growing collection of books, materials, sources on the internet and the information Georgia has at each meeting."

"The group has as many diverse objectives as it has members, but Georgia uses the programs at the meetings as a way to give some enlightenment to everyone."

"Georgia puts her heart and soul into each presentation, doing lots of research, giving hand outs and has books displayed that are about the topic of each presentation."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

RANGEVIEW LIBRARY DISTRICT

The majority of respondents (59%) reported coming to the library primarily for personal interests and/or recreational purposes (see Chart 3). In addition, a large percentage of respondents came to the library for educational purposes (13%), meeting their needs as students, educators, and home-schooling parents. Job-related reasons also attracted visitors to the library (9%).

Chart 3

**Return on Investment - Rangeview Library District:
Primary Reason for Respondent's Trip to Library**
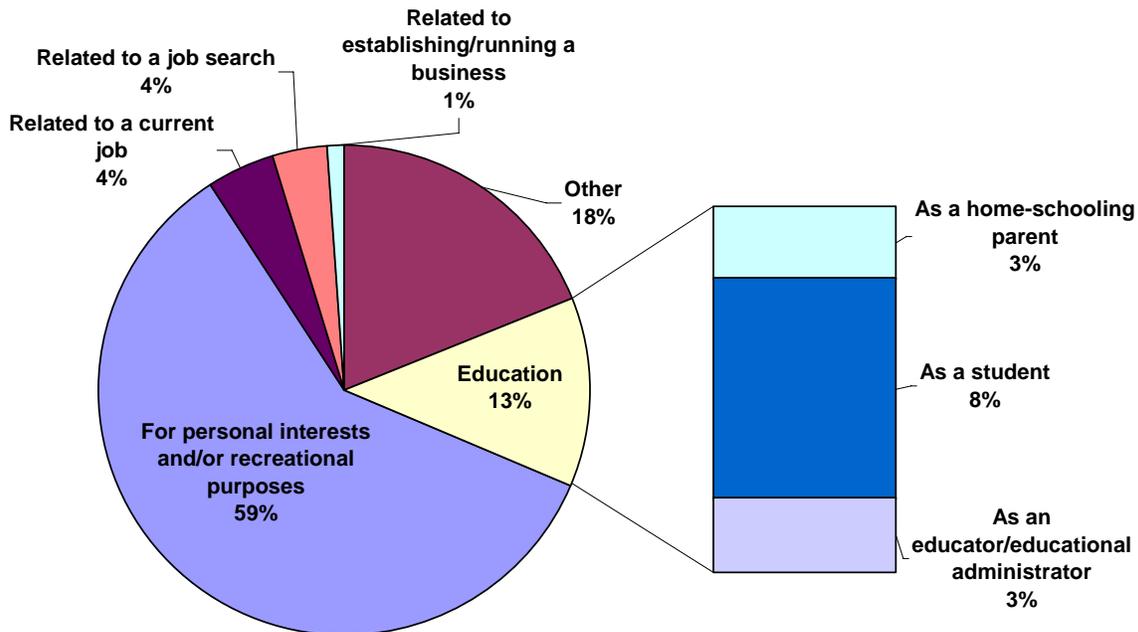
Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100%.

**Rangeview Library District
Serving the Community**

Ed Stephen has been the Literacy Coordinator for the Rangeview Library District since 1987. The program began with a primary focus to help adults who had problems reading. About ten years ago, the program was expanded to include English as a Second Language (ESL) which has quickly become the most prominent component of the program. In 2006 approximately 200 people were involved either as students or tutors in the ESL and adult literacy programs. This number should increase significantly when the ESL classes are expanded to the Northglenn and Thornton branches in September 2007. Several former adult literacy students went on to receive full high school diplomas.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

RANGEVIEW LIBRARY DISTRICT

Alternatives to Library Use

When asked what they would do to meet their information needs if the library did not exist, a majority of respondents (58%) said that they would have tried to get the information elsewhere (see Chart 4). However, 21 percent would not have known where else to go to get the information they received at the library, and another 8 percent would not have tried to get the information from another source. Without the library, the information needs of these users would not have been met.

Chart 4

**Return on Investment - Rangeview Library District:
Respondent's Alternative Strategy for Meeting Information Needs
If Library Did Not Exist**

Other
13%

I would <u>not</u> have tried
to get the information
from another source
8%

I would have tried to
get the information
from another source
58%

I would <u>not</u> have
known where else to
go to get the
information
21%

**Rangeview Library District
Patron Comments**

"It is the best source for almost any information to be researched, read, heard or anything else."

"We love it and don't ever want to lose it. It is a great resource to our community. We are a small farm community and would have to drive miles to another library. I don't have a computer."

Obtaining the information received during library visits would be expensive if acquired through alternative means. Respondents who would have tried to meet their information needs using an alternative source were asked to estimate how much money they would have spent using the other source. Over half (52%) of Rangeview Library District respondents said that they would have spent at least $20 to have their information needs met elsewhere (see Chart 5).

Chart 5

**Return on Investment - Rangeview Library District:
Respondent's Estimated Cost of Alternatives to Library Resources**

$10-$19
12%

$20 or more
52%

Less than $10
13%

No money required
23%
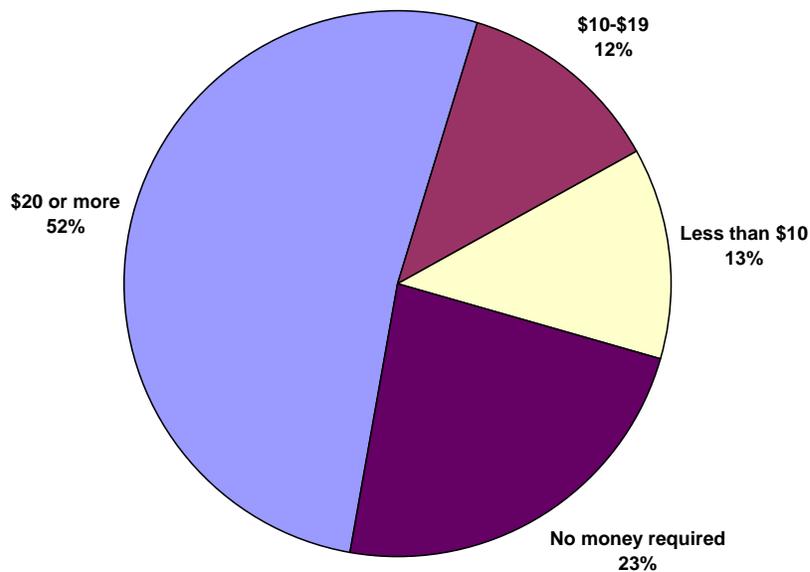
**Rangeview Library District
Patron Comments**

"It is the best place to go. You can read, study, research and enjoy yourself without having to pay money."

"We love our public library at the Northglenn branch. We attend every week for the circle time activity...We also check out new books each week and it is vastly increasing my son's vocabulary!"

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

RANGEVIEW LIBRARY DISTRICT

Many respondents to the survey reported doing other activities or errands during the same trip as their visit to the library. The most likely peripheral activity, with 37 percent of respondents, was shopping (see Chart 6). One in five respondents also reported attending to personal business or going to the post office (20% each). At least one in ten said they went to the bank (17%) or visited a restaurant or coffee shop (10%).[10]

Chart 6

**Return on Investment - Rangeview Library District:
Activities Performed by Respondent on the Same Trip as Library Visit**
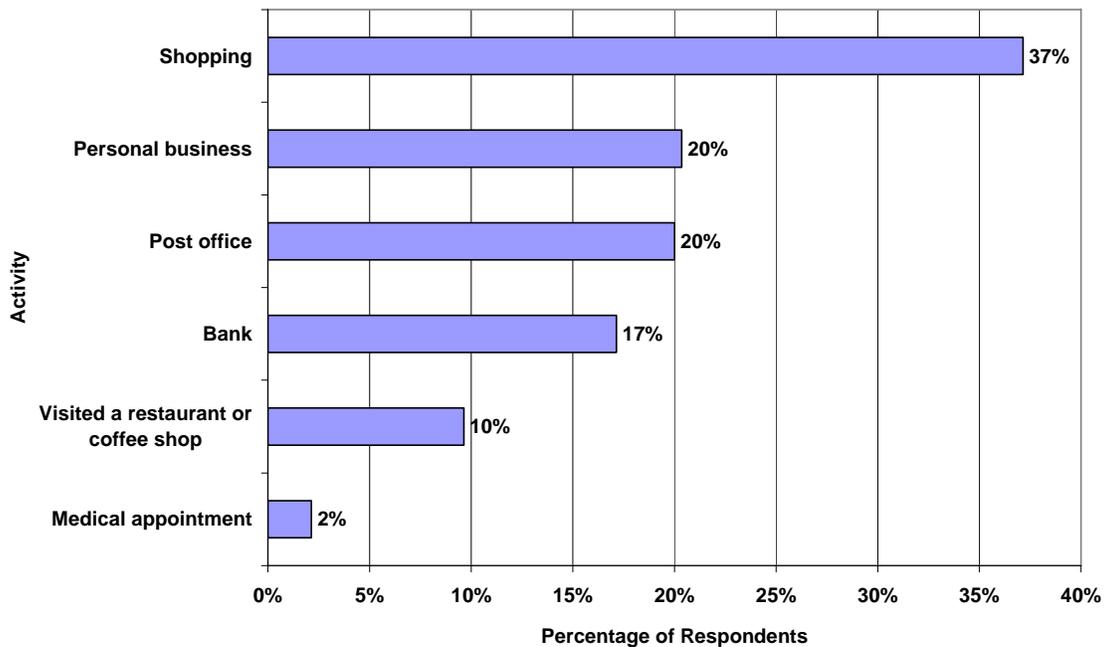
Rangeview Library District Patron Comments
"I love this library district. If you can't find something, they will find it for you. If they don't have it, eventually they will. Very convenient!"
"I have been frequenting public libraries for more than fifty years and can't imagine life without them!"

---

[10] As noted in the section on methodology, a U.K. study reported that a portion of the spending on these "halo" activities would not have occurred if the library were not available.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

RANGEVIEW LIBRARY DISTRICT

Rangeview Library District's computers are extremely popular with their users. More than two out of three respondents (69%) reported having used a library computer at some point (see Chart 7). The fact that so many patrons are using computers suggests that Rangeview Library District is serving as a location to bridge the digital divide.

Chart 7

**Return on Investment - Rangeview Library District:
Percentage of Respondents Who Have Used a Library Computer**

Have not used a
library computer
31%

Have used a library
computer
69%
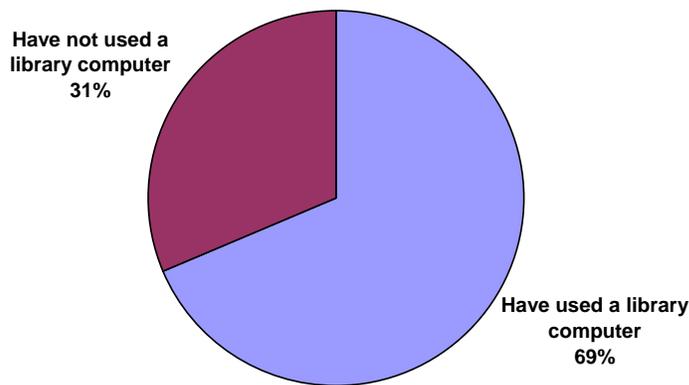
**Rangeview Library District
Patron Comments**

"I use the Northglenn library a lot for school research, personal fulfillment and job searches."

"I believe our library is a valuable asset to our community."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

RANGEVIEW LIBRARY DISTRICT

In addition to in-library use, Rangeview Library District's users appear to frequently connect to libraries from home. Half of the respondents to this survey (50%) had connected to a Colorado public library from a home computer in the past twelve months (See Chart 8). As with visits, many that connect do so often. Nearly one-fifth of the respondents (19%) had connected to a public library from home at least 20 times within the last year. Not only is the library a place to visit in the community, it is a place to visit in cyberspace as well.

Chart 8

Return on Investment - Rangeview Library District:
Number of Times Respondent Connected to a Colorado Public Library
from a Home Computer in Last 12 Months

Never connected remotely 49%

Connected remotely at least once 50%

1-9 times 20%

10-19 times 12%

20 or more times 19%
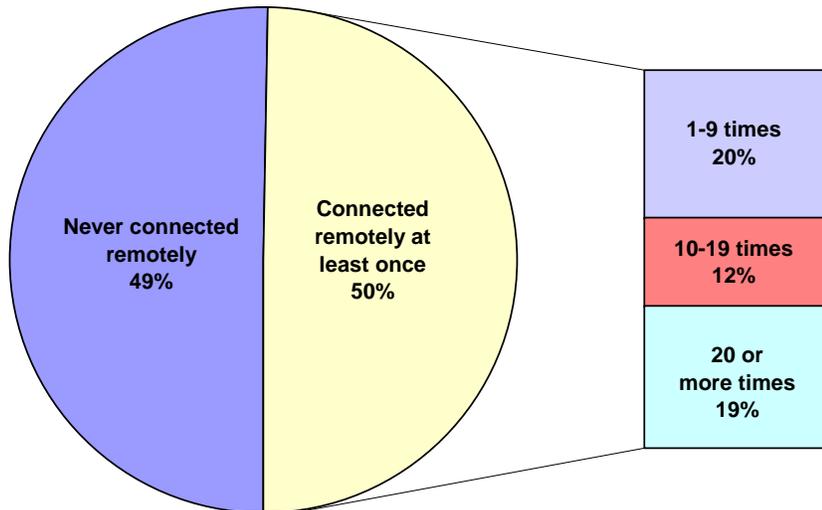
Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100%.

Rangeview Library District
Patron Comments

"I would be lost without a library. It is one of my favorite places to be."

"I visit my local public library with my kids quite frequently and feel that it plays a huge role in nurturing the love of books and knowledge in children and adults alike."

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

RANGEVIEW LIBRARY DISTRICT

Demographics

The following five charts illustrate the demographics of the respondents to the Rangeview Library District ROI patron survey. Demographic data includes gender, age, highest level of education, race and ethnicity, and personal and household income.

Chart 9

**Return on Investment - Rangeview Library District:
Respondents by Gender**

PUBLIC LIBRARIES – A WISE INVESTMENT

RANGEVIEW LIBRARY DISTRICT

Chart 10

**Return on Investment - Rangeview Library District:
Respondents by Age**

- Under 18 — 5%
- 18-29 — 15%
- 30-44 — 27%
- 45-54 — 21%
- 55-64 — 16%
- 65 & over — 16%

Chart 11

**Return on Investment - Rangeview Library District:
Respondents by Highest Level of Education**

- Other — 11%
- Some high school — 5%
- High school graduate or GED — 33%
- Associate's degree — 12%
- Bachelor's degree — 24%
- Advanced degree — 15%

Chart 12

**Return on Investment - Rangeview Library District:
Respondents by Race and Ethnicity**

Respondents could choose more than one race/ethnicity.   **Race/Ethnicity**

Chart 13

**Return on Investment - Rangeview Library District:
Respondent's Personal and Household Income**

Appendix B

Cortez Public Library

The Return on Investment Study conducted by Library Research Service revealed some significant demographic data among the libraries that participated. The following questions provided significant statistics for Cortez Public Library after cross-tabulation analysis was conducted. These demographic highlights are those that are most significant for Cortez Public Library and may not be comparable to demographics for other libraries participating in the survey.

How much time, if any, did you last spend using a library computer for access to free Internet information?

CPL Chart 1
Return on Investment: Cortez Public Library
Time Spent on the Internet Using a Library Computer, by Age Group
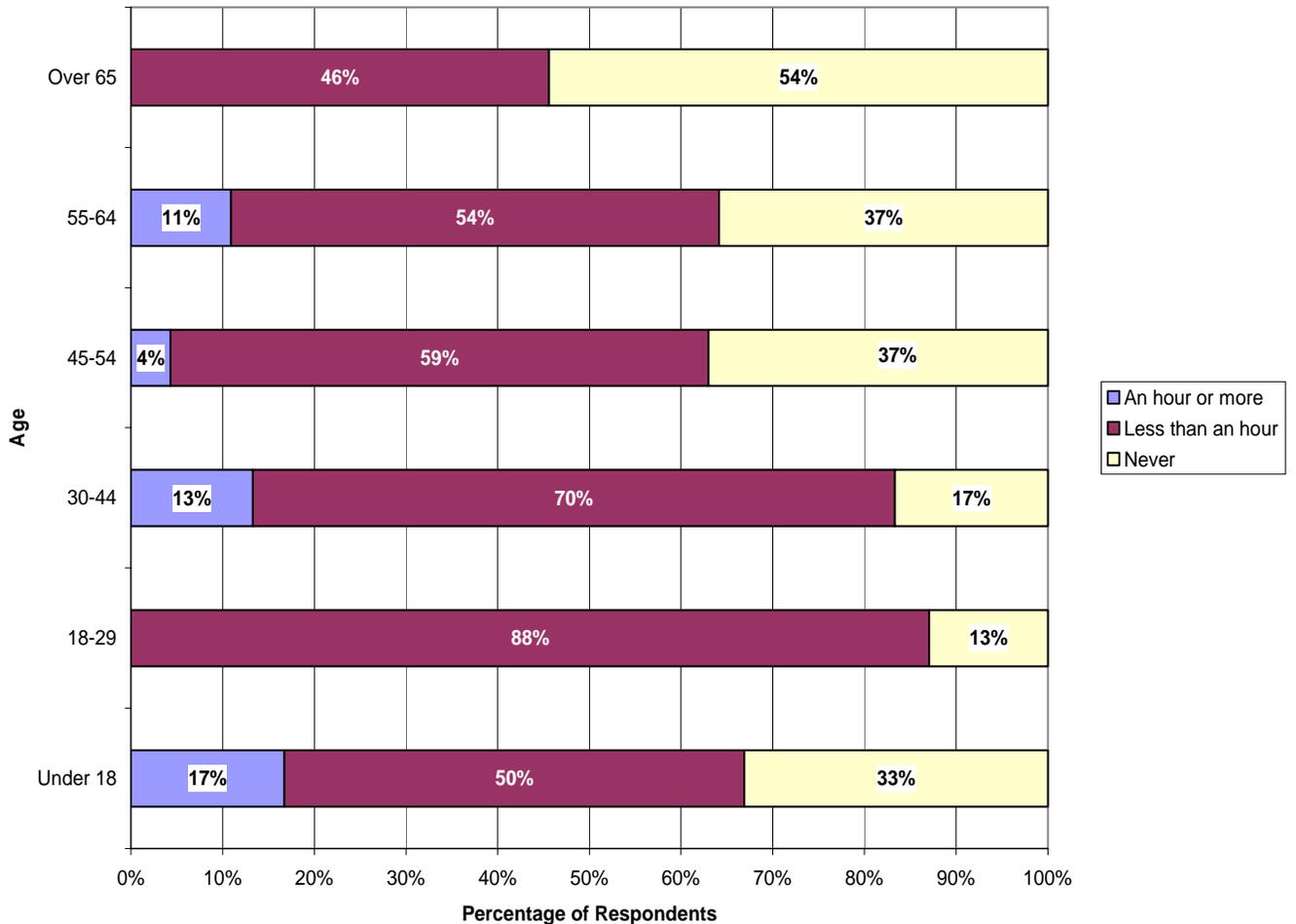
- Respondents under 18 years old were the most likely to spend more than an hour online at the library (see CPL Chart 1).
- In general, most respondents used the Internet in the library for less than an hour.
- More than half (54%) of the respondents who were sixty-five or older had not accessed the Internet at the public library during the prior year.

Cortez Public Library

CPL Chart 2
Return on Investment: Cortez Public Library
Time Spent on the Internet Using a Library Computer, by Household Income
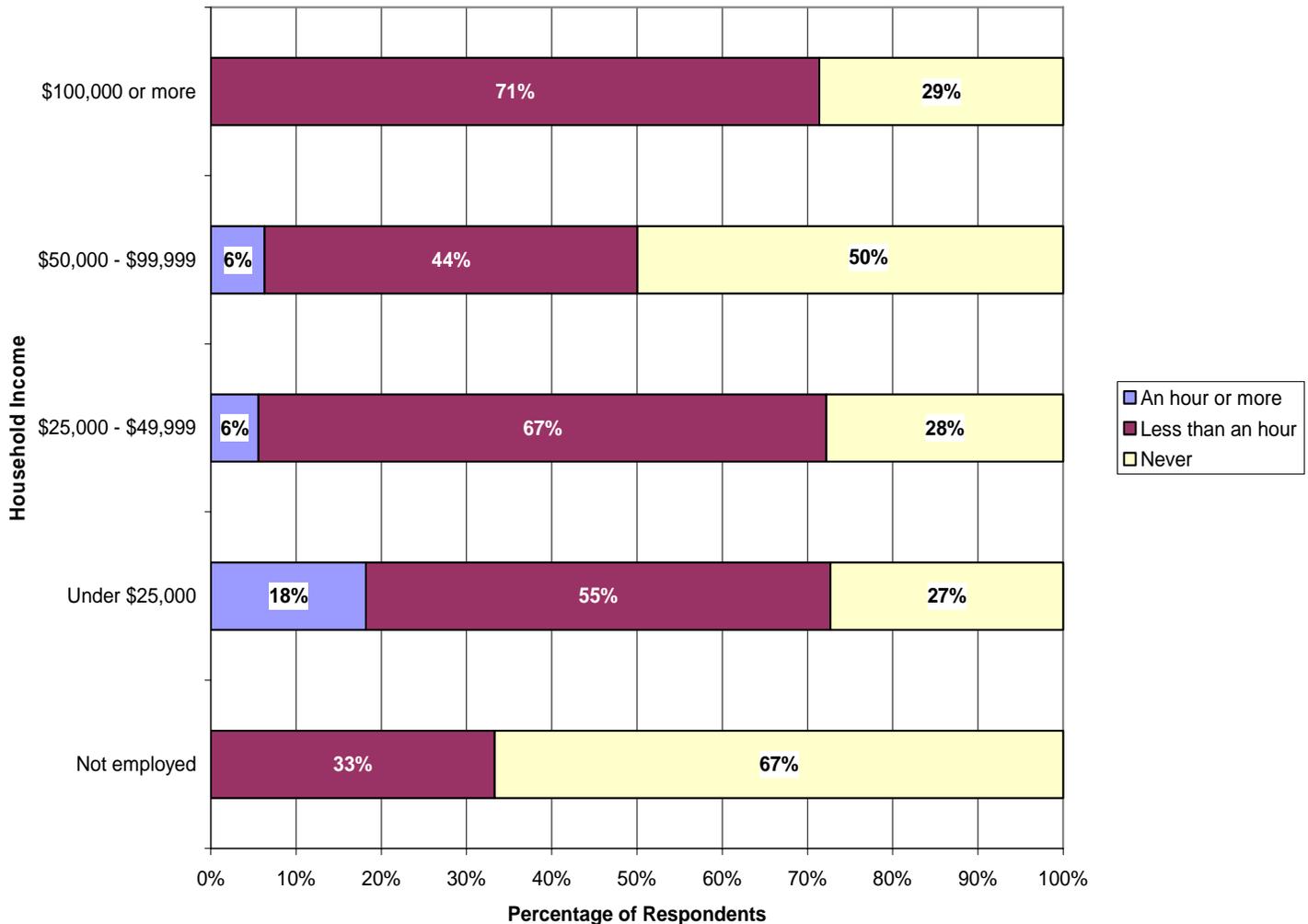
- More than half (67%) of the respondents who were not employed had not accessed the Internet from a library computer during the previous twelve months (see CPL Chart 2).
- Almost three-quarters (73%) of respondents earning less than $25,000 per year had accessed the Internet from the library. They were also the group most likely to have spent an hour or more online at the library.

Cortez Public Library

How many times have you checked out a CD and/or tape from the library during the last twelve months?

CPL Chart 3
Return on Investment: Cortez Public Library
CD or Tape Checkouts, by Age
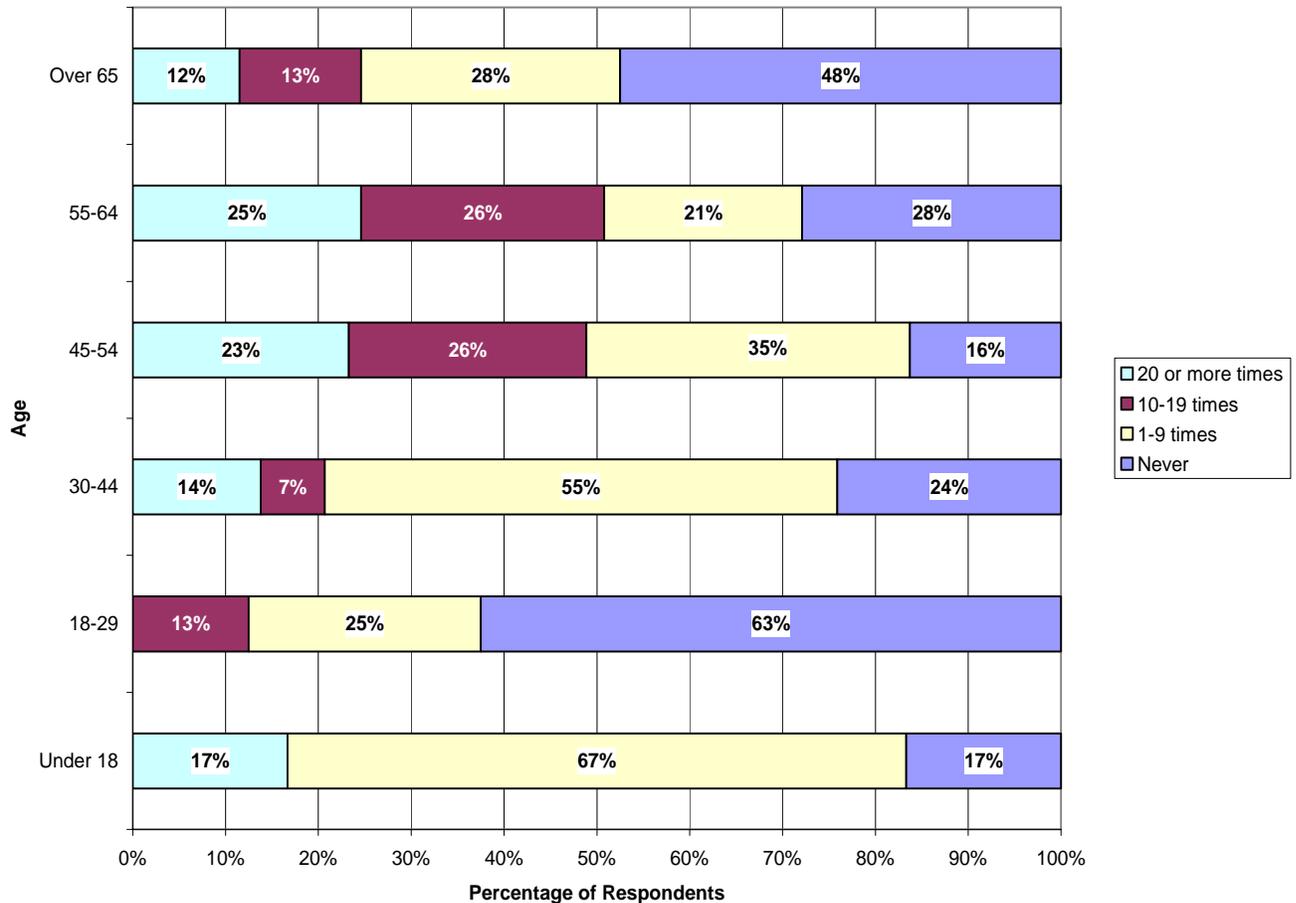
- The age groups most likely to have checked out a CD or tape from the library during the previous year were aged 45-54 or under 18 years old (see CPL Chart 3). Only 16% and 17% of these respondents, respectively, had not checked out a CD or tape.
- The age group least likely to have checked out this kind of media during the previous year was aged 18-29.
- A quarter of the respondents aged 55-64 had checked out a CD or tape twenty or more times during the previous year.

Cortez Public Library

CPL Chart 4
Return on Investment: Cortez Public Library
CD or Tape Checkouts, by Education Level

Highest Education Level Attained

Education Level	20 or more times	10-19 times	1-9 times	Never
Advanced degree	30%	18%	30%	23%
Bachelor's degree	16%	16%	38%	29%
Associate's degree	19%	37%	33%	11%
High school graduate/GED	10%	19%	29%	43%
Some high school			43%	57%

Legend:
- 20 or more times
- 10-19 times
- 1-9 times
- Never

Percentage of Respondents
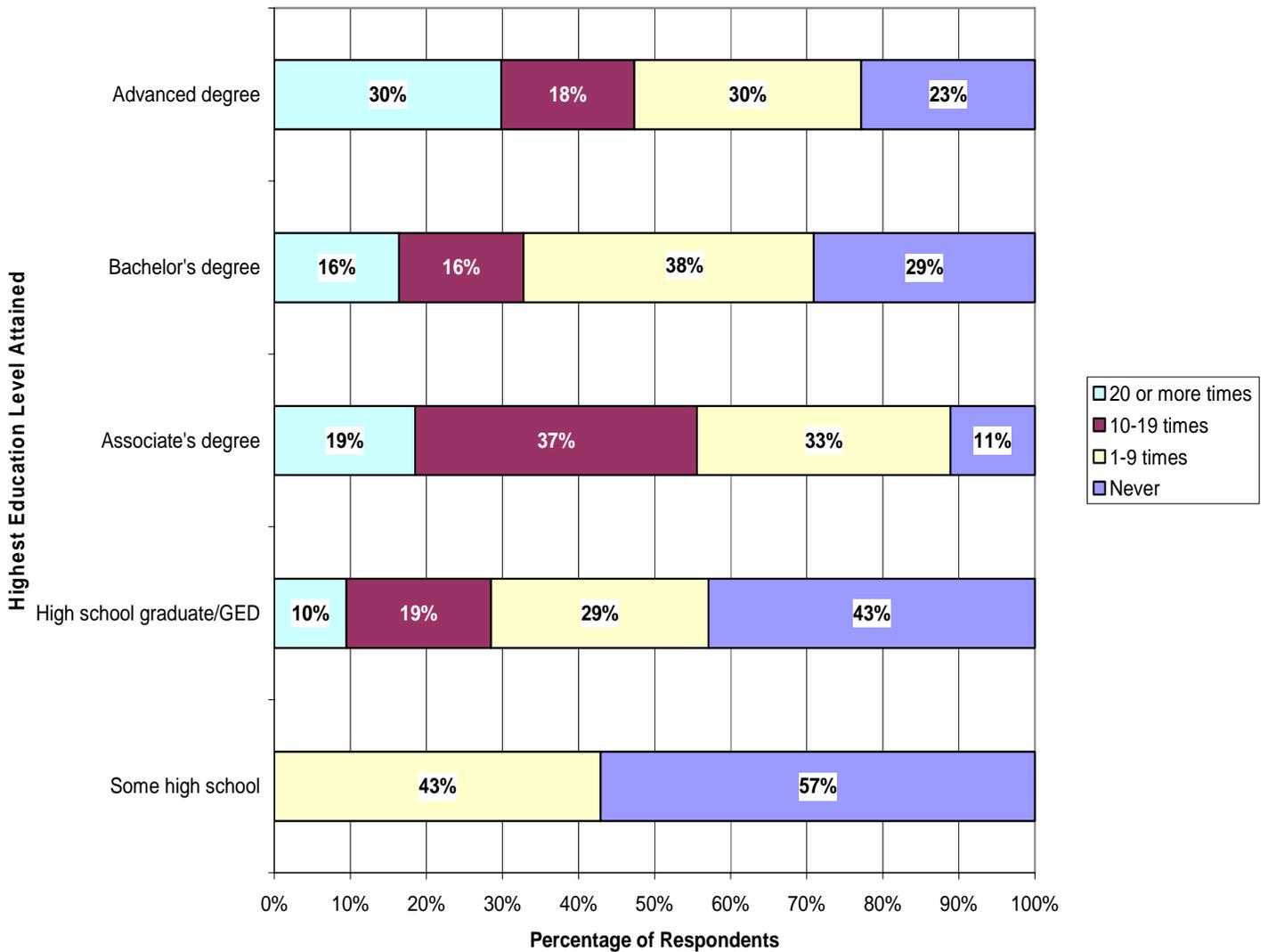
- Those respondents who had completed some high school but who did not graduate were the least likely to have checked out a CD or tape during the previous twelve months (see CPL Chart 4).
- Those holding advanced degrees were the most likely to have checked a CD or tape out more than twenty times during the previous twelve months.

Cortez Public Library

How many times have you connected to a Colorado public library remotely during the last twelve months?

CPL Chart 5
Return on Investment: Cortez Public Library
Remote Access to a Colorado Public Library, by Age
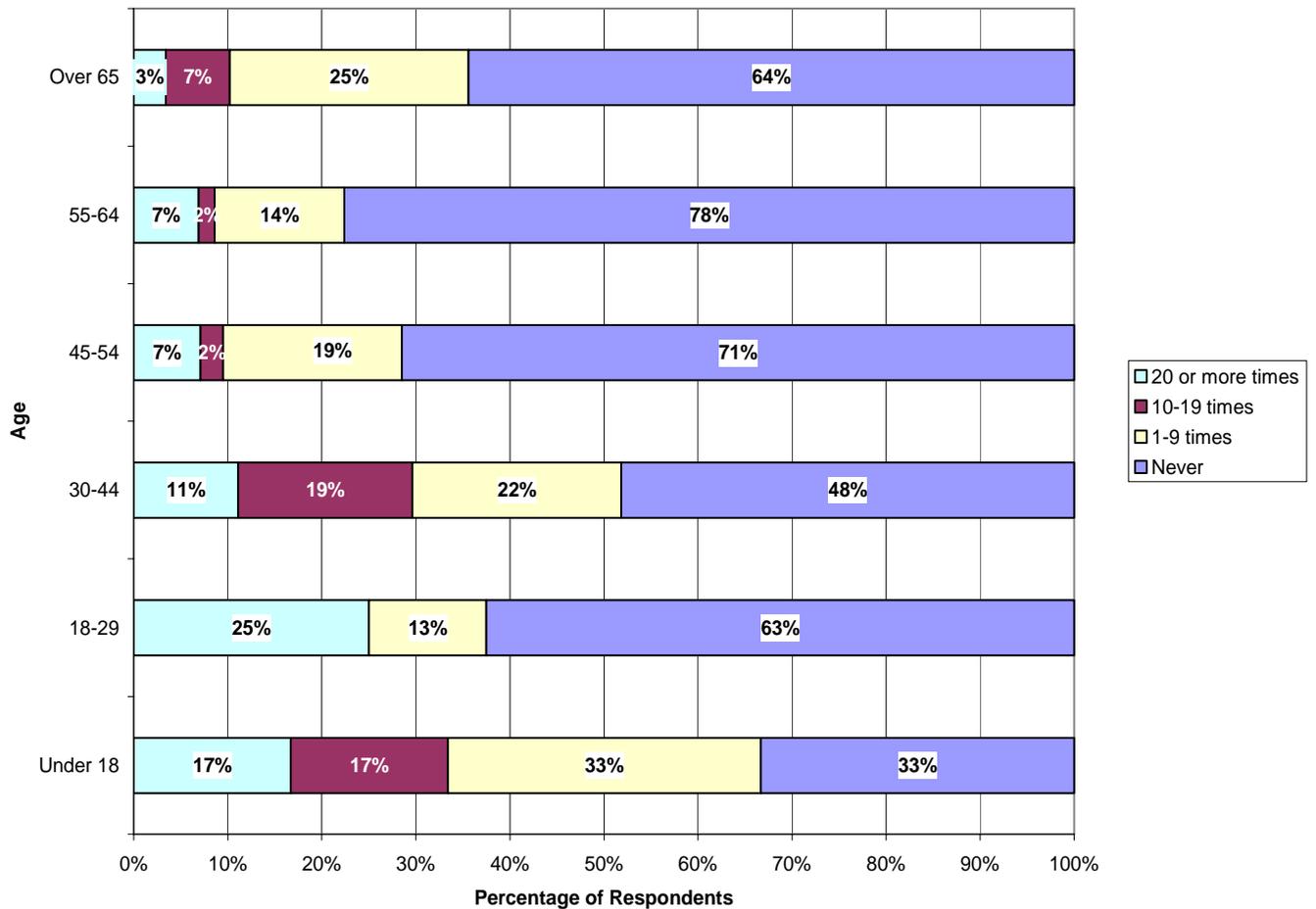
- For most age groups, the majority of respondents had not accessed a Colorado public library remotely at all during the previous twelve months (see CPL Chart 5).
- A quarter of the respondents aged 18-29 had accessed a Colorado public library remotely twenty or more times during the previous year.
- More than three-quarters (78%) of the respondents aged 55-64 had not accessed a Colorado public library remotely during the previous twelve months.

Cortez Public Library

CPL Chart 6
Return on Investment: Cortez Public Library
Remote Access to a Colorado Public Library, by Household Income
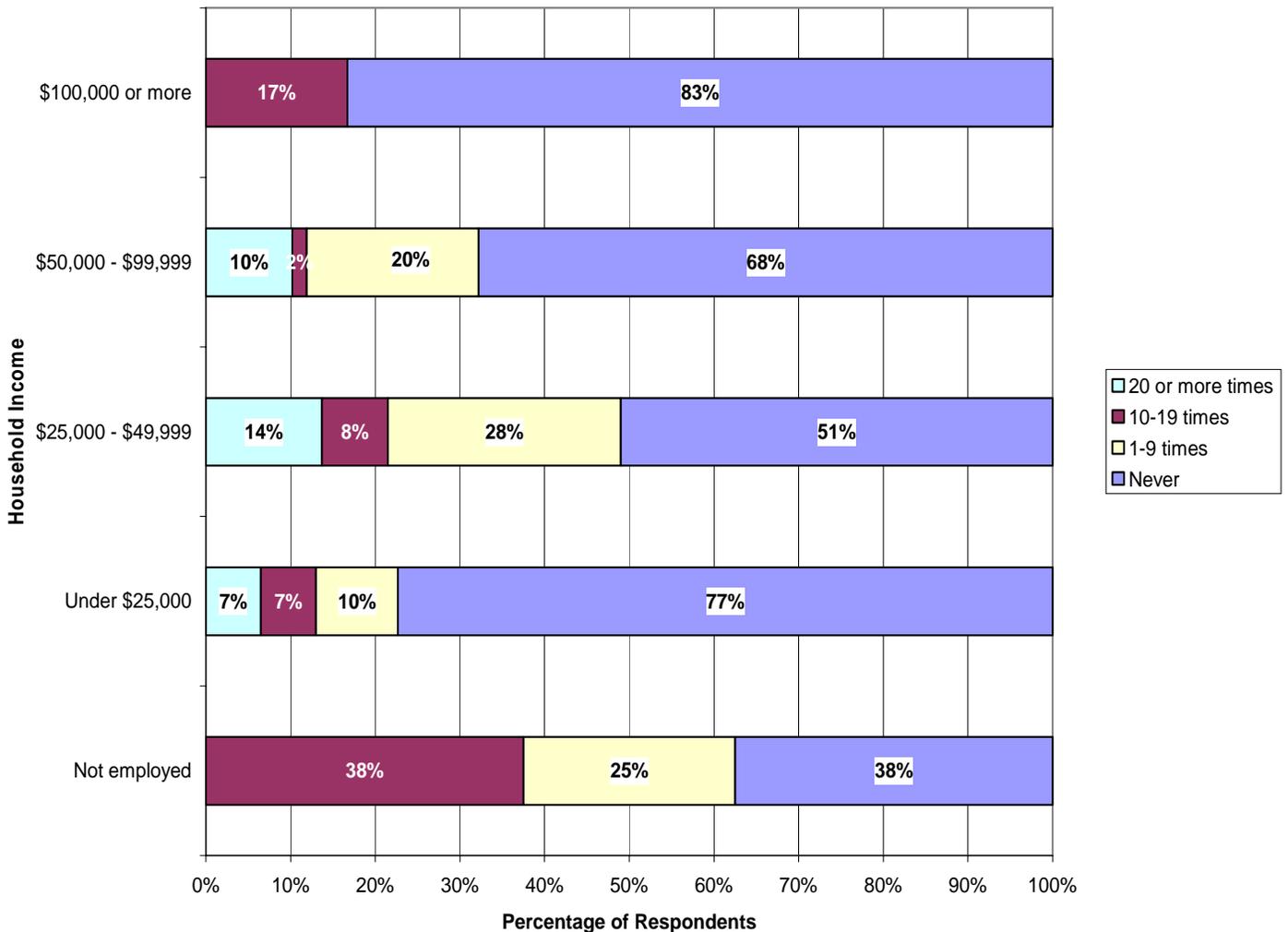
- Respondents earning the most annual income ($100,000 or more) were the least likely to have accessed the public library remotely during the prior year (see
- CPL Chart 6).
- Those respondents who were not employed were the most likely to have accessed the public library remotely (62%).
- Respondents earning between $25,000 and $49,999 were most likely to have accessed the library remotely twenty or more times during the previous year.
- More than half of the respondents in all income groups had never accessed the library remotely, with the exception of those respondents who were not employed (38% had never accessed the library remotely).

Cortez Public Library

Conclusions

It is important to note that some of the demographic groups listed above had few respondents, so data provided here may not apply to the entire clientele of the Cortez Public Library. Still, a few trends are evident:

- Young people (under 18 years old) were more likely to use library computers to access the Internet, and were more likely to check out media such as CDs and tapes. This group was also more likely to access the public library website remotely. All of this suggests that younger patrons are using the library in non-traditional ways.
- Overall, patrons older than 55 accessed the library in more traditional ways. They were less likely to use the Internet at the library and less likely to access the library website remotely.
- In general, patrons with higher levels of educational attainment were more likely to check out media like CDs and tapes.
- Patrons earning the most annual income ($100,000 or more) were less likely to access the public library remotely, but did access the Internet in the library. Those earning less than $25,000 annually also did not tend to access the library remotely, but were the income group most likely to spend more than an hour online in the library.

.

Notes:

Percentages were rounded to the nearest whole number; in some cases percentages do not add up to 100%.

Denver Public Library

The Return on Investment Study conducted by Library Research Service revealed some significant demographic data among the libraries that participated. The following questions provided significant statistics for Denver Public Library after cross-tabulation analysis was conducted. These demographic highlights are those that are most significant for Denver Public Library, and may not be comparable to demographics for other libraries participating in the survey.

How many times have you read a book in the library during the last twelve months?

DPL Chart 7
Return on Investment: Denver Public Library
Books Read in Library, by Age
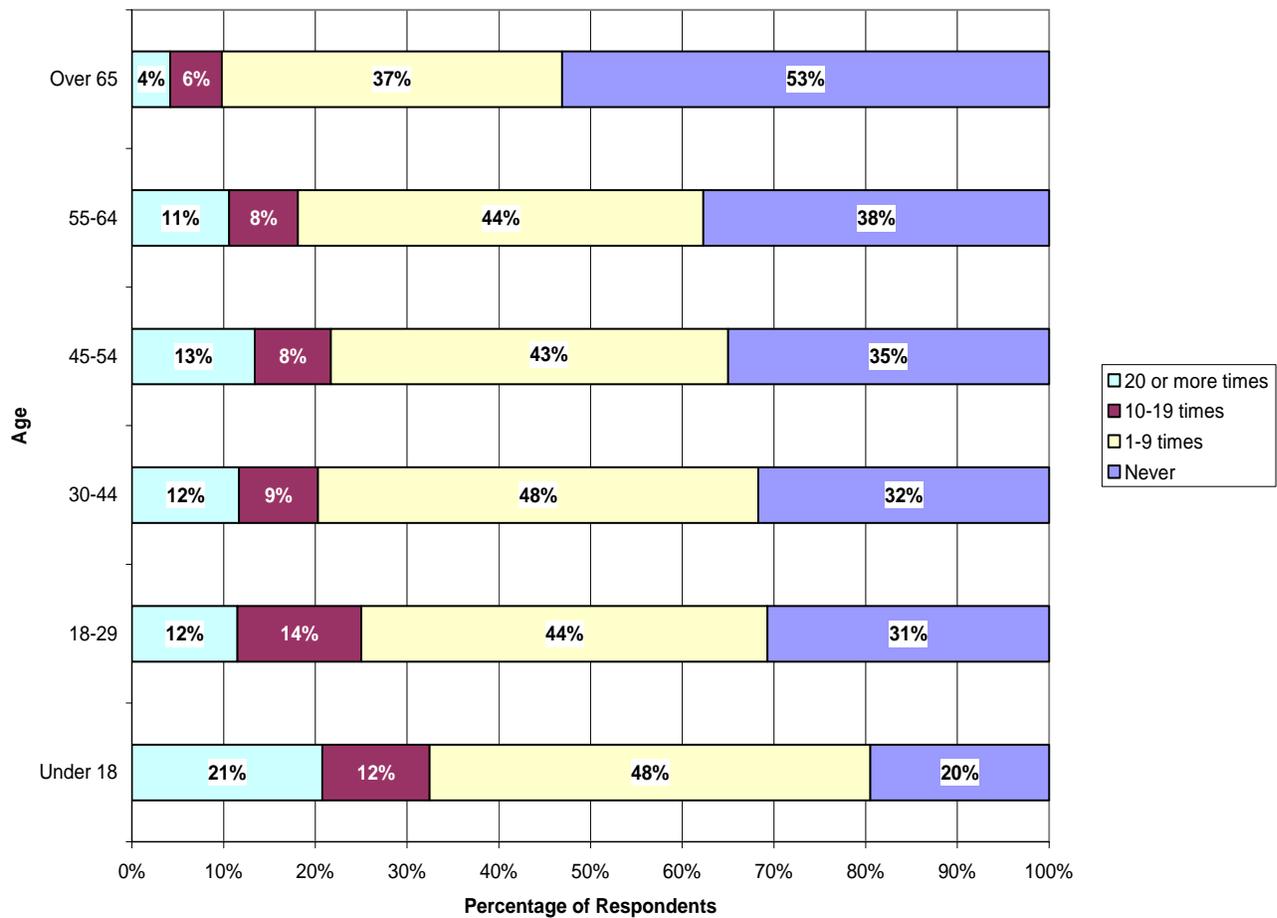
- Respondents under 18 years old were most likely to have read a book in the library during the previous year. Almost a quarter (21%) of those in this age group reported reading books in the library twenty or more times (see DPL Chart 7).
- Respondents over 65 were least likely to have read a book in the library; more than half (53%) reported never reading a book in the library during the previous year.
- The frequency and likelihood of reading in the library decreased steadily with age.

Denver Public Library
DPL Chart 8

Return on Investment: Denver Public Library
Books Read in Library, by Ethnicity
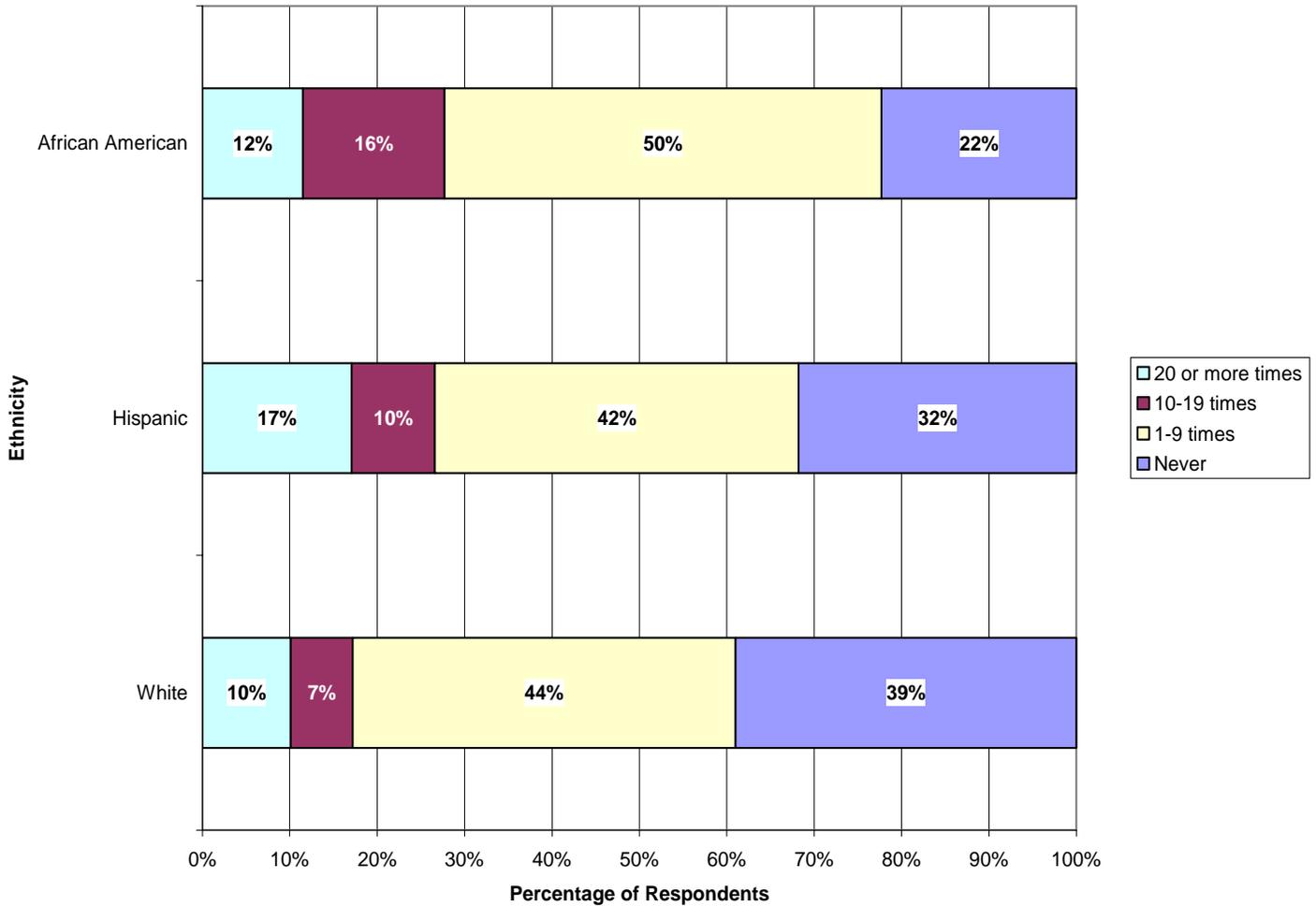
- Respondents identifying as white were least likely to have read a book in the library; over a third (39%) reported never having done so during the previous year (see

-

-

- DPL Chart 8).

- Respondents identifying as African American were most likely to read books in the library, while those identifying as Hispanic were most likely to read books frequently (17% reported reading books in the library twenty or more times).

Denver Public Library

How many times have you checked out a book from the library during the last twelve months?

DPL Chart 9
Return on Investment: Denver Public Library
Books Checked Out, by Age
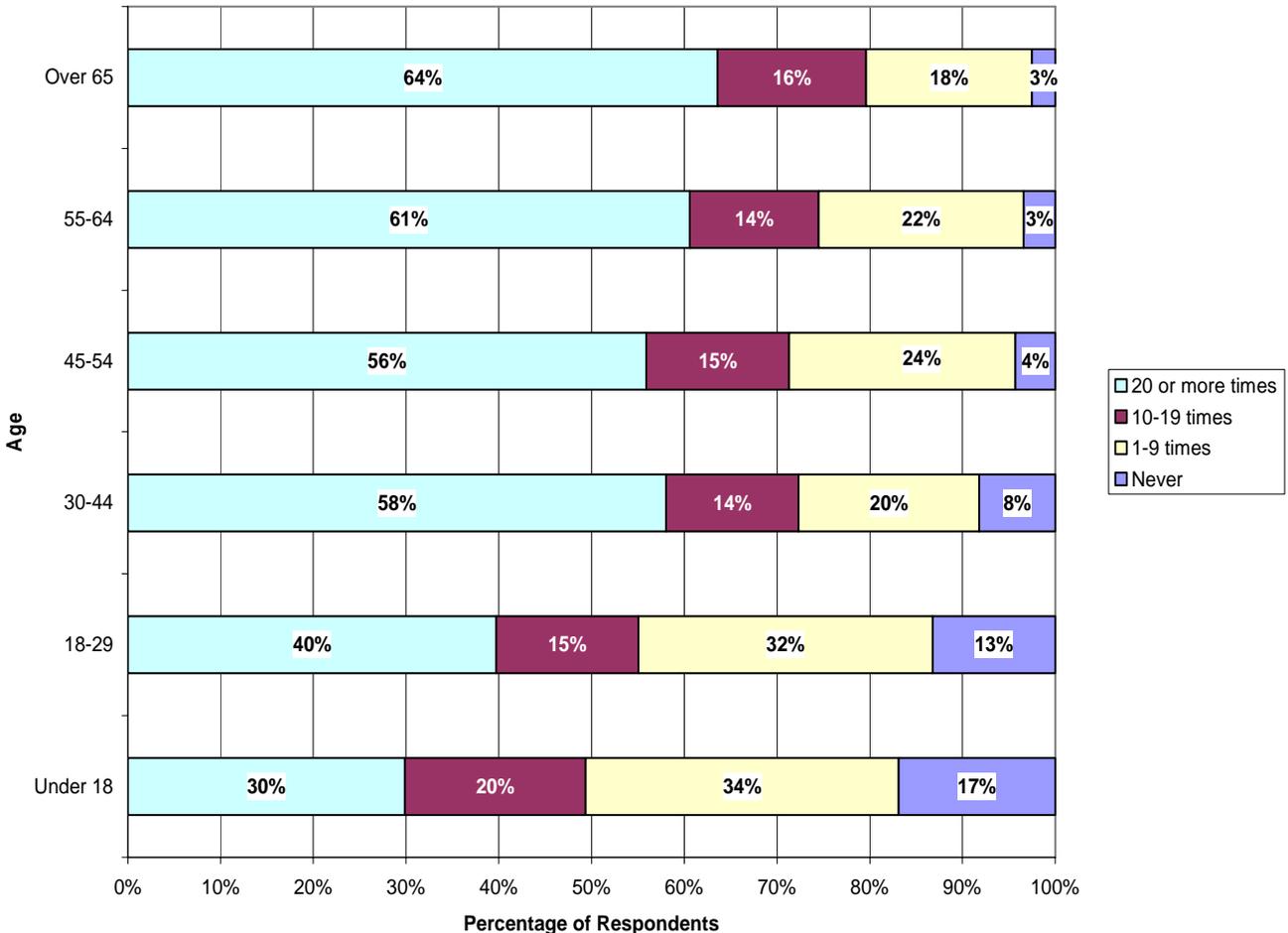
- Frequency and likelihood of checking out books increased steadily with age (see
-
- DPL Chart **9**).
- Almost two-thirds (64%) of respondents over 65 years of age reported checking out books twenty or more times during the previous year. Only three percent reported never checking a book out.
- Those under 18 years old were least likely to have checked out books, although only seventeen percent reported never having done so.

Denver Public Library

DPL Chart 10
Return on Investment: Denver Public Library
Books Checked Out, by Education Level

Highest Education Level Attained

Education Level	20 or more times	10-19 times	1-9 times	Never
Advanced degree	71%	14%	15%	1%
Bachelor's degree	62%	16%	20%	2%
Associate's degree	51%	17%	23%	9%
High school graduate/GED	37%	16%	34%	14%
Some high school	22%	10%	40%	28%

Legend:
- ☐ 20 or more times
- ■ 10-19 times
- ☐ 1-9 times
- ■ Never

Percentage of Respondents
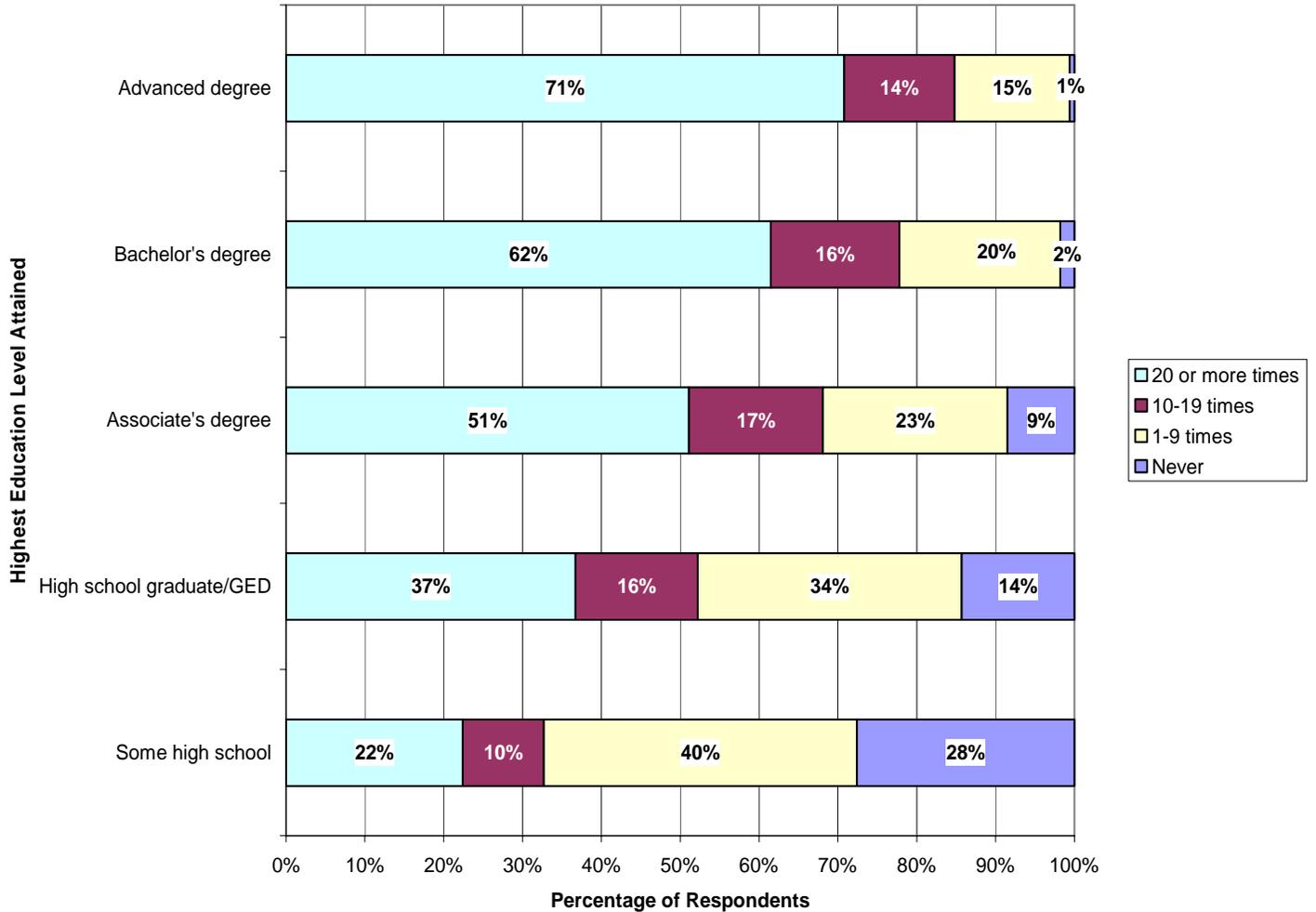
- Respondents with higher levels of educational attainment were more likely to check books out from the library, with almost three-quarters (71%) reporting having done so twenty or more times during the previous year (see DPL Chart 10).
- Over a quarter (28%) of respondents without a high school diploma reported never having checked out a book from the library during the prior year.

Denver Public Library

DPL Chart 11
Return on Investment: Denver Public Library
Books Checked Out, by Household Income

Household Income

$100,000 or more
- 74%
- 12%
- 14%

$50,000 - $99,999
- 64%
- 18%
- 16%
- 2%

$25,000 - $49,999
- 59%
- 16%
- 22%
- 4%

Under $25,000
- 55%
- 13%
- 25%
- 7%

Not employed
- 45%
- 26%
- 21%
- 19%

Legend:
- 20 or more times
- 10-19 times
- 1-9 times
- Never

X-axis: 0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
Percentage of Respondents
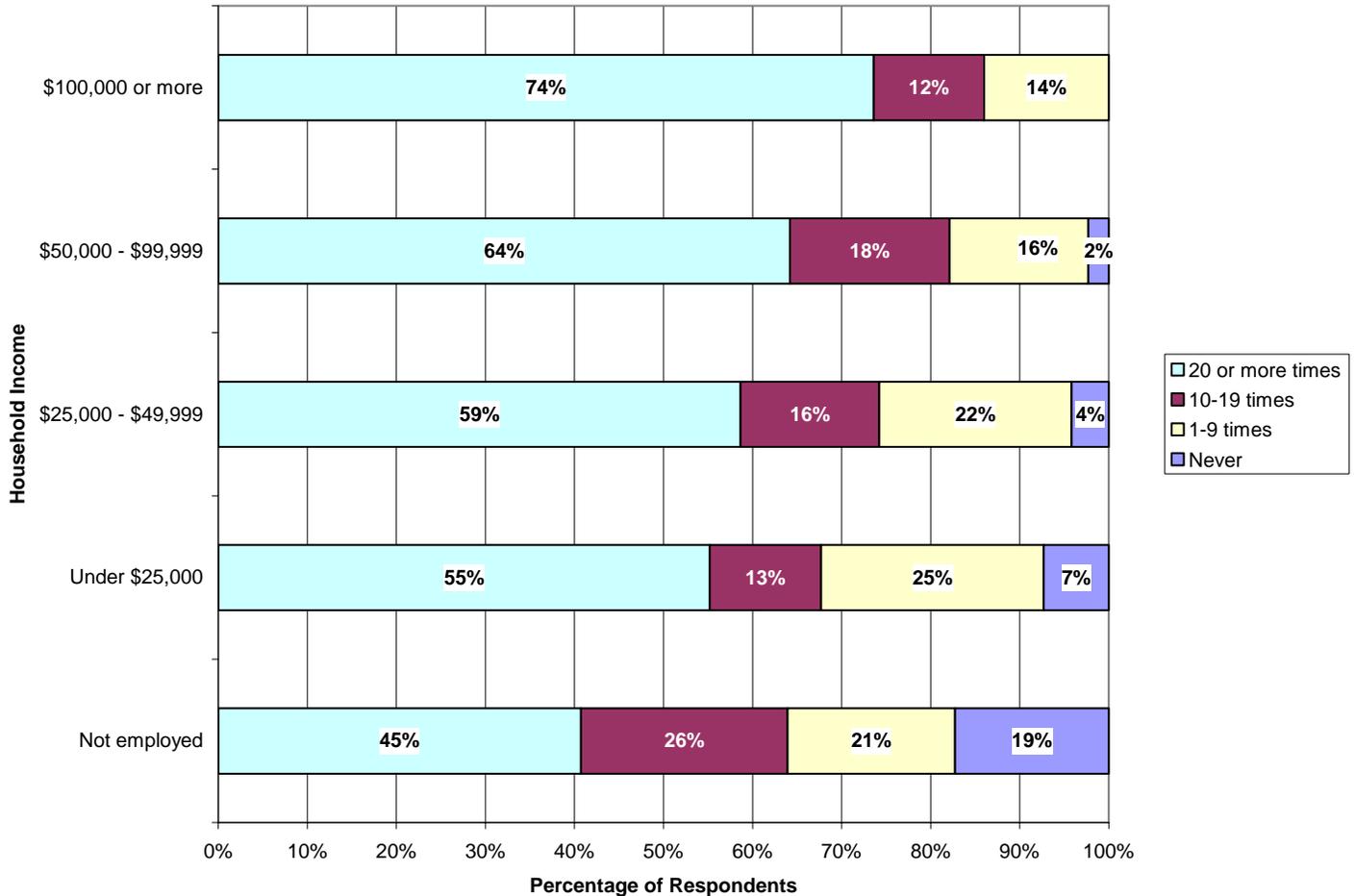
- Frequency and likelihood of checking out books also increased steadily with household income (see DPL Chart 11).
- Almost three out of every four respondents earning more than $100,000 annually reported having checked books out from the library twenty or more times during the previous year.
- Respondents who were not employed were least likely to have checked out a book, with less than half (45%) reporting having done so twenty or more times.

Denver Public Library

DPL Chart 12
Return on Investment: Denver Public Library
Books Checked Out, by Ethnicity
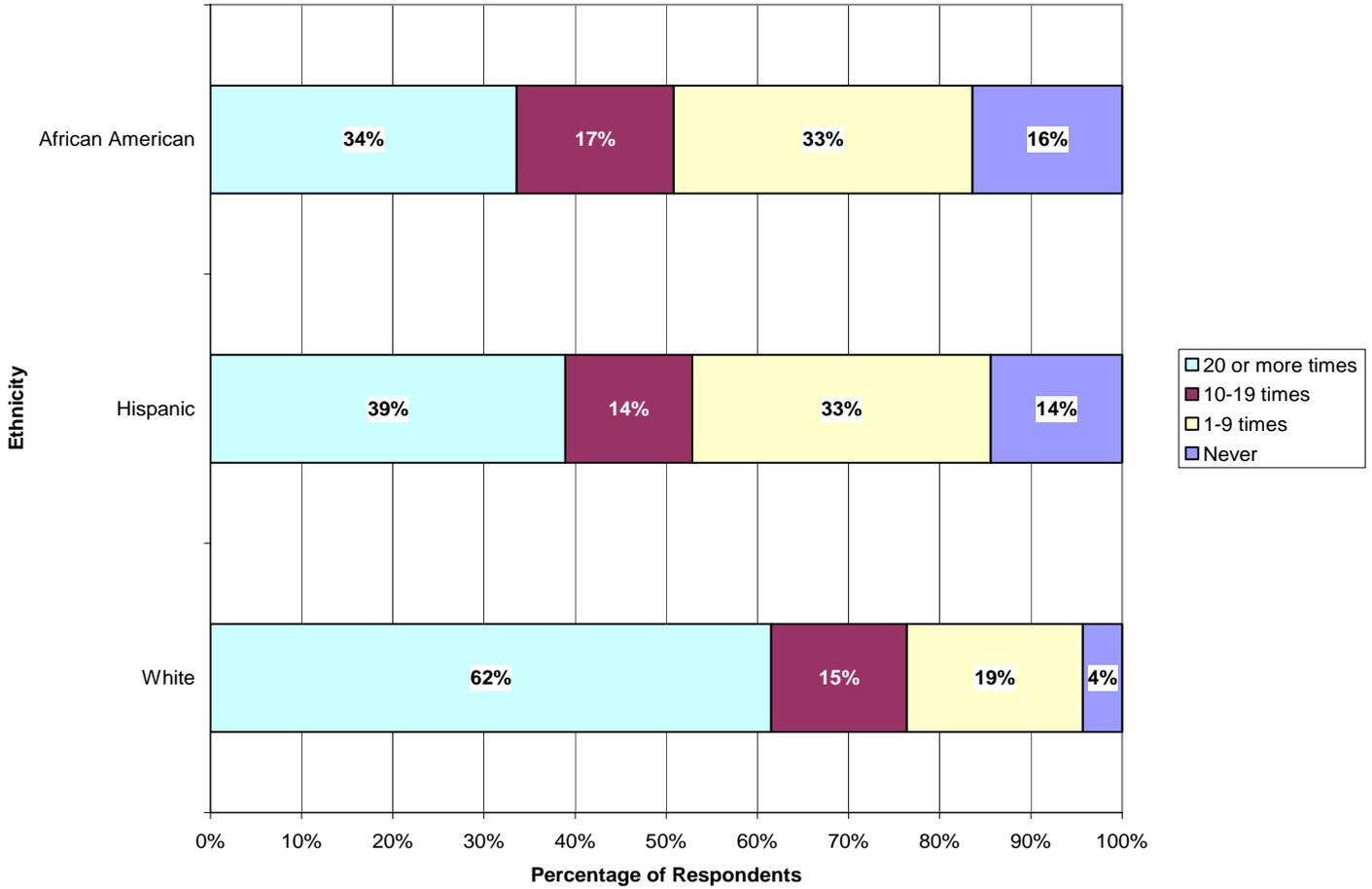
- More than three out of every five respondents identifying as white reported checking books out more than twenty times during the previous year (see DPL Chart 12).
- Other ethnicities reported checking books out less often, although more than three-quarters of respondents identifying as either African American or Hispanic did report checking books out during the previous year (84% and 86%, respectively).

Denver Public Library

How many times have you used a library computer to access software, free information on the Internet, or research resources during the past twelve months?

DPL Chart 13
Return on Investment: Denver Public Library
Use of Library Computers, by Gender
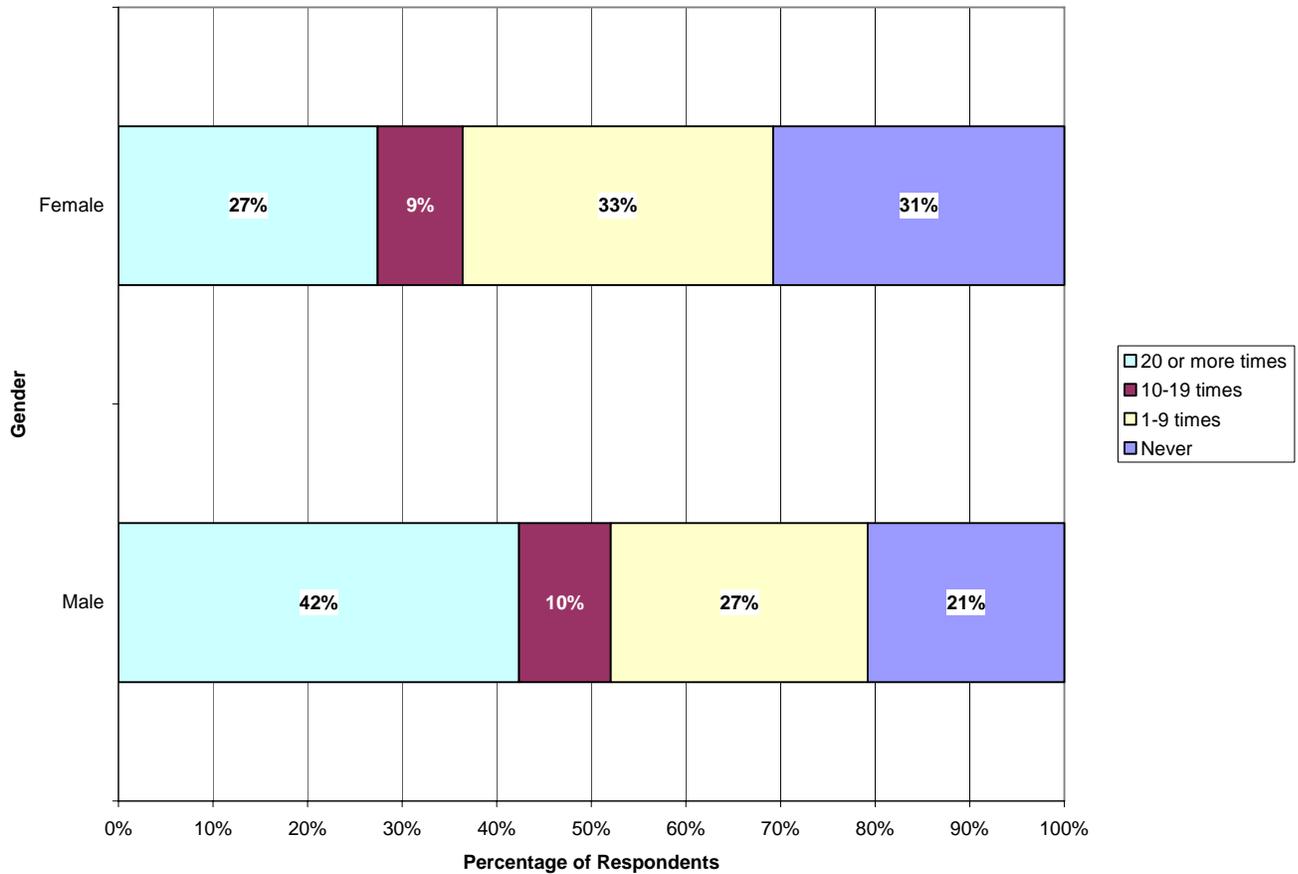
- Male respondents reported using the library computers more frequently, with nearly half (42%) using them twenty or more times during the previous year (see DPL Chart 13).
- About a third (31%) of female respondents reported never having used a library computer during the prior year. Only twenty-one percent of males reported never using a library computer.

Denver Public Library

DPL Chart 14
Return on Investment: Denver Public Library
Use of Library Computers, by Age

Age	20 or more times	10-19 times	1-9 times	Never
Over 65	16%	6%	21%	57%
55-64	34%	10%	29%	26%
45-54	35%	11%	29%	25%
30-44	35%	10%	33%	23%
18-29	40%	8%	39%	13%
Under 18	48%	12%	24%	16%

Percentage of Respondents
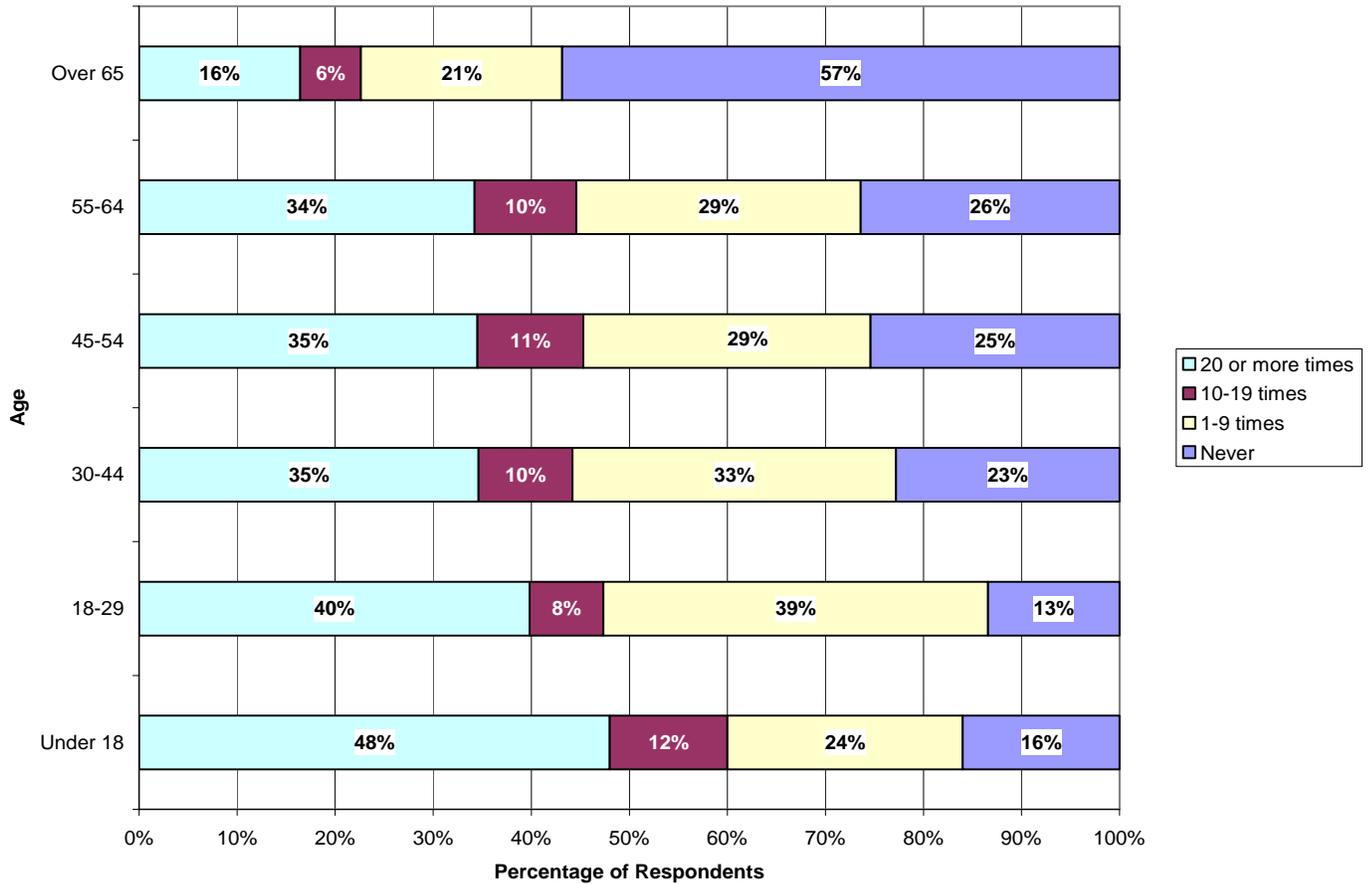
- Use of library computers decreased steadily with age (see DPL Chart 14).
- Almost half (48%) of respondents under 18 years old reported having used library computers twenty or more times during the previous year.
- Well over half (57%) of respondents over 65 reported never having used a library computer during the previous twelve months.

Denver Public Library

DPL Chart 15
Return on Investment: Denver Public Library
Use of Library Computers, by Household Income

Household Income	20 or more times	10-19 times	1-9 times	Never
$100,000 or more	20%	12%	31%	26%
$50,000 - $99,999	27%	9%	35%	30%
$25,000 - $49,999	34%	8%	35%	23%
Under $25,000	54%	8%	24%	13%
Not employed	35%	15%	27%	23%

Percentage of Respondents
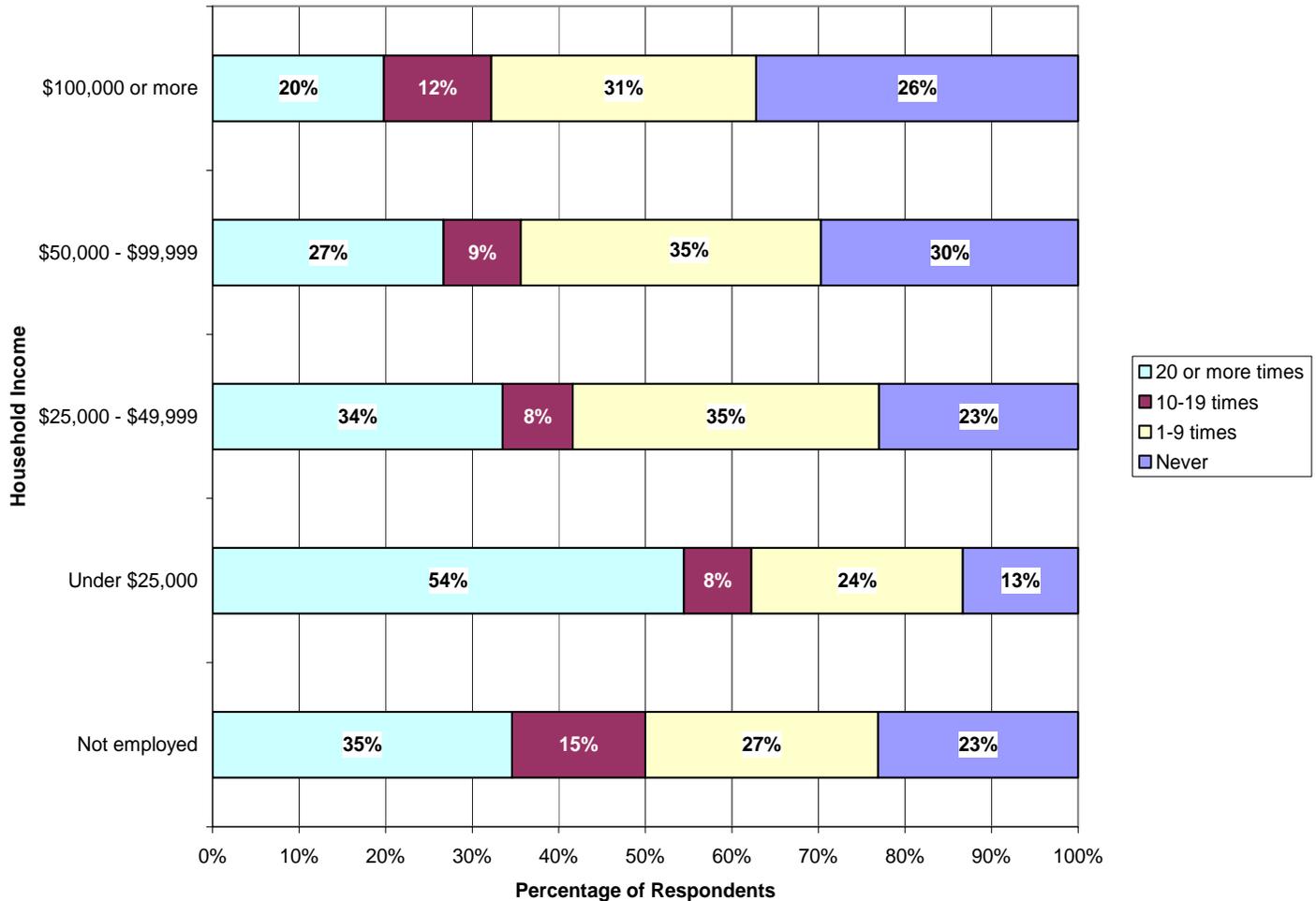
- In general, use of library computers decreased as annual income increased (see DPL Chart 15).
- Over a quarter (26%) of respondents earning the most annual income ($100,000 or more) reported never having used a library computer during the previous year.
- The income group most likely to have used a library computer earned less than $25,000 annually. This group also included the most frequent users of library computers; over half (54%) reported using library computers twenty or more times during the previous year.

Denver Public Library

DPL Chart 16
Return on Investment: Denver Public Library
Use of Library Computers, by Ethnicity
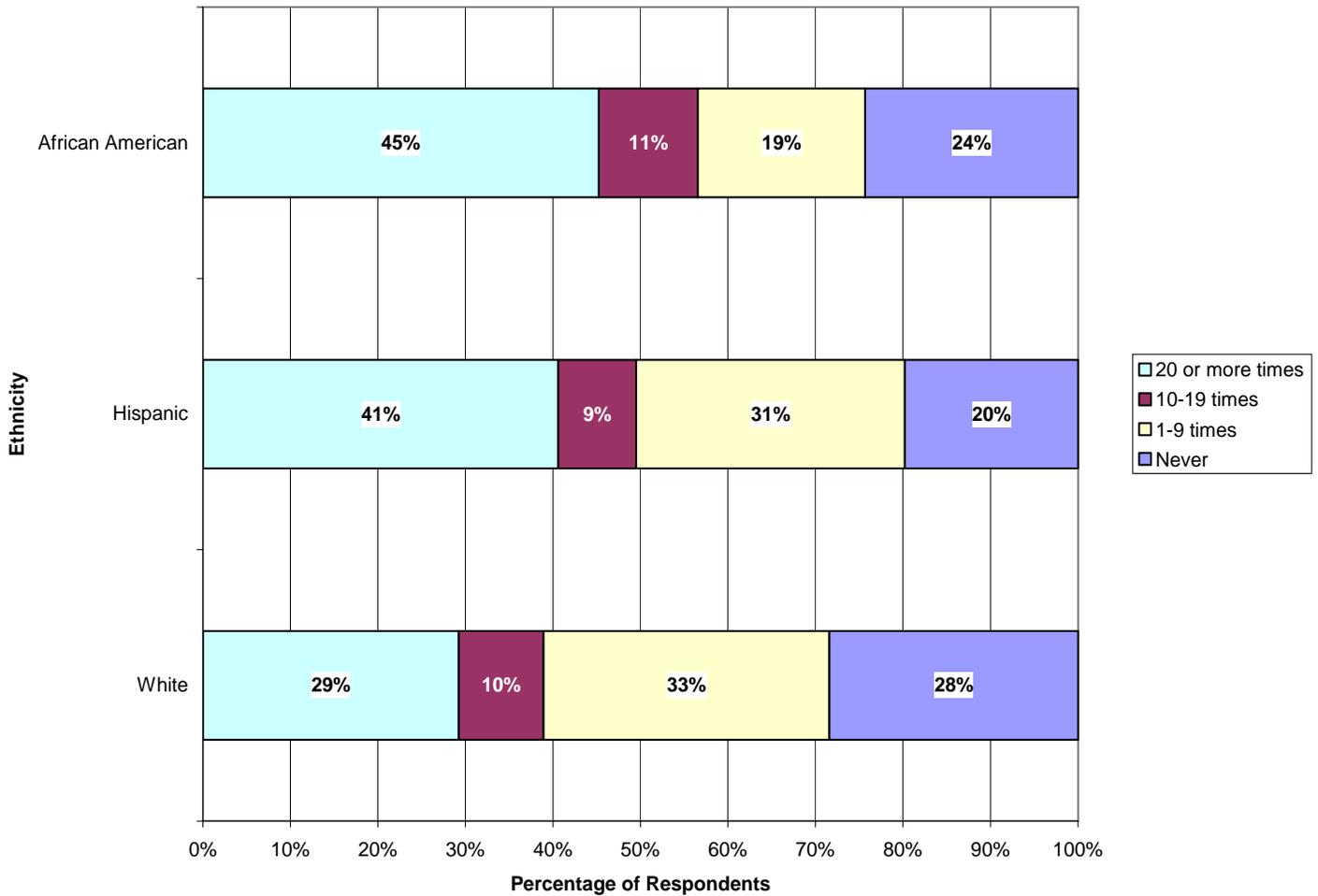
- Respondents identifying as white were least likely to have used a library computer during the previous year, with over a quarter (28%) reporting never having done so (see DPL Chart 16).
- African American respondents used the library computers frequently, with almost half (45%) accessing the computers twenty or more times during the previous year.

Denver Public Library

How many times did you connect to a Colorado public library remotely during the last twelve months?

DPL Chart 17
Return on Investment: Denver Public Library
Remote Access to a Colorado Public Library, by Education Level
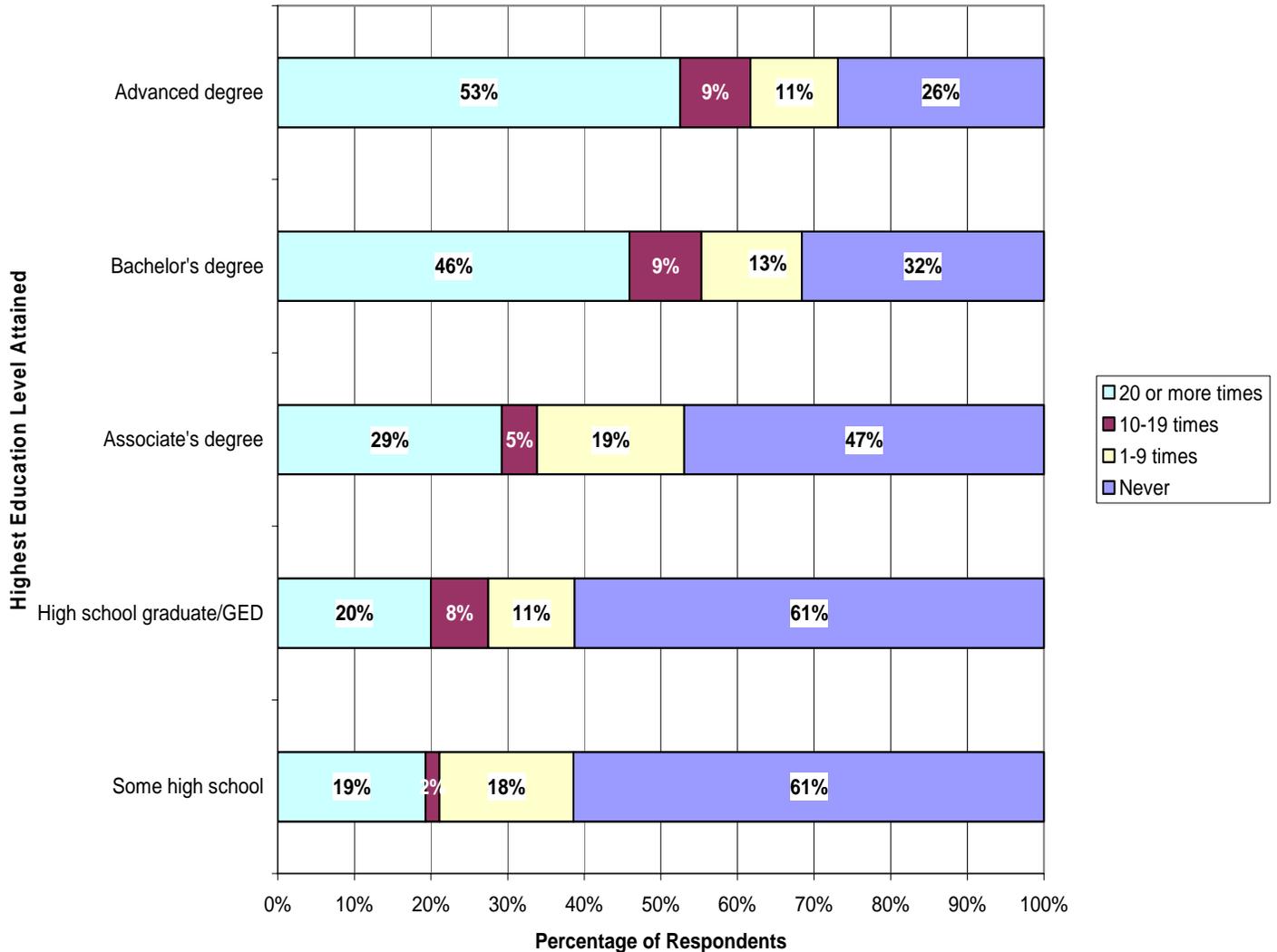
- Remote access to a Colorado public library's website increased with educational attainment, with over half (53%) of respondents with advanced degrees reporting having accessed the library remotely twenty or more times during the previous year (see DPL Chart 17).
- Those with some high school and those who graduated high school or earned their equivalencies were the least likely to have accessed the library remotely. In both groups, sixty-one percent of respondents reported never having done so during the previous year.

Denver Public Library

DPL Chart 18
Return on Investment: Denver Public Library
Remote Access to a Colorado Public Library, by Household Income
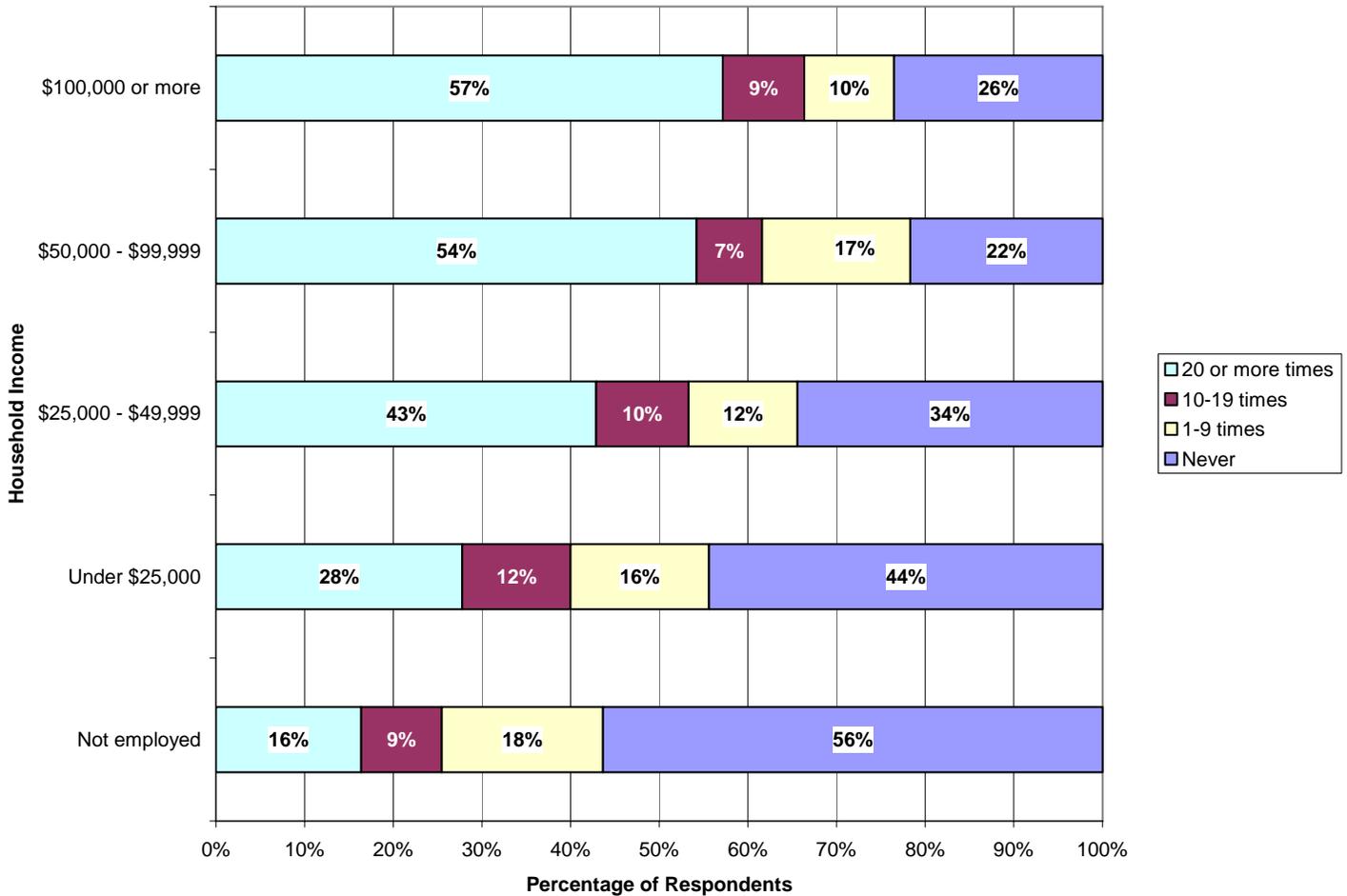
- Remote access to Colorado public libraries increased with annual household income. Over half (57%) of those earning the greatest annual income ($100,000 or more) accessed a Colorado public library twenty or more times during the previous year (see DPL Chart 18).
- Respondents who were not employed at the time of the survey were least likely to have accessed the library remotely; over half (56%) reported never having done so during the previous year.

Denver Public Library

DPL Chart 19
Return on Investment: Denver Public Library
Remote Access to a Colorado Public Library, by Ethnicity
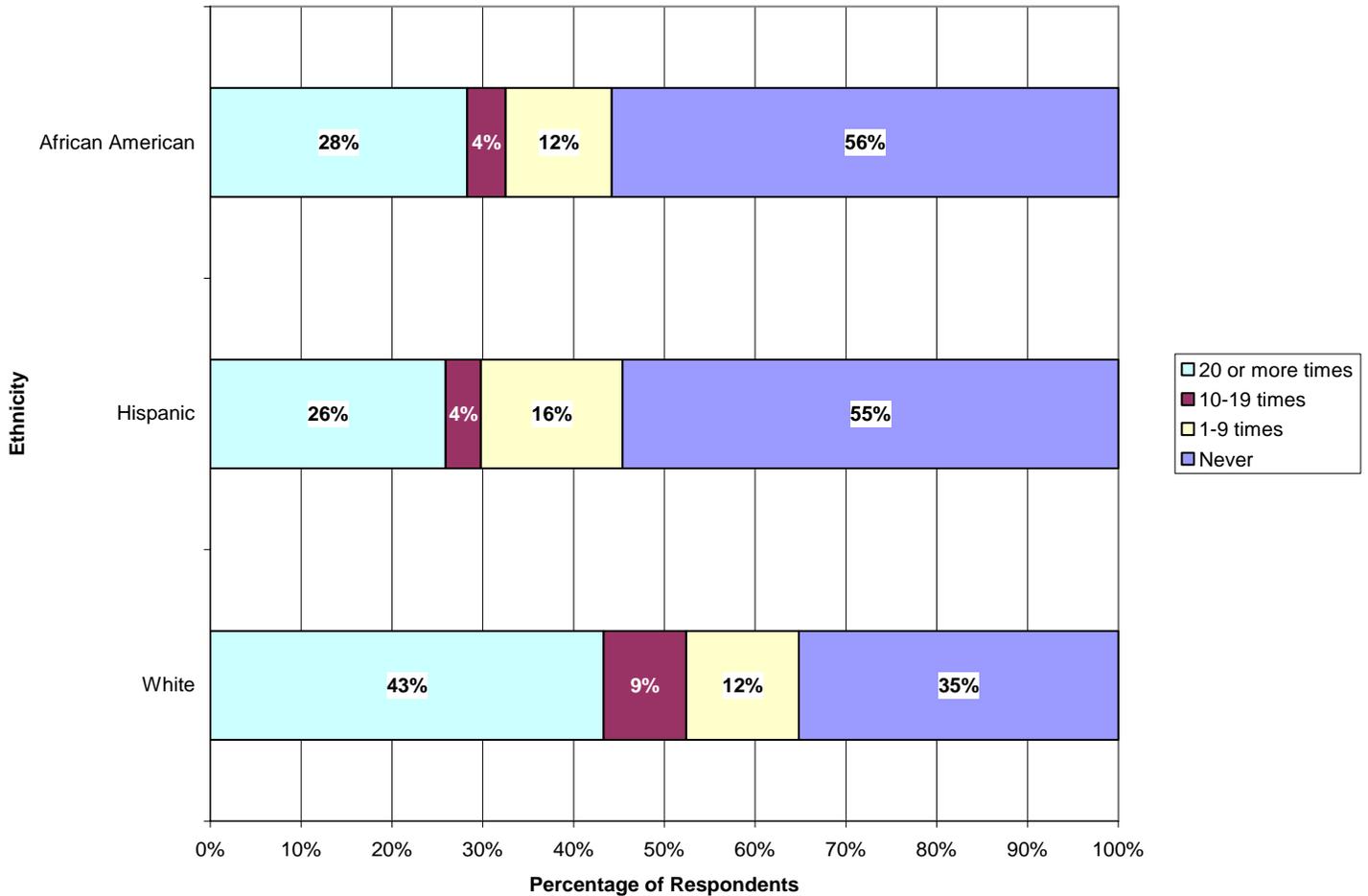
- Respondents identifying as white were most likely to access a Colorado public library remotely, with forty-three percent reporting having done so more than twenty times during the previous year (see DPL Chart 19).
- Respondents identifying as African American or Hispanic were about as likely to have accessed a library remotely; more than half (56% and 55%, respectively) of respondents in both groups reported not having done so during the previous twelve months.

Denver Public Library

Conclusions

Data provided here may not apply to the entire clientele of the Denver Public Library. Still, a few interesting trends are evident:

- Young people (under 18 years old) were more likely to read books in the library, but less likely to check books out.
- Respondents over 65 years old were most likely to check books out, and did so frequently, but were the age group least likely to read a book in the library.
- In general, patrons with higher levels of educational attainment more likely to check books out from the library and access the library website remotely.
- Patrons earning the most annual income ($100,000 or more) were more likely to access the library website remotely, but were less likely to use computers in the library. They were the income group most likely to check books out from the library. In general, the opposite trends were evident for respondents earning less than $25,000 annually.
- Respondents identifying as white were less likely to read in the library, but more likely to check books out. The opposite trends were evident for respondents identifying as African American or Hispanic.

.

**Notes:**

Percentages were rounded to the nearest whole number; in some cases percentages do not add up to 100%.

Respondents may overlap groups, especially ethnicities. Respondents were encouraged to mark as many categories as described them. Similarly, certain ethnic groups were discussed whereas others were not. This is because statistically significant numbers from only a few ethnic groups responded from this library.

Douglas County Libraries

The Return on Investment Study conducted by Library Research Service revealed some significant demographic data among the libraries that participated. The following questions provided significant statistics for Douglas County Libraries after cross-tabulation analysis was conducted. These demographic highlights are those that are most significant for Douglas County Libraries, and may not be comparable to demographics for other libraries participating in the survey.

About how many times have you visited the library within the last year?

DCL Chart 20
Return on Investment: Douglas County Libraries
Library Visits, by Gender
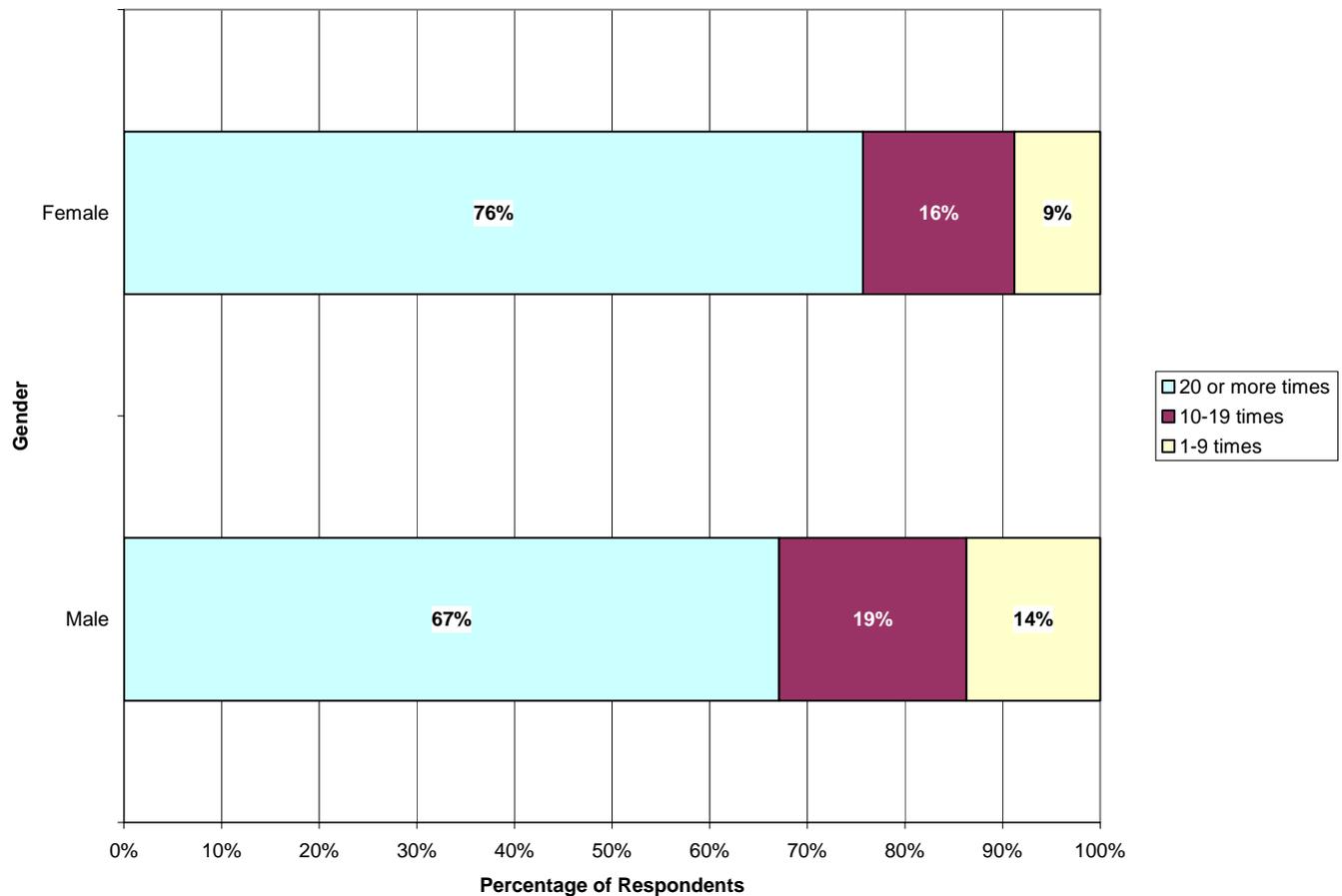
- Both males and females visited the library frequently (see DCL Chart 20).
- More than three-quarters (76%) of female respondents reported visiting the library twenty or more times during the previous year. Well over half (67%) of male respondents reported the same.

Douglas County Libraries

DCL Chart 21
Return on Investment: Douglas County Libraries
Library Visits, by Age
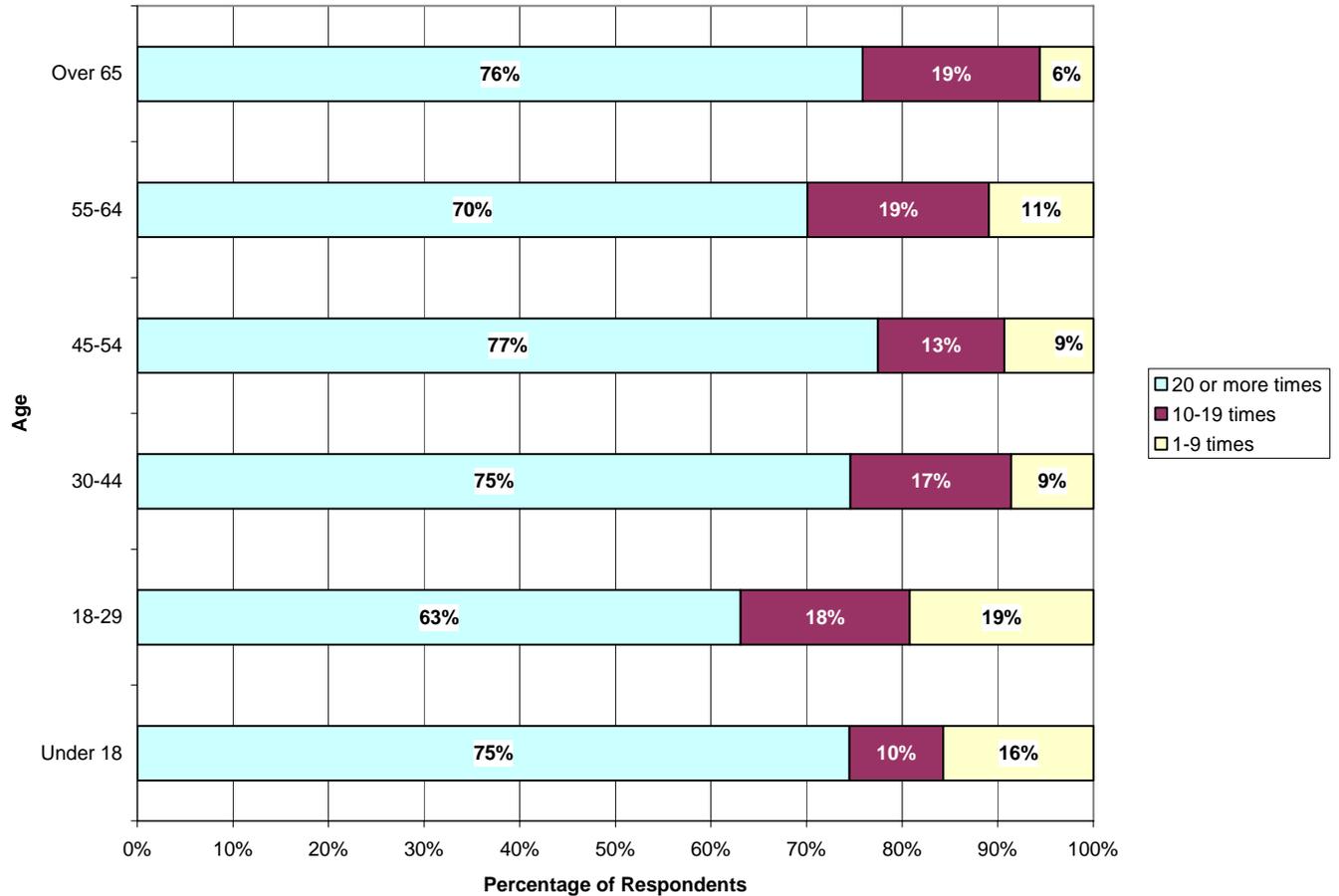
- Respondents in all age groups visited the library frequently (DCL Chart 21). Well over half of the respondents in all age groups reported visiting the library twenty or more times during the previous year; for many age groups, over three-quarters of respondents had accessed the library twenty or more times.
- Those over 65 years old used the library most frequently, with seventy-six percent visiting twenty or more times; approximately ninety-four percent had accessed the library ten or more times.

Douglas County Libraries

DCL Chart 22
Return on Investment: Douglas County Libraries
Library Visits, by Education Level
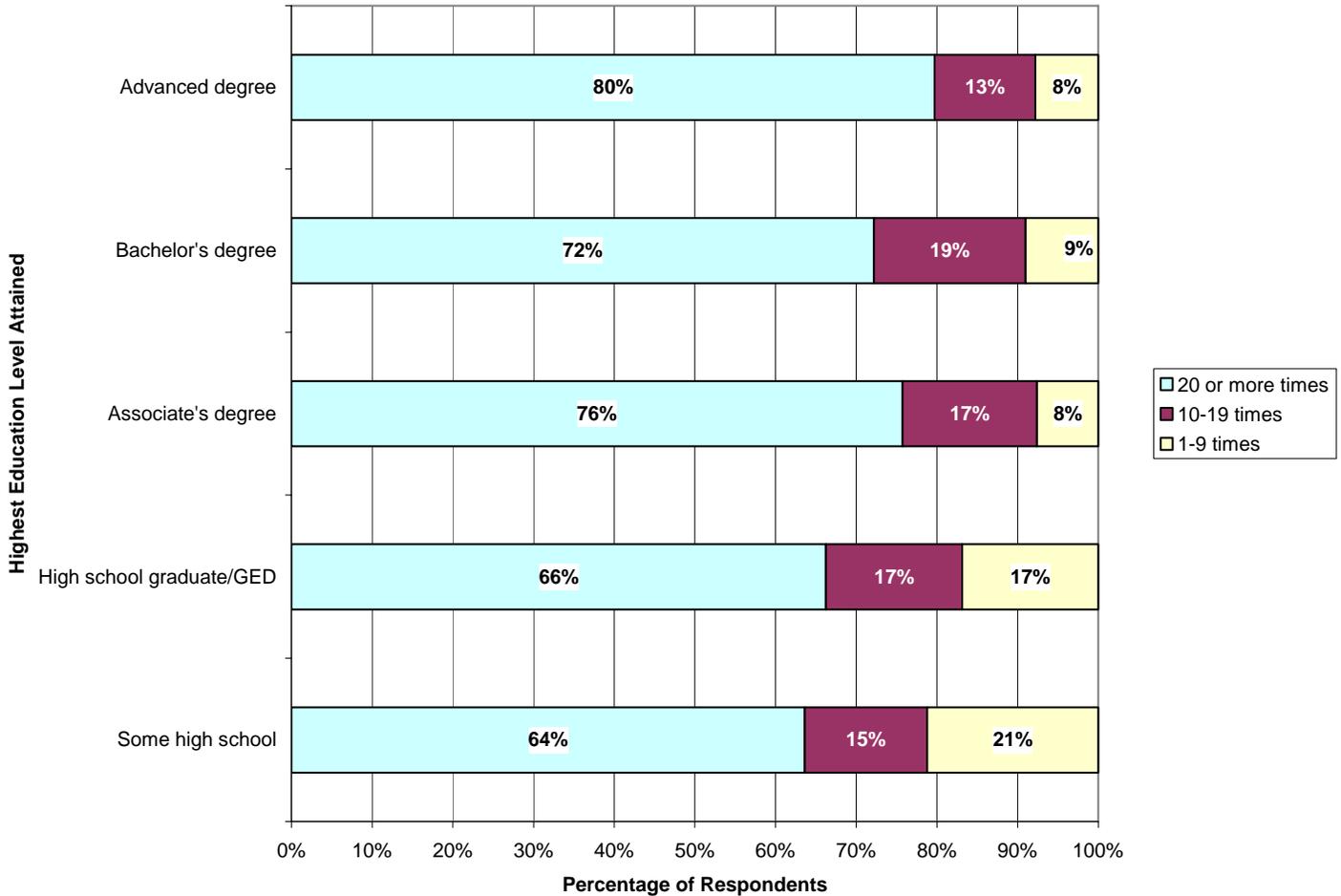
- Respondents with varying levels of educational attainment were likely to visit the library (see DCL Chart 22).
- Four out of every five respondents with advanced degrees reported visiting the library twenty or more times during the previous year.
- Those with some high school education but no high school diploma reported using the library less frequently, though still over half (64%) of respondents in this category visited the library twenty or more times.

Douglas County Libraries

How many times have you checked out a book from the library during the last twelve months?

DCL Chart 23
Return on Investment: Douglas County Libraries
Books Checked Out, by Gender
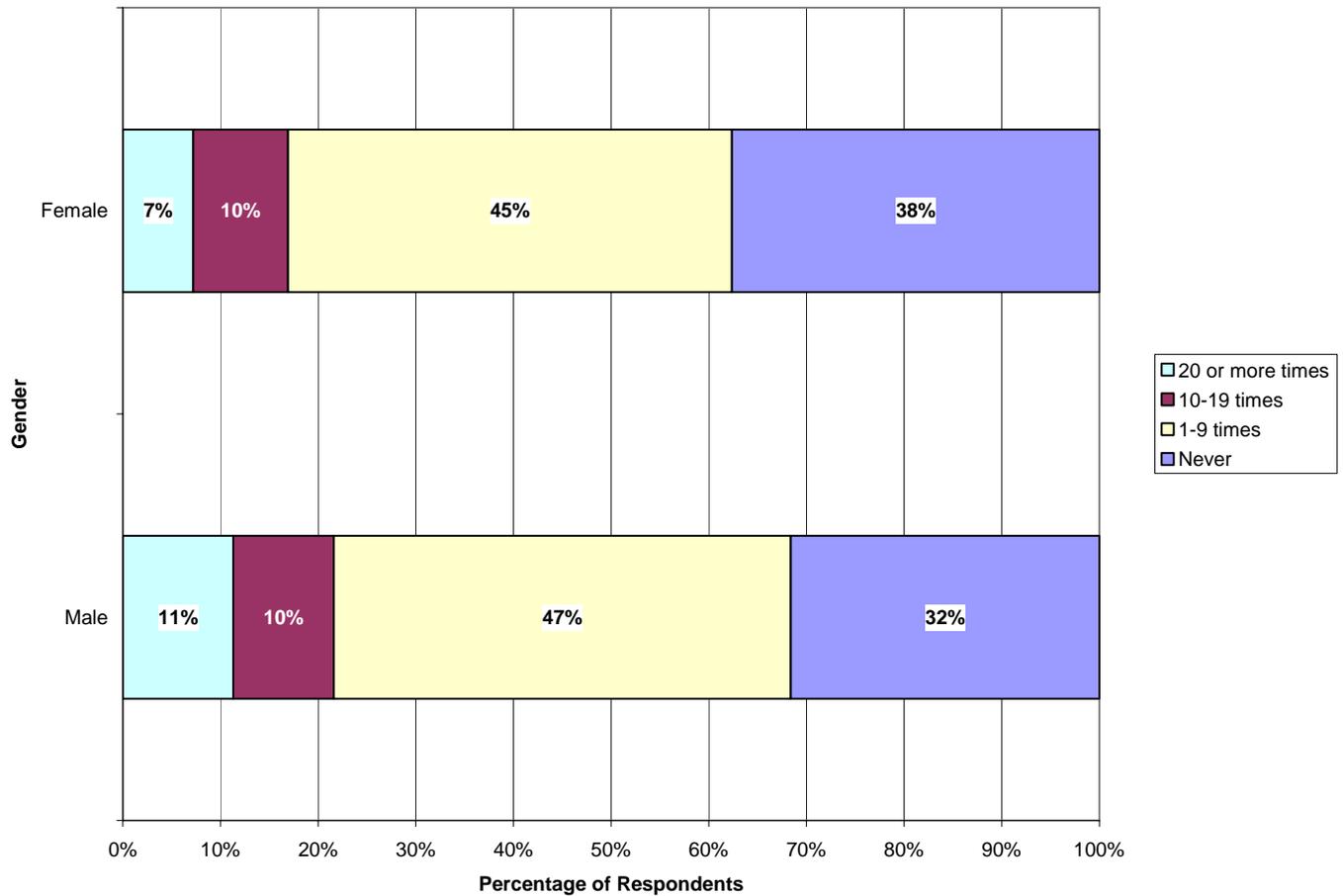
- Men and women were similar when checking books out, though men reported checking out slightly more books than women (see DCL Chart 23).
- Eleven percent of men reported checking out twenty or more books during the prior year, whereas seven percent of women reported the same.

Douglas County Libraries

DCL Chart 24
Return on Investment: Douglas County Libraries
Books Checked Out, by Education Level
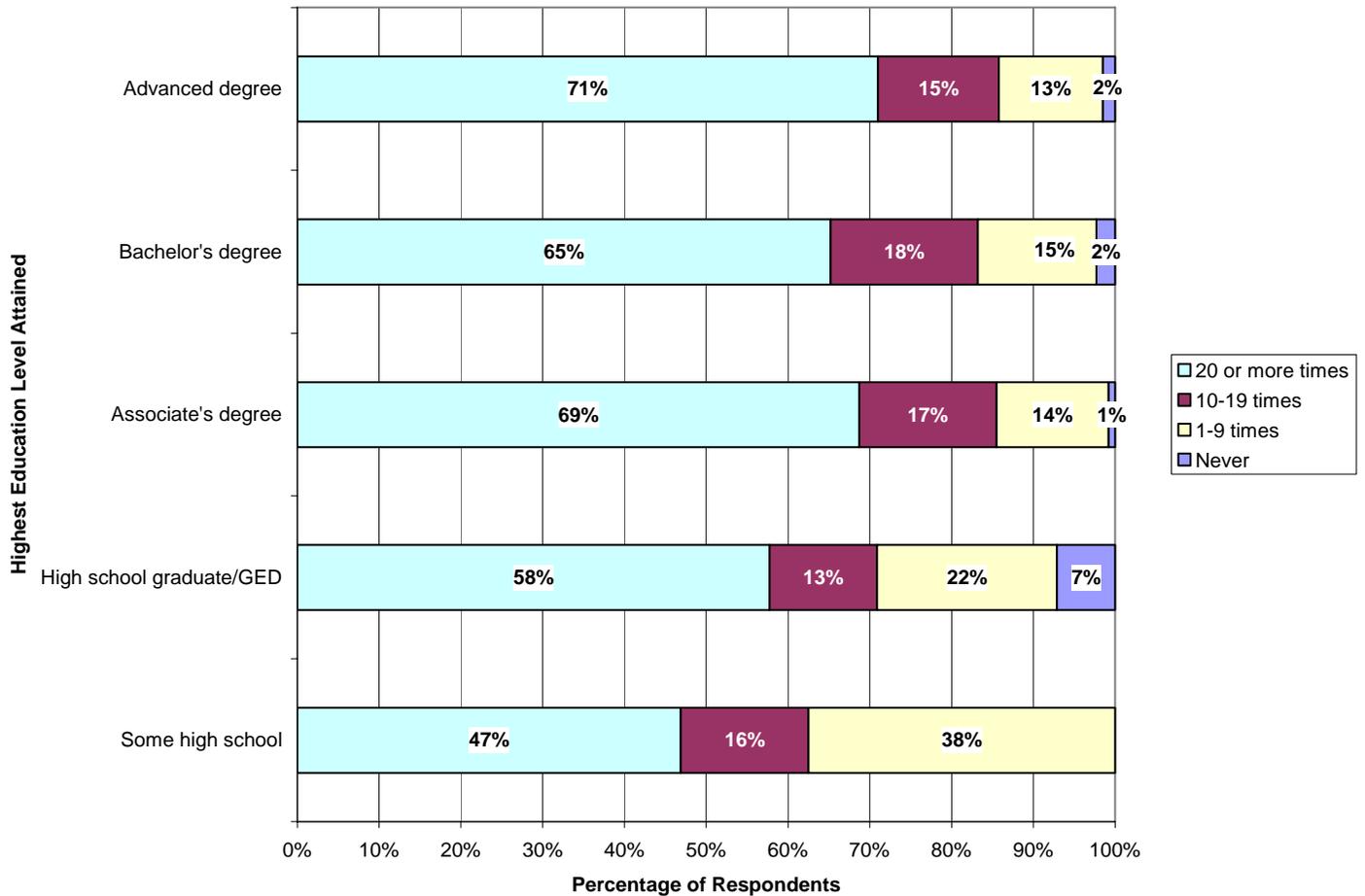
- In general, the number of books checked out increased with educational attainment (see DCL Chart 24).
- Those with advanced degrees were the most likely to have checked books out twenty or more times during the previous year.
- Respondents with some high school education but no diploma reported checking books out least frequently; less than half (47%) reported checking books out twenty or more times.

Douglas County Libraries

How many times have you used a library computer to access software, free information on the Internet, or research resources during the past twelve months?

DCL Chart 25
Return on Investment: Douglas County Libraries
Use of Library Computers, by Gender
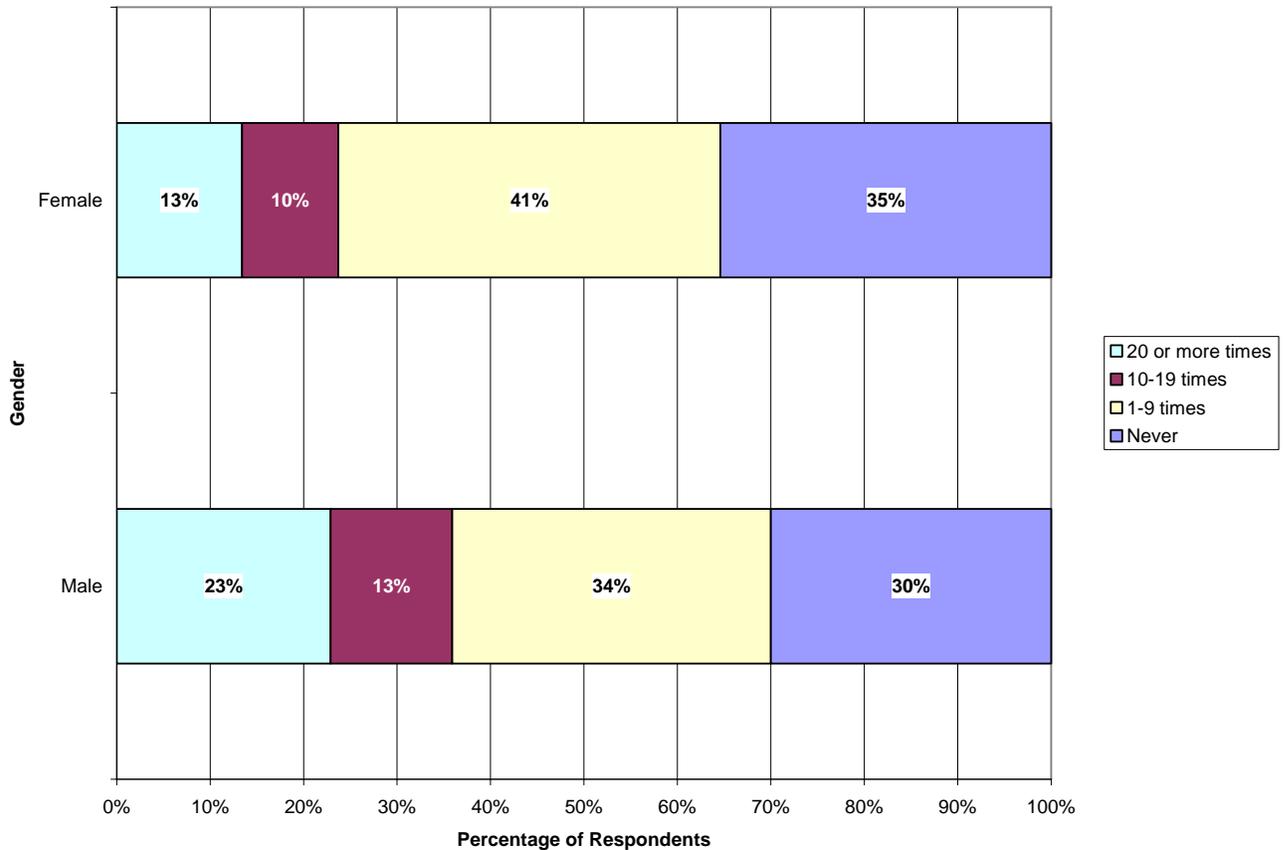
- In general, men were more likely to have used library computers to access software, the Internet, or research resources (see DCL Chart 25).
- Almost a quarter (23%) of male respondents reporting having used a library computer twenty or more times during the previous year.
- Over a third (35%) of women reported never having used a library computer during the previous twelve months.

Douglas County Libraries

DCL Chart 26
Return on Investment: Douglas County Libraries
Use of Library Computers, by Age
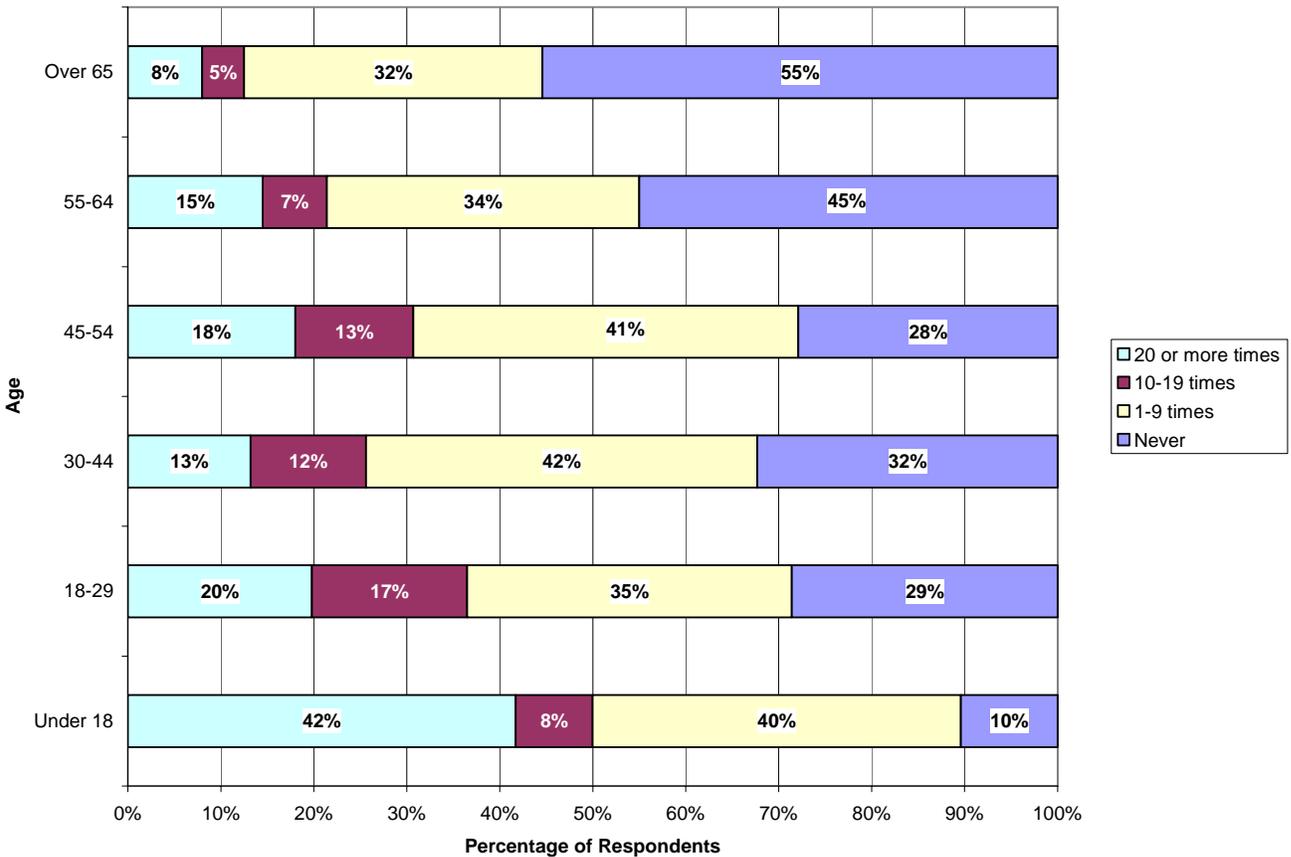
- Use of library computers generally decreased with age (see DCL Chart 26).
- More than half (55%) of respondents over 65 had not used a library computer to access software, the Internet, or research resources during the previous year.
- Respondents under 18 comprised the age group most likely to have used a library computer during the previous year; forty-two percent had used a computer twenty or more times, and only ten percent had not used a library computer during the prior year.

Douglas County Libraries

How many times did you connect to a Colorado public library remotely during the last twelve months?

DCL Chart 27
Return on Investment: Douglas County Libraries
Remote Access to a Colorado Public Library, by Gender
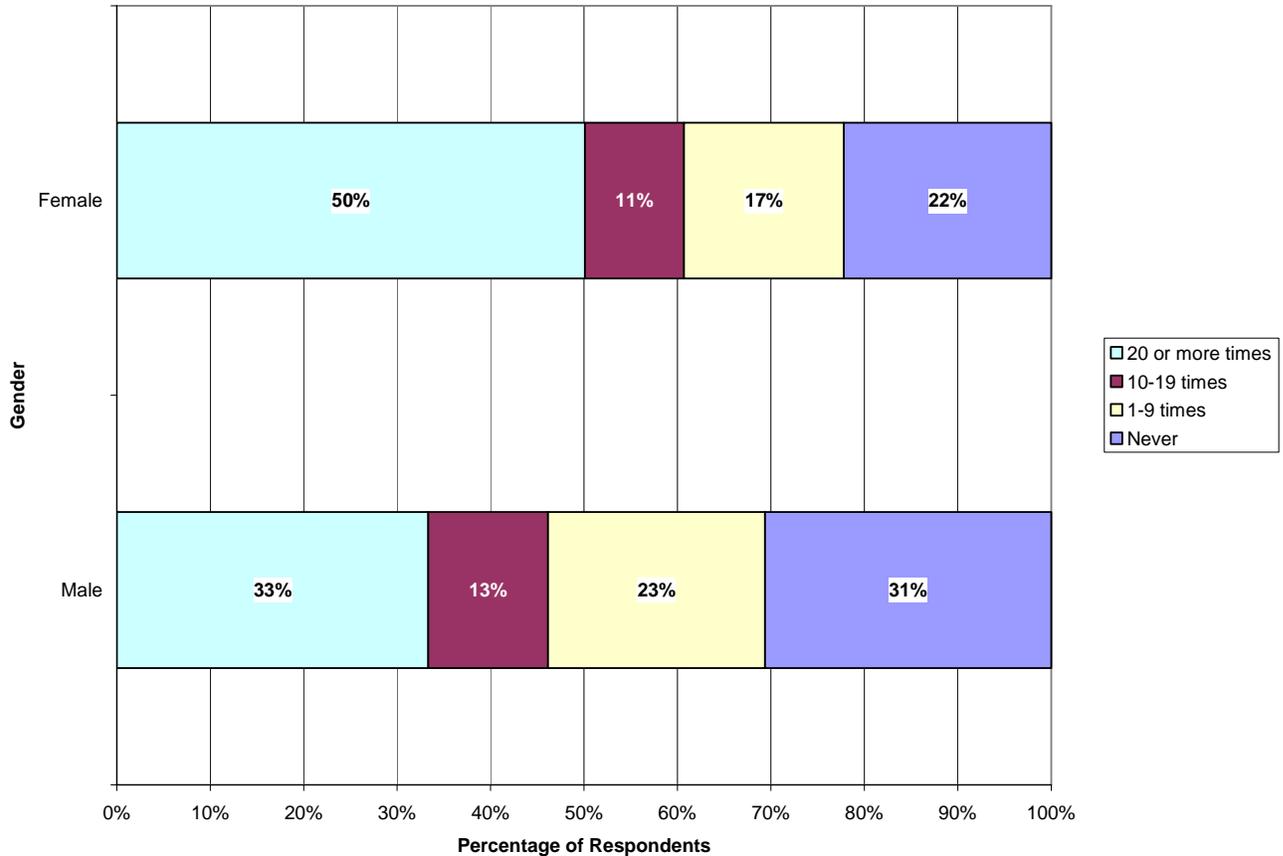
- In general, women were more likely than men to connect to a Colorado public library remotely (see DCL Chart 27).
- Half of the female respondents reported accessing a library remotely twenty or more times during the previous twelve months.
- Almost a third of men (31%) reported never having accessed a library remotely during the previous year.

Douglas County Libraries

DCL Chart 28
Return on Investment: Douglas County Libraries
Remote Access to a Colorado Public Library, by Age
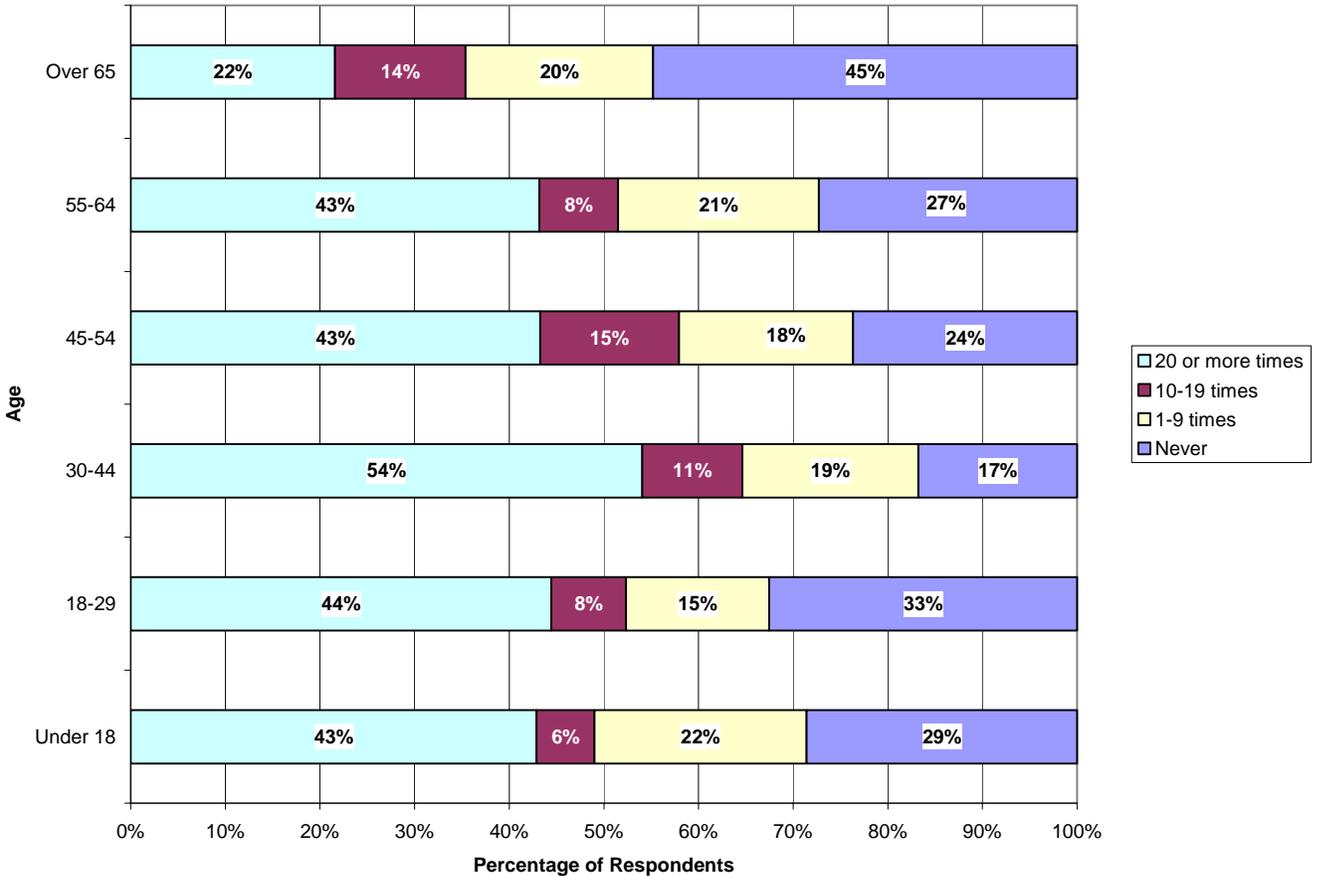
- Remote access to the library's website increased with age until the group age 44; remote access peaked with the group aged 30-44 then decreased with age (see DCL Chart 28).
- The only group with more than half (54%) of its respondents reporting remote access more than twenty times during the previous year was the group aged 30-44.
- Those respondents over 65 were least likely to have accessed the public library remotely; almost half (45%) had not accessed the library remotely at all during the previous year.

Douglas County Libraries

DCL Chart 29
Return on Investment: Douglas County Libraries
Remote Access to a Colorado Public Library, by Household Income
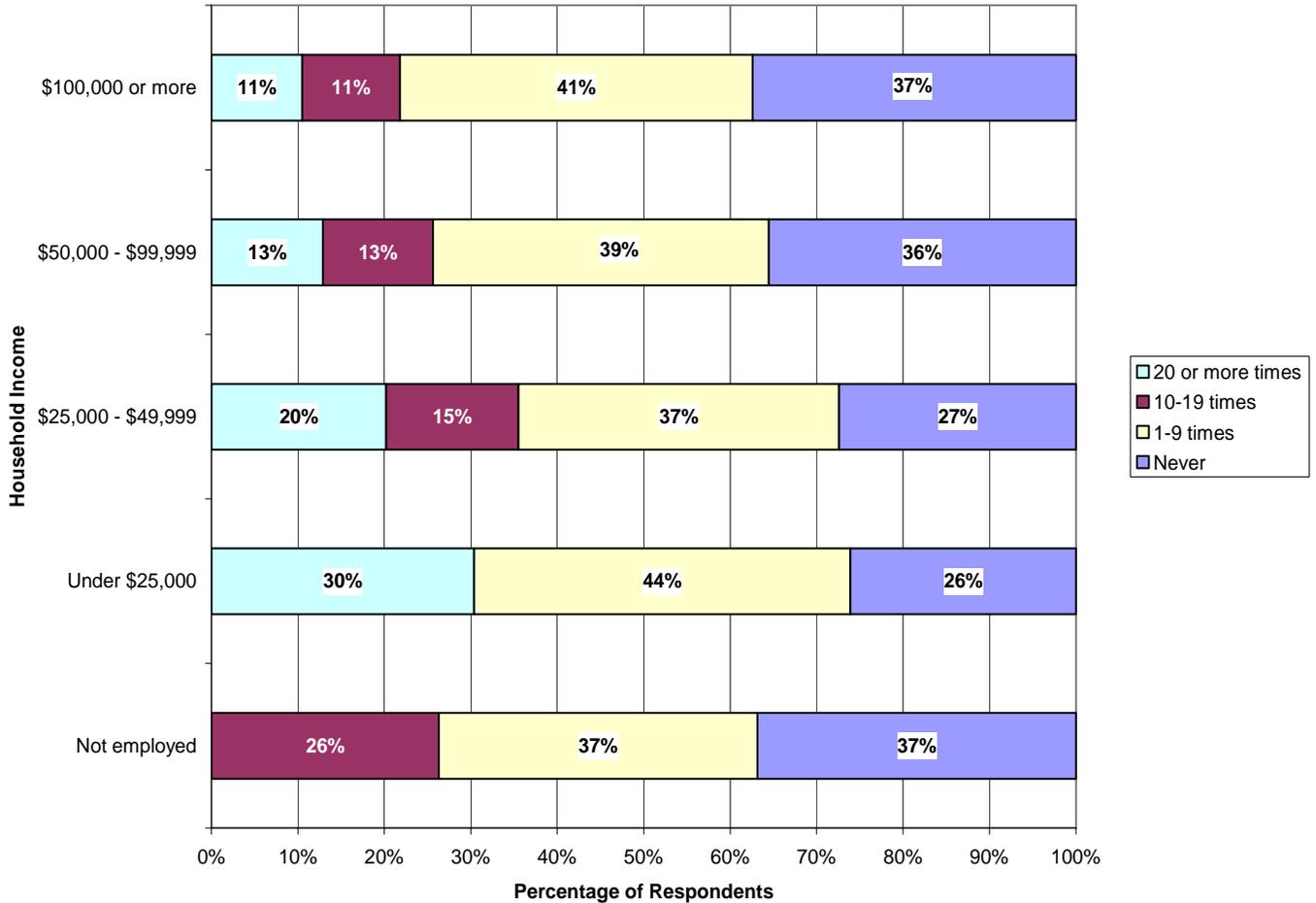
- Remote access to the library, according to annual income, peaked with those earning less than $25,000; after that, remote access decreased steadily with increased income (see DCL Chart 29).
- Those who were not employed and those who made the most annually ($100,000 or more) were the least likely to have accessed the library remotely; thirty-seven percent of both income groups reported never having accessed the website remotely during the previous year.

Douglas County Libraries

<u>Conclusions</u>

Data provided here may not apply to the entire clientele of the Douglas County Libraries. Still, a few interesting trends are evident:

- Women were more likely to visit the library than men, but men were more likely to check books out more often. Men more likely to use computers in the library, whereas women accessed the library's website remotely more frequently.
- People of all ages and with all levels of educational attainment were very likely to visit the library.
- Respondents with higher degrees of educational attainment were more likely to check out books.
- Young people reported using computers in the library often; this use decreased with age.
- Respondents aged 30-44 were the most likely to access the library's website remotely, those earning less than $25,000 annually were the least likely to do the same.

.

Notes:

Percentages were rounded to the nearest whole number; in some cases percentages do not add up to 100%.

Eagle Valley Library District

The Return on Investment Study conducted by Library Research Service revealed some significant demographic data among the libraries that participated. The following questions provided significant statistics for the Eagle Valley Library District after cross-tabulation analysis was conducted. These demographic highlights are those that are most significant for Eagle Valley Libraries, and may not be comparable to demographics for other libraries participating in the survey.

How many times have you checked out a book from the library during the last twelve months?

EVLD Chart 30
Return on Investment: Eagle Valley Library District
Books Checked Out, by Gender
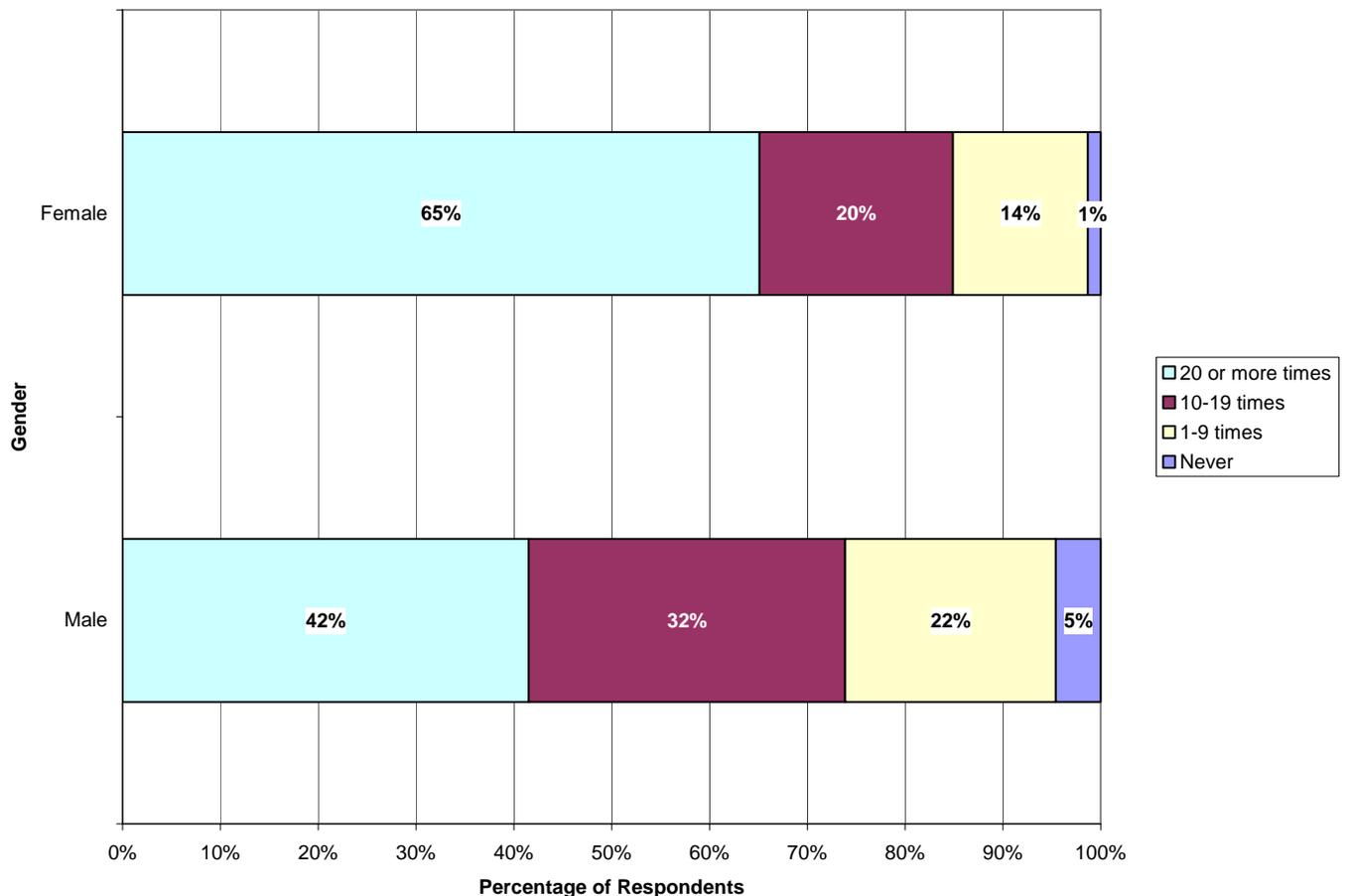
- Female respondents checked out more books than male respondents, with about two-thirds (65%) of women checking out twenty or more books during the previous year (see EVLD Chart 30).
- Men were more likely than women to have never checked out a library book during the prior twelve months (5% versus 1%).

Eagle Valley Library District

EVLD Chart 31
Return on Investment: Eagle Valley Library District
Books Checked Out, by Age
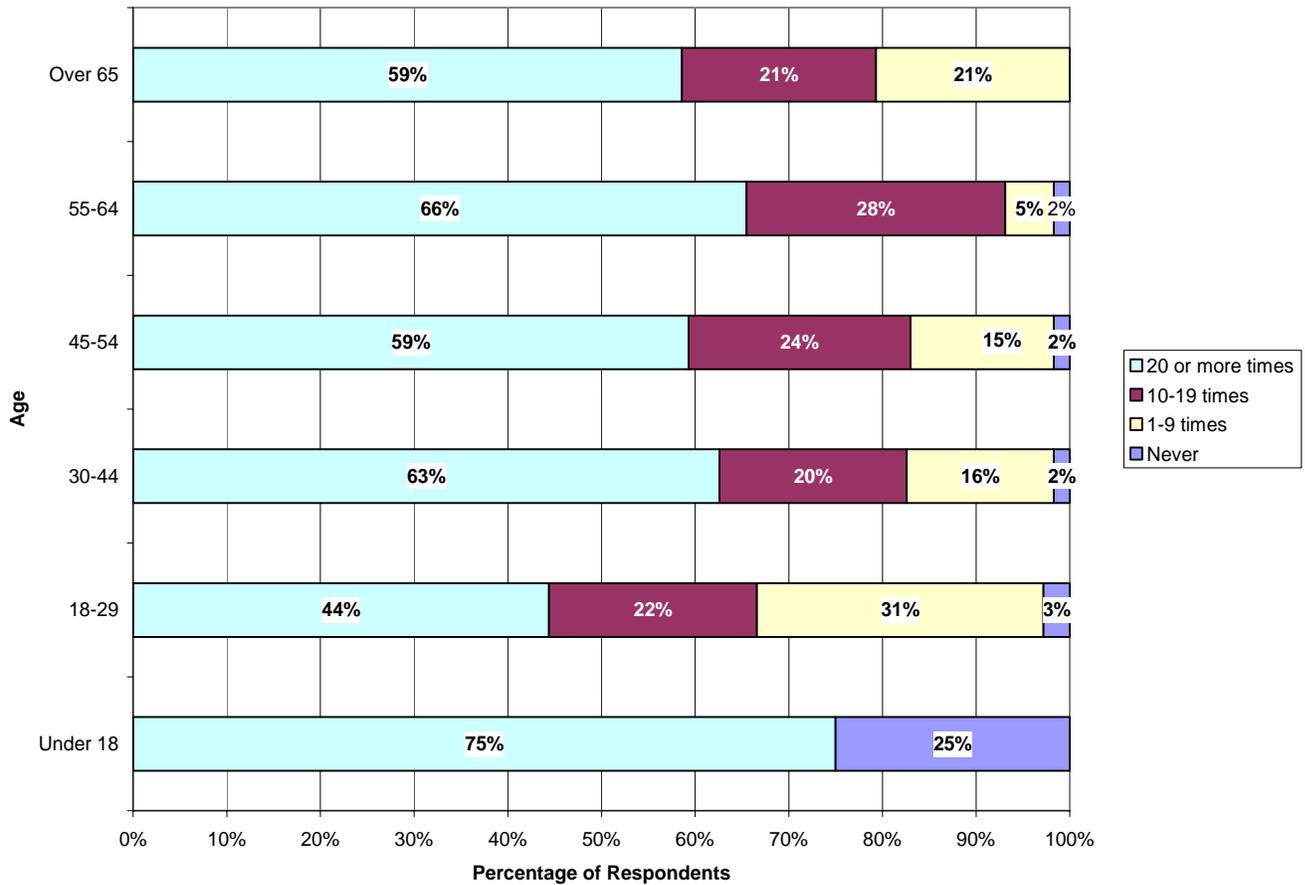
- Three-fourths of respondents under 18 years old had checked out twenty or more books during the previous year; this age group also had the largest amount of respondents who had never checked out a book that year at twenty-five percent (see EVLD Chart 31).
- Most respondents, in general, had checked out library books during the previous year. All respondents over 65 years old had checked out at least one book.

Eagle Valley Library District

EVLD Chart 32

Return on Investment: Eagle Valley Library District
Books Checked Out, by Education Level
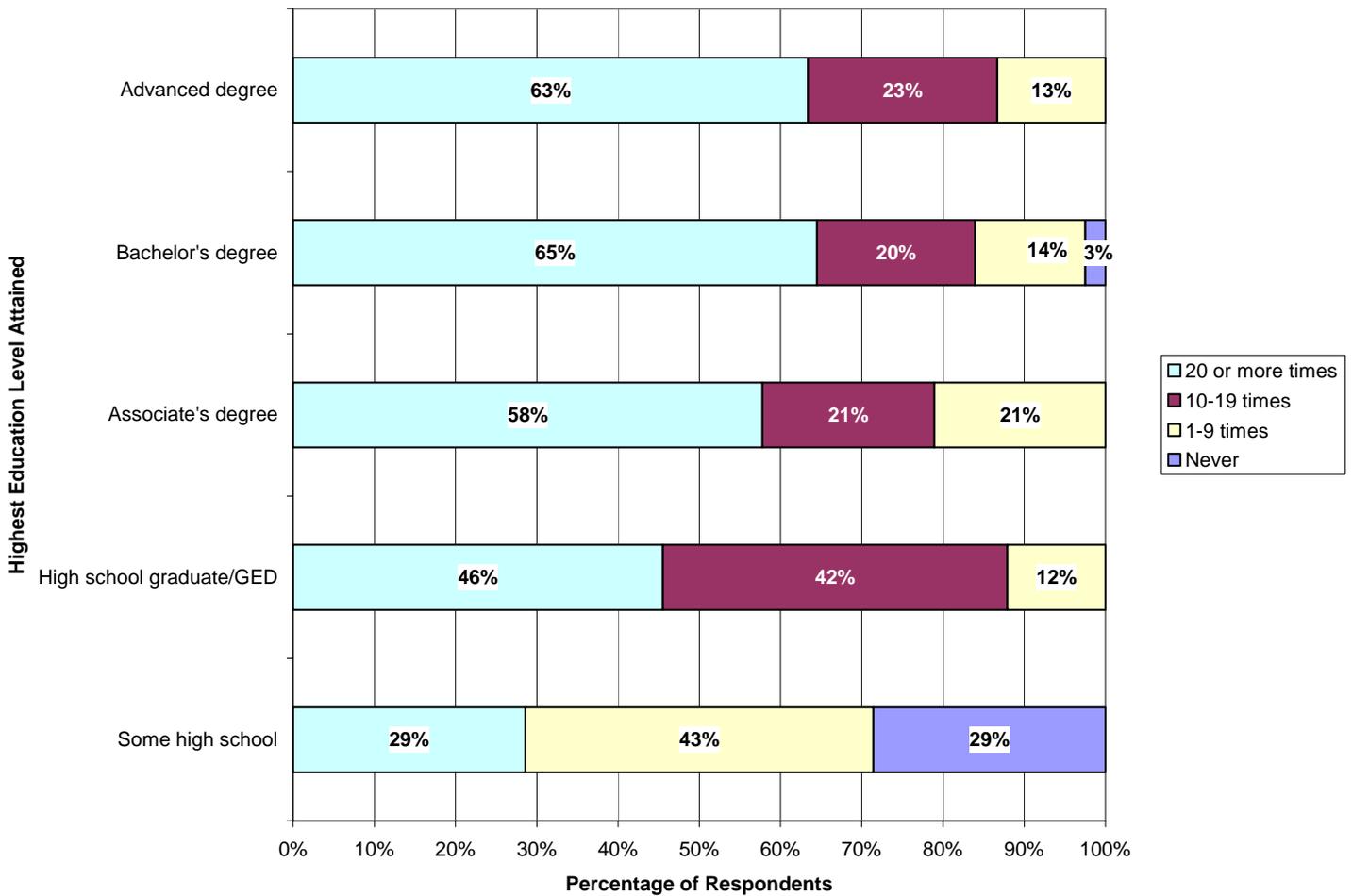
- Respondents who had completed some high school but who did not graduate were the least likely to have checked out books during the previous year, with twenty-nine percent never having done so (see EVLD Chart 32).
- In general, book checkouts increased in frequency with higher educational attainment. Those respondents who had completed bachelor's degrees were the most likely to have checked out twenty or more books during the previous year.

Eagle Valley Library District

How many times have you checked out a CD and/or tape from the library during the last twelve months?

EVLD Chart 33
Return on Investment: Eagle Valley Library District
CD or Tape Checkouts, by Education Level
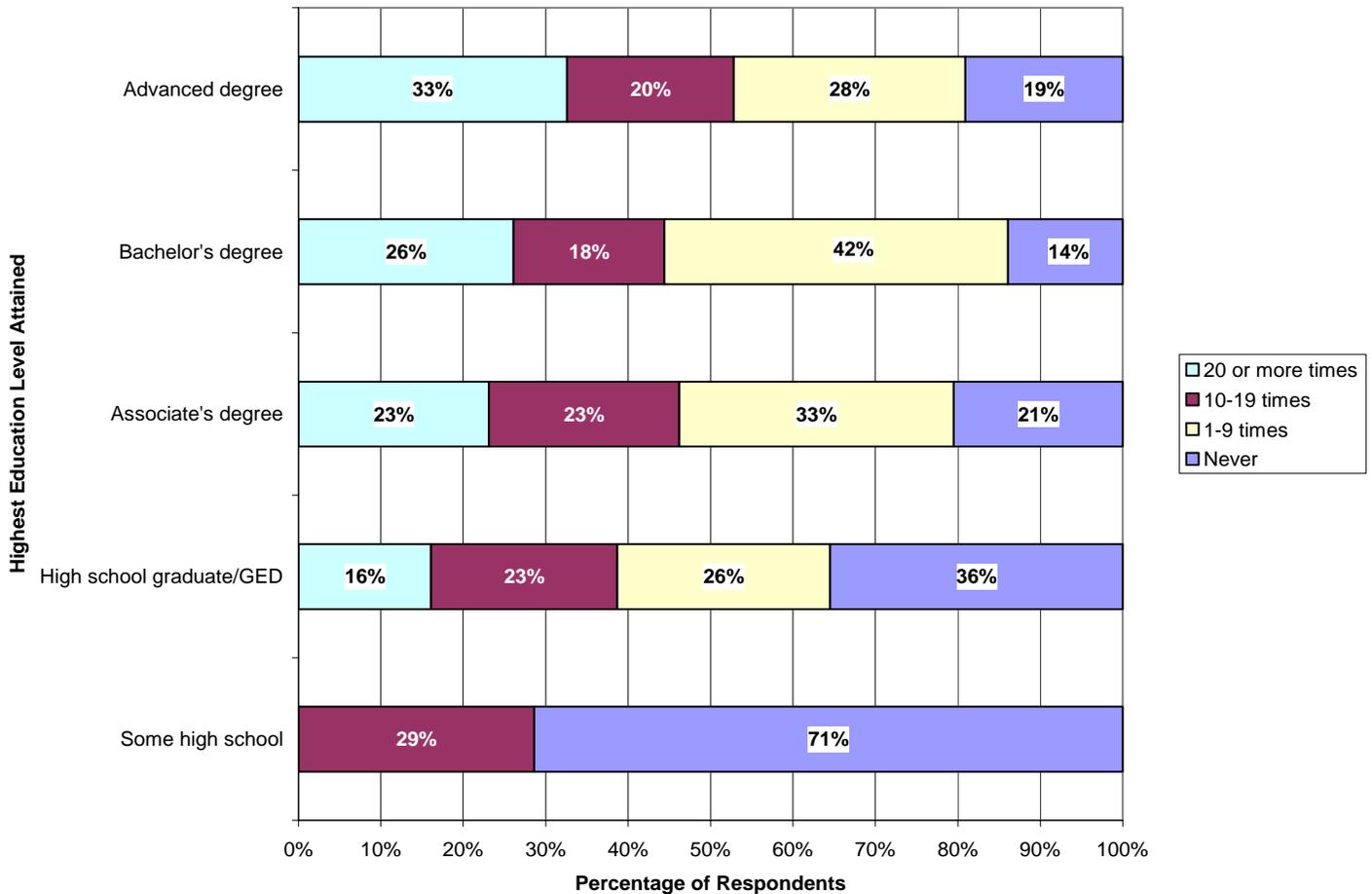
- In general, CD and tape checkouts increased with educational attainment (see EVLD Chart 33).
- Those respondents who had completed some high school but who did not receive a diploma were least likely to have checked out a CD or tape from the library during the previous year, with almost three-fourths (71%) reporting never having done so.
- About one in three respondents holding advanced degrees reported having checked out CDs or tapes twenty or more times during the previous year.

Eagle Valley Library District

EVLD Chart 34
Return on Investment: Eagle Valley Library District
CD or Tape Checkouts, by Household Income
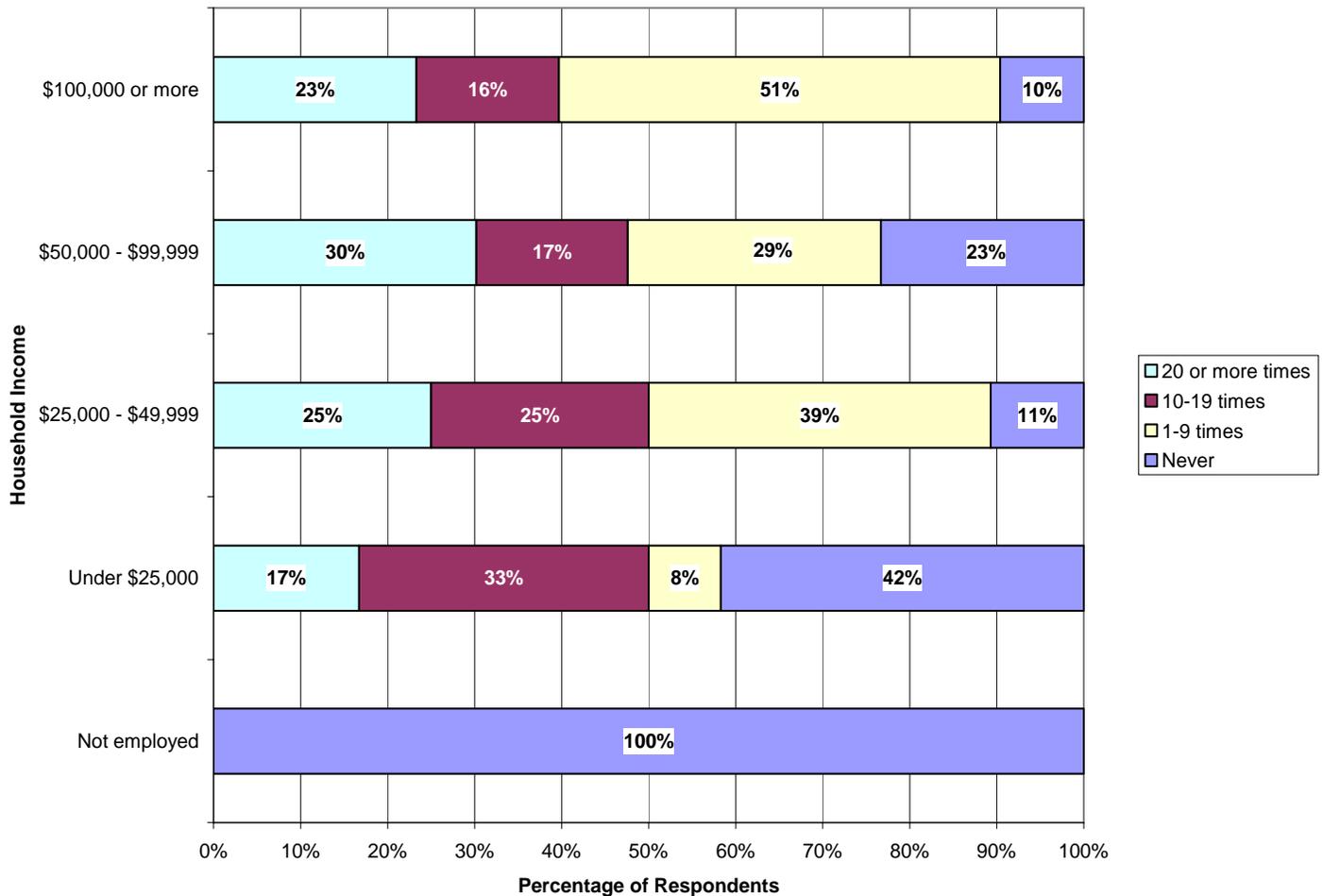
- Respondents reporting that they were not employed at the time of the survey also reported never having checked out a CD or tape from the library during the previous year (see EVLD Chart 34).
- Those earning the most annual income ($100,000 or more) were most likely to have checked out this type of media from the library, with only ten percent reporting not having done so during the previous year.

Eagle Valley Library District

How many times have you checked out a DVD and/or video from the library during the last twelve months?

EVLD Chart 35
Return on Investment: Eagle Valley Library District
DVD or Video Checkouts, by Age
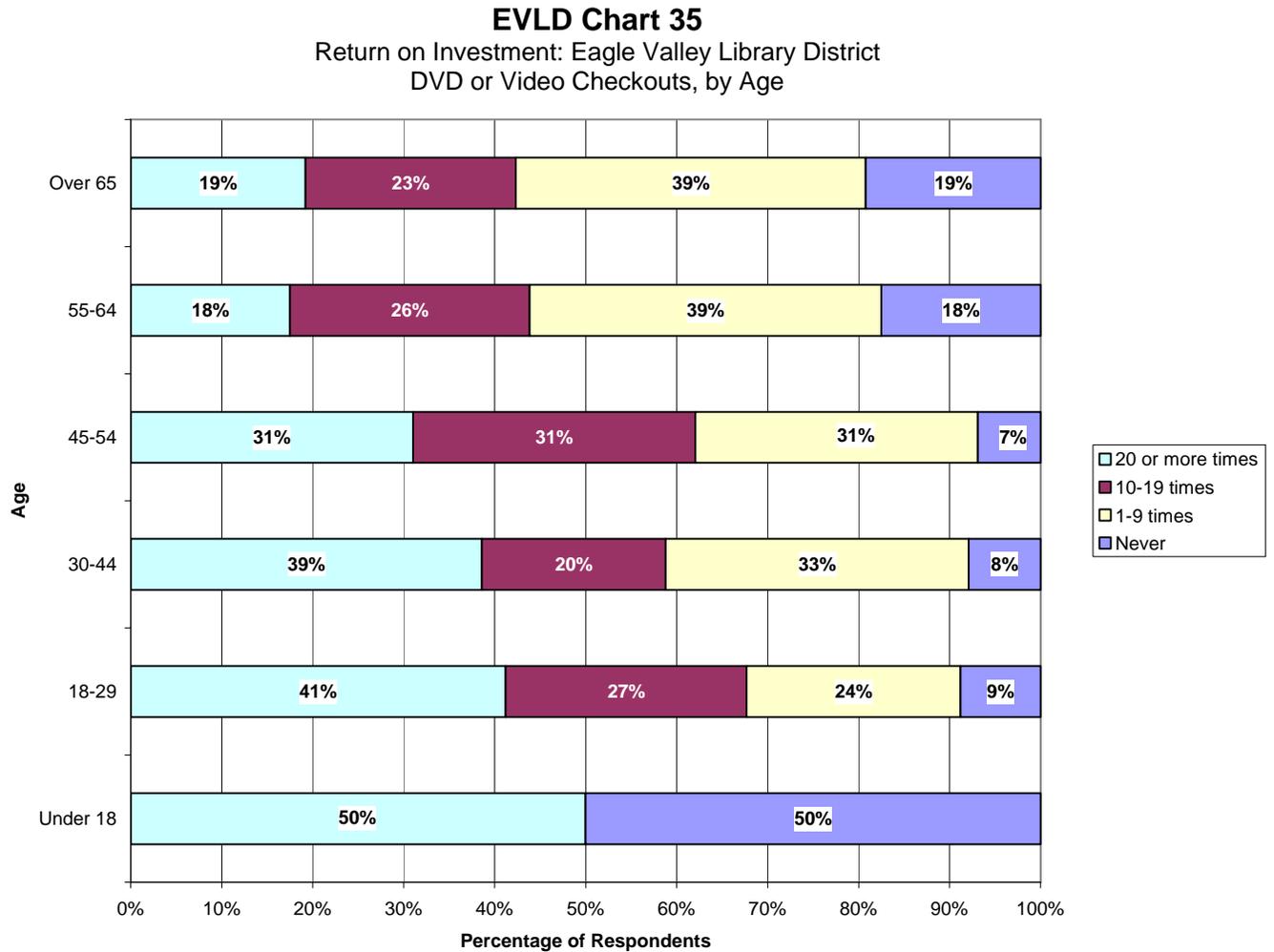
- In general, frequency of DVD and/or video checkouts decreased as age increased (see EVLD Chart 35).
- Respondents under 18 years old were most likely to have checked out a DVD or video frequently, with half reporting that they had checked such media out twenty or more times during the previous year. The same amount (50%), however, reported that they had never checked out this kind of media from the library during the prior twelve months.
- Aside from those respondents under 18, the age group least likely to have checked out a DVD or video was the group over 65 years old.

Eagle Valley Library District

EVLD Chart 36
Return on Investment: Eagle Valley Library District
DVD or Video Checkouts, by Education Level
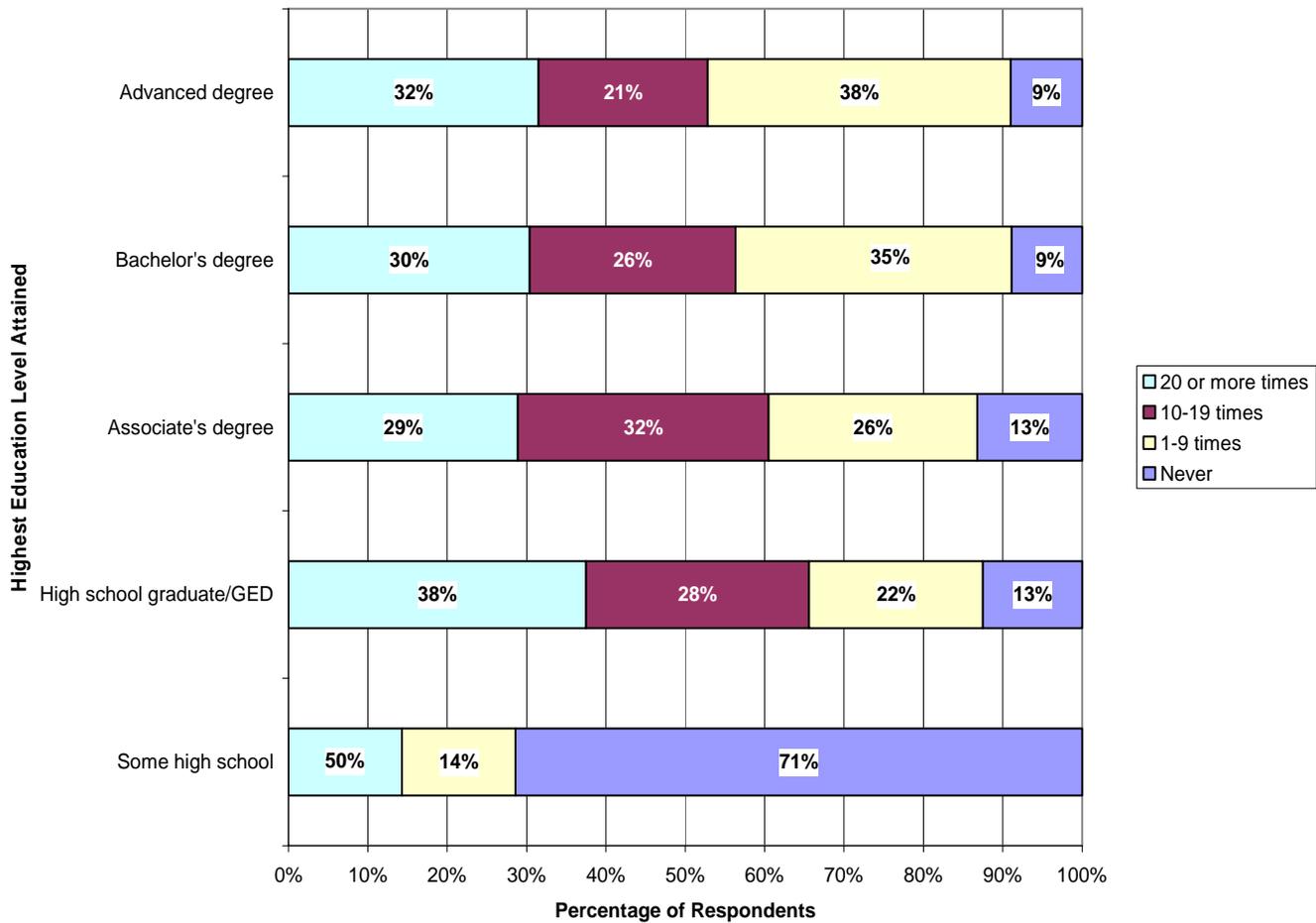
- Respondents with some high school education but without a diploma were least likely to report having checked out a DVD or tape (see EVLD Chart 36).
- For groups with all other levels of educational attainment, frequency of DVD or tape checkouts was similar.
- The groups most likely to have checked out a DVD or tape were the groups holding Bachelor's and Advanced degrees; only nine percent of each of these groups had never checked out this type of media.

Eagle Valley Library District

How many times have you used a library computer to access software, free information on the Internet, or research resources during the past twelve months?

EVLD Chart 37
Return on Investment: Eagle Valley Library District
Use of Library Computers, by Gender
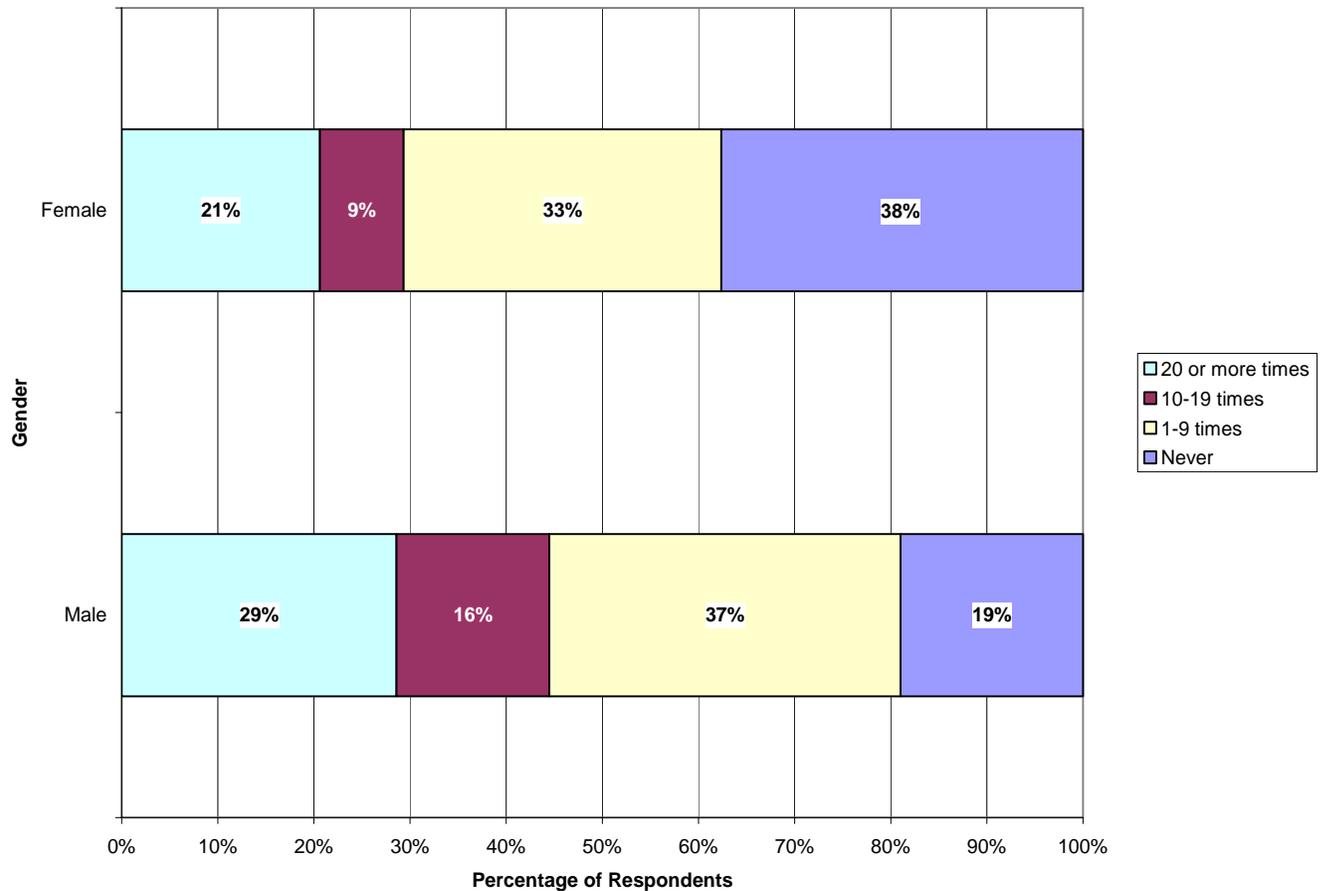
- Men were more likely to use library computers to access software, the Internet, or research resources (see EVLD Chart 37).
- More than one in three female respondents reported never having accessed a library computer during the prior year.
- Men were also more likely to use the library computers frequently, as nearly one third (29%) reported having used a library computer twenty or more times during the previous twelve months.

Eagle Valley Library District

EVLD Chart 38

Return on Investment: Eagle Valley Library District
Use of Library Computers, by Age
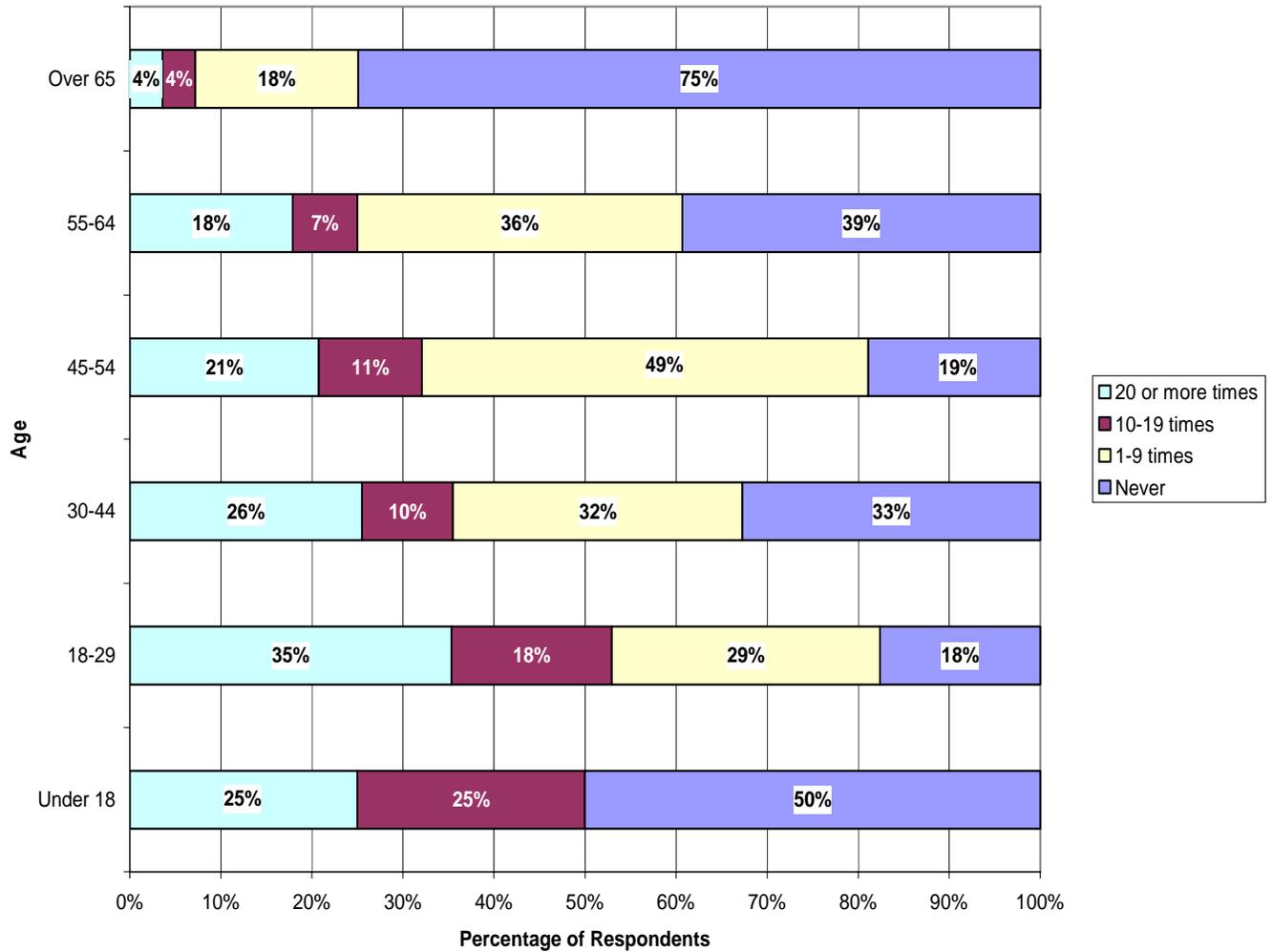
- In general, use of library computers decreased as age increased (see EVLD Chart 38).
- The age group least likely to have ever used a library computer was over 65 years old; three-fourths of this group reported never having accessed a library computer during the previous year.
- The age group most likely to have used a computer in the library was aged 18-29; over one-third (35%) of this group reported using library computers twenty or more times during the prior twelve months.

Eagle Valley Library District

Conclusions

Data provided here may not apply to the entire clientele of the Eagle Valley Library District. Still, a few interesting trends are evident:

- In general, young people (under 29) were more likely to use library computers to access software, the Internet, or research resources. This group was also more likely to check out DVDs and tapes. This suggests that young people are more likely to use the library in non-traditional ways.
- Respondents over 65 years old were less likely to check out DVDs and tapes, and also did not frequently use library computers. This suggests that their use of the library is more traditional.
- Women were more likely to check books out than men, but were less likely to use computers in the library.
- In general, library circulation of all materials (including books, CDs or tapes, and DVDs or videos) increased with educational attainment.

.

Notes:

Percentages were rounded to the nearest whole number; in some cases percentages do not add up to 100%.

# Ft. Morgan Public Library

The Return on Investment Study conducted by Library Research Service revealed some significant demographic data among the libraries that participated. The following questions provided significant statistics for Ft. Morgan Public Library after cross-tabulation analysis was conducted. These demographic highlights are those that are most significant for Ft. Morgan Public Library, and may not be comparable to demographics for other libraries participating in the survey.

How many times have you read a book in the library during the last twelve months?

FMPL Chart 39
Return on Investment: Ft. Morgan Public Library
Books Read in Library, by Age
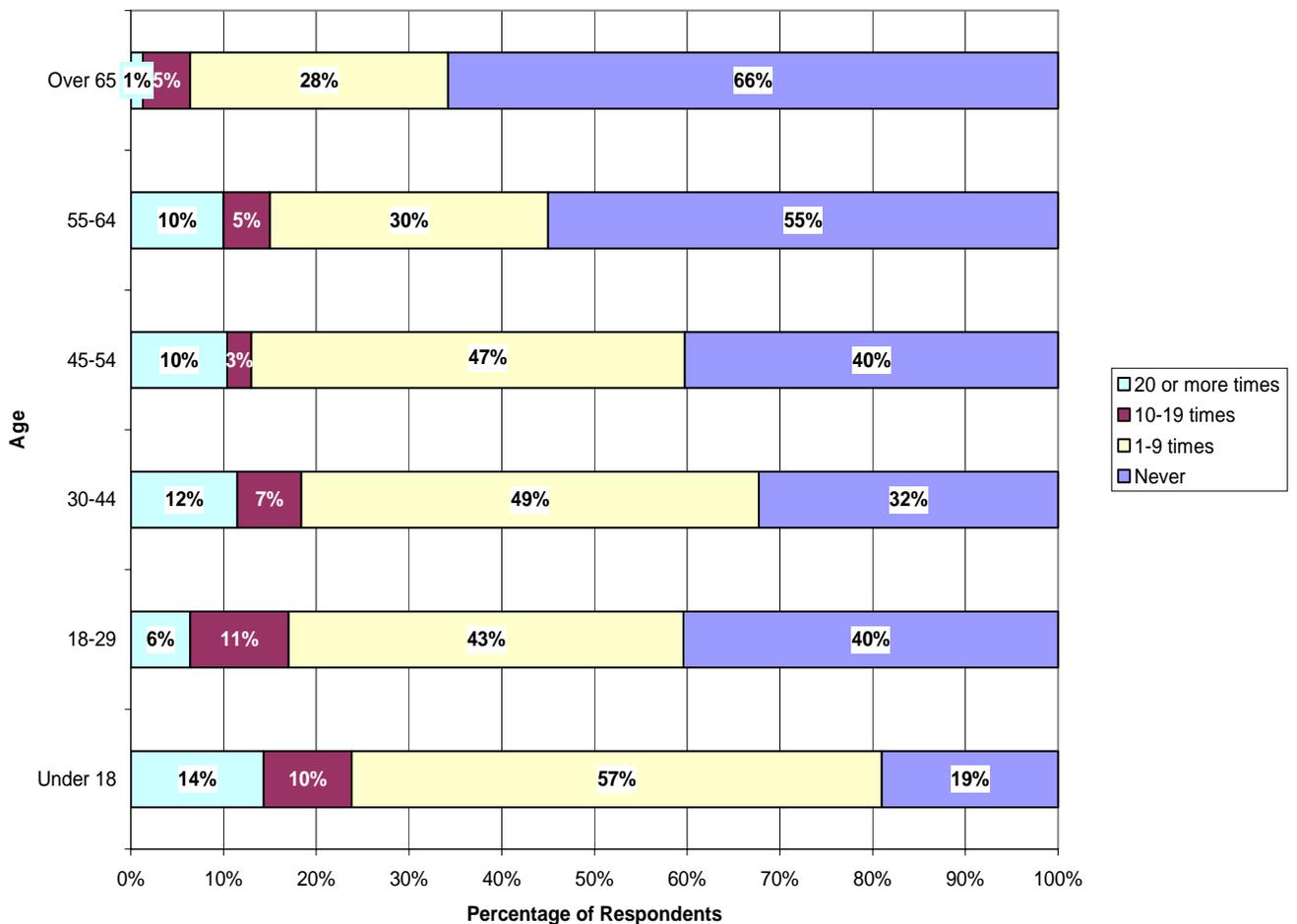
- In general, the number of times respondents reporting reading in the library decreased as age increased (see FMPL Chart 39).
- Over half (66%) of respondents over 65 reported never having read in the library during the previous year.
- The age group that reported reading most frequently in the library was under 18; more than four out of five respondents reported reading in the library at least once.

Ft. Morgan Public Library

FMPL Chart 40
Return on Investment: Ft. Morgan Public Library
Books Read in Library, by Household Income
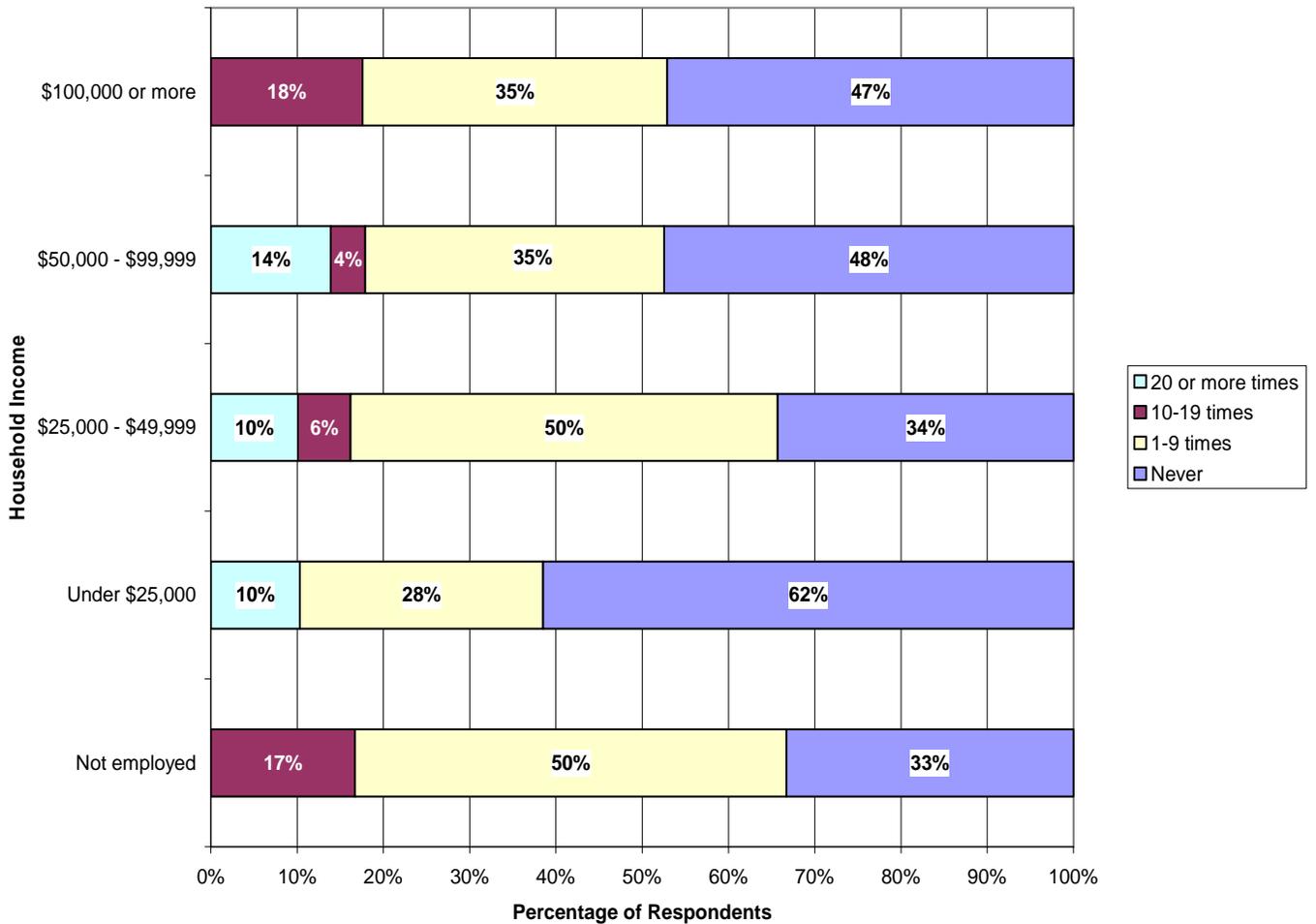
- Respondents who were not employed and respondents earning $25,000-40,000 annually at the time of the survey were most likely to have read a book in the library during the previous year (see
- FMPL Chart **40**).
- More than half (62%) of respondents earning under $25,000 annually reported never having read a book in the library during the previous twelve months.

Ft. Morgan Public Library

FMPL Chart 41
Return on Investment: Ft. Morgan Public Library
Books Read in Library, by Ethnicity
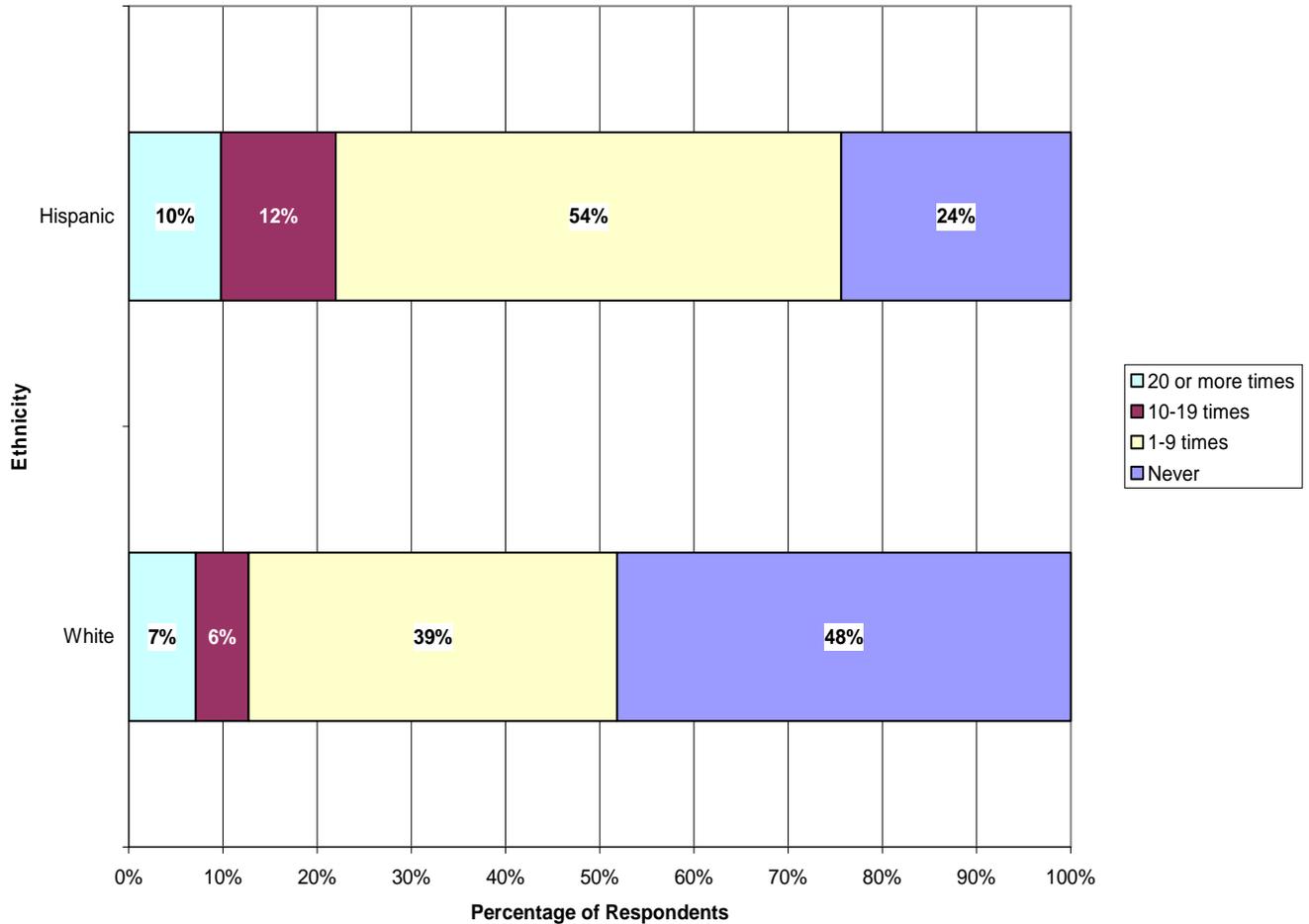
- Respondents identifying as Hispanic were more likely to have read a book in the library than respondents identifying as white (see FMPL Chart 41).
- Almost half (48%) of respondents identifying as white reported never having read a book in the library during the previous year.
- More than three-quarters (76%) of respondents identifying as Hispanic reported having read a book in the library at least once during the previous twelve months.

Ft. Morgan Public Library

How many times have you used a library computer to access software, free information on the Internet, or research resources during the past twelve months?

FMPL Chart 42
Return on Investment: Ft. Morgan Public Library
Use of Library Computers, by Age
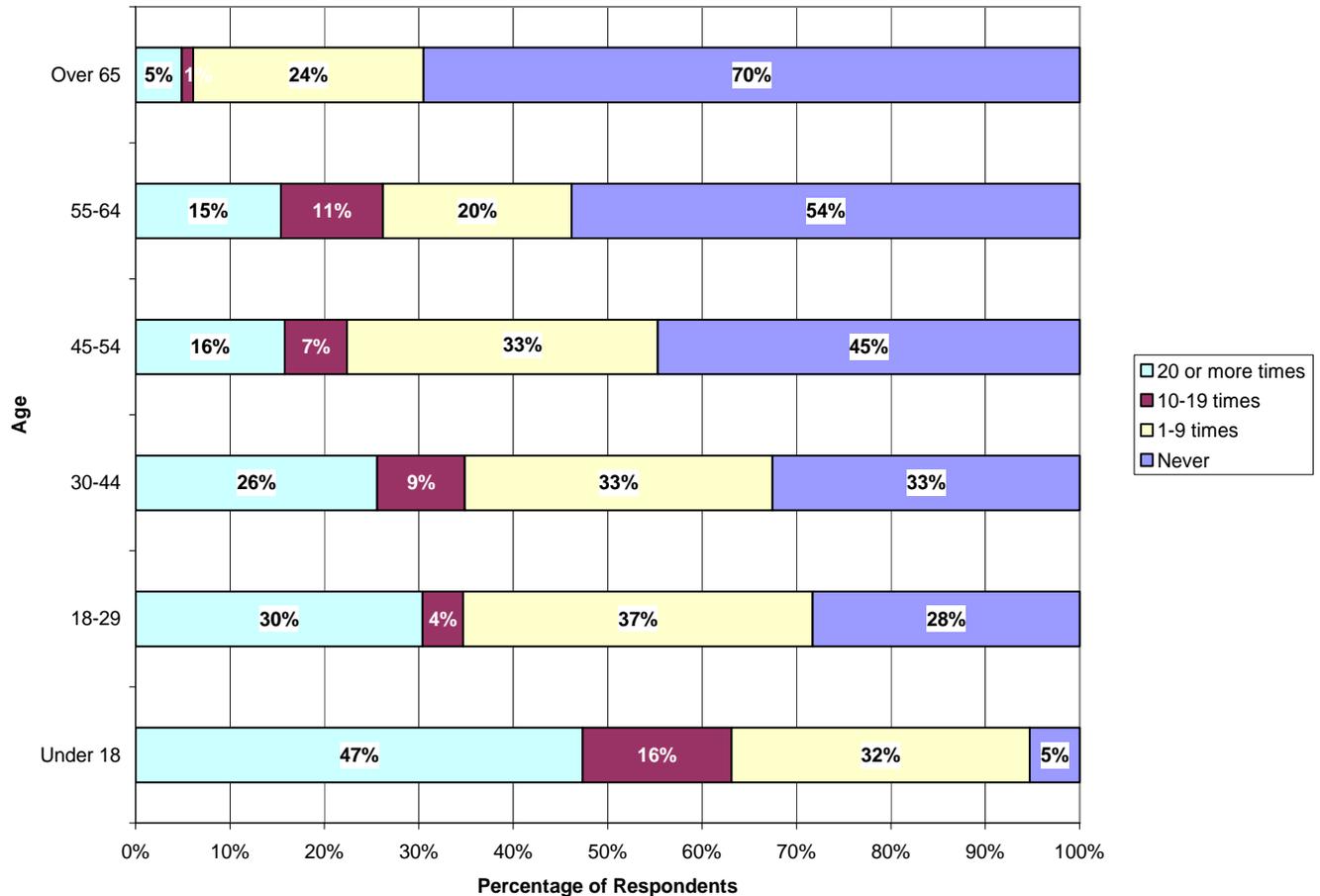
- In general, use of library computers among those responding to the survey decreased as age increased (see FMPL Chart 42).
- Respondents under 18 years old were most likely to have accessed computers in the library, with only five percent reporting never having done so.
- Almost half (47%) of respondents under 18 reported using a library computer twenty or more times during the previous year.
- Seventy percent of respondents over 65 reported never having accessed a computer in the library during the previous year.

Ft. Morgan Public Library

FMPL Chart 43
Return on Investment: Ft. Morgan Public Library
Use of Library Computers, by Household Income
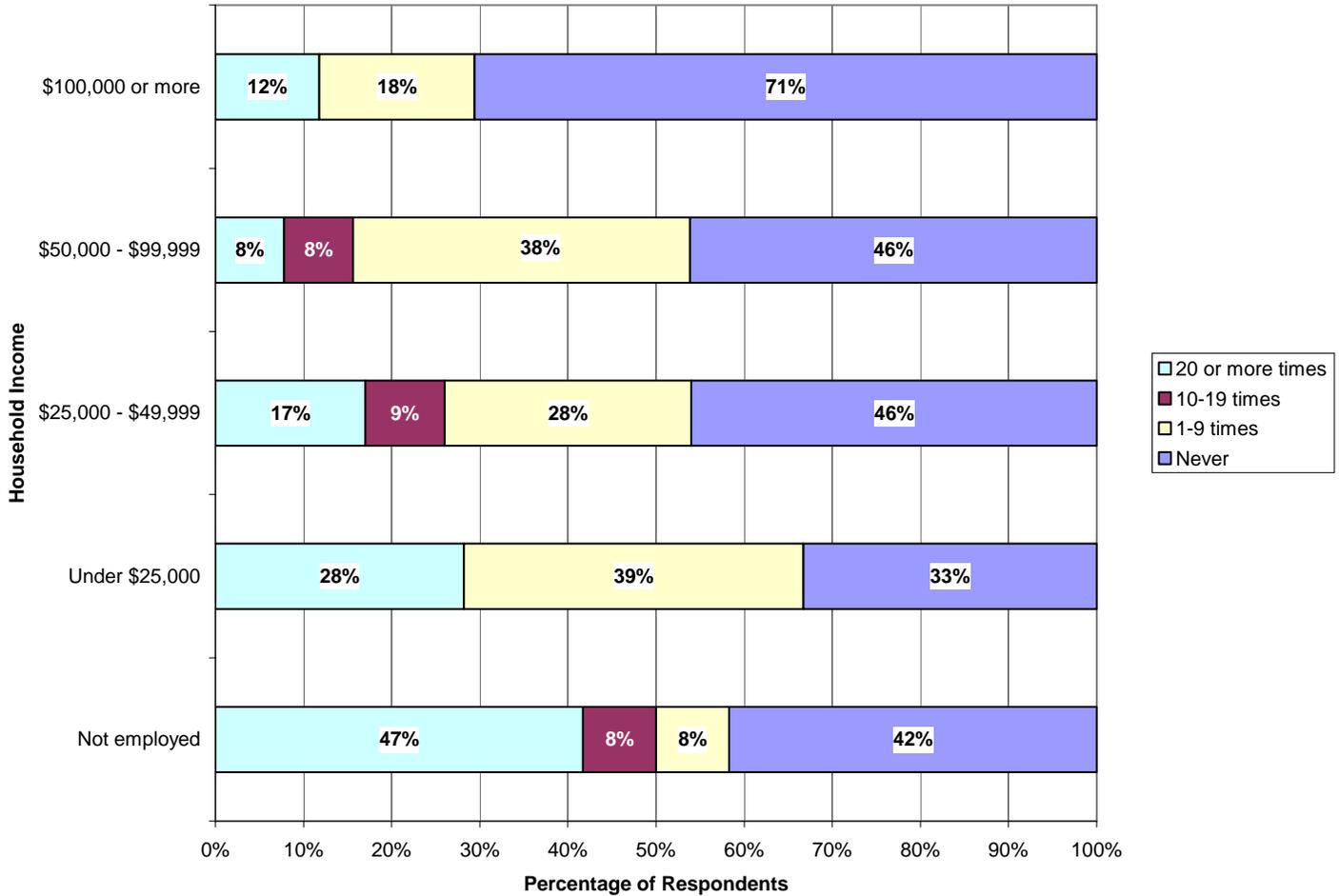
- In general, frequent use of library computers decreased as income increased (see FMPL Chart 43).
- Almost three-quarters (71%) of respondents earning the most annual income ($100,000 or more) reported never having used a computer in the library during the previous year.
- The income group most likely to have used a library computer during the prior year earned under $25,000 annually.

Ft. Morgan Public Library

FMPL Chart 44
Return on Investment: Ft. Morgan Public Library
Use of Library Computers, by Ethnicity
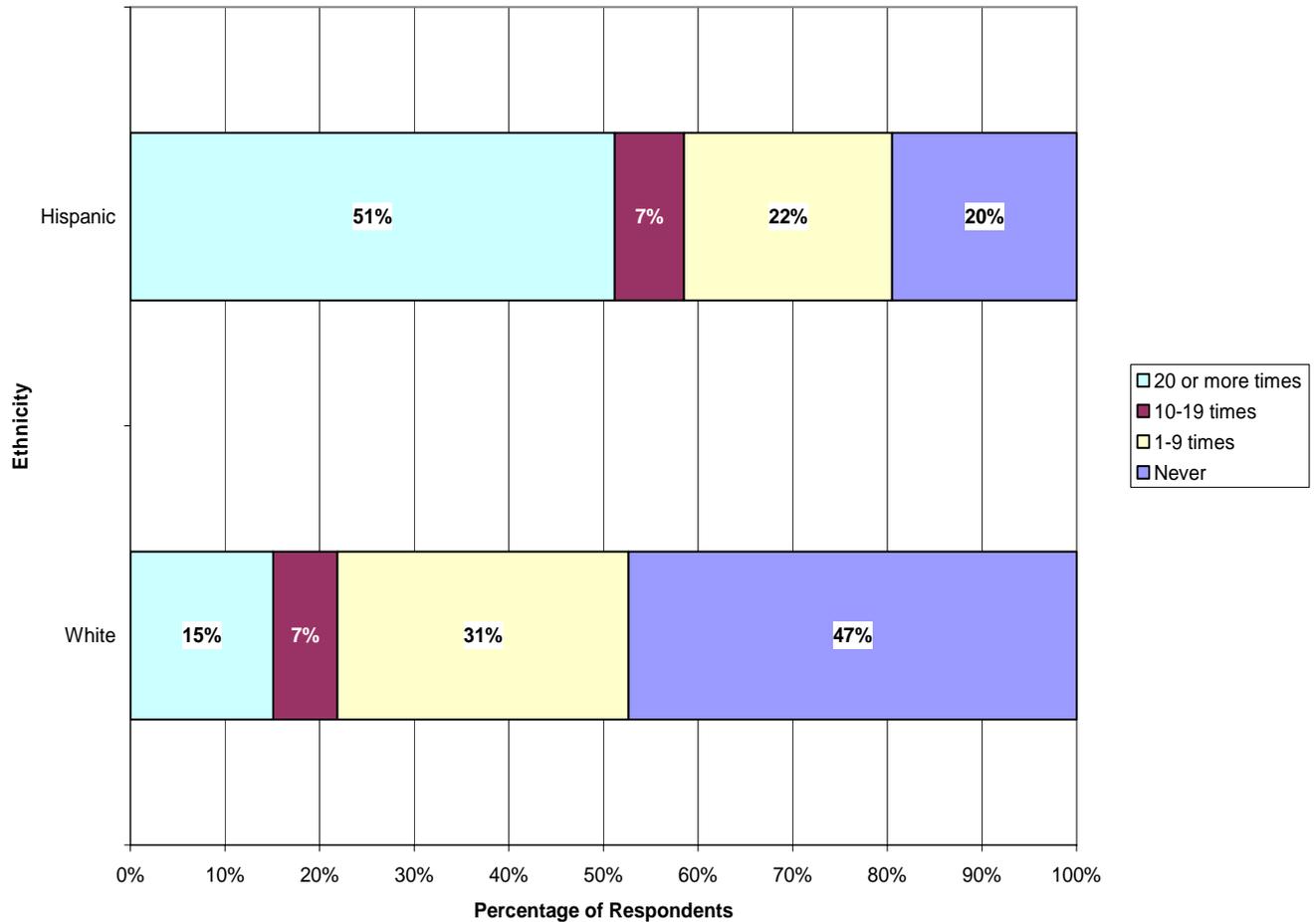
- In general, respondents identifying as Hispanic were more likely than respondents identifying as white to access computers in the library (see FMPL Chart 44).
- More than half (51%) of respondents identifying as Hispanic reported using a library computer twenty or more times during the previous twelve months.
- Almost half (47%) of respondents identifying as white reported never having accessed a library computer during the prior year.

Ft. Morgan Public Library

Approximately how much money would it have cost for you to use information sources other than the library to fulfill your information needs?

FMPL Chart 45

Return on Investment: Ft. Morgan Public Library
Cost of Other Information Source, by Gender
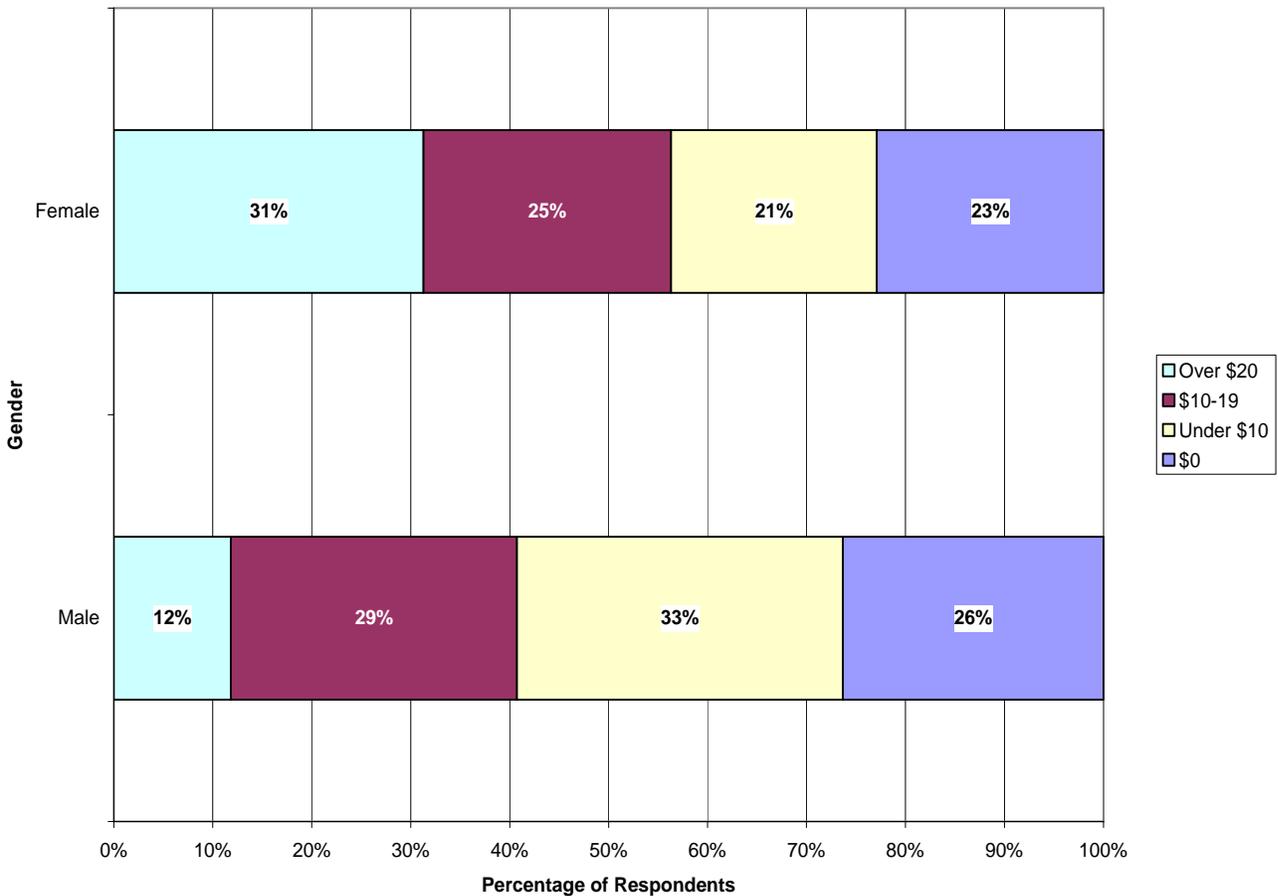
- Women reported more often than men that it would cost more money to fulfill their information needs outside the library (see FMPL Chart 45).
- About one in four men and women (26% and 23%, respectively) reported that they would not have spent any money fulfilling their information needs outside the library.

Ft. Morgan Public Library

FMPL Chart 46
Return on Investment: Ft. Morgan Public Library
Cost of Other Information Source, by Age
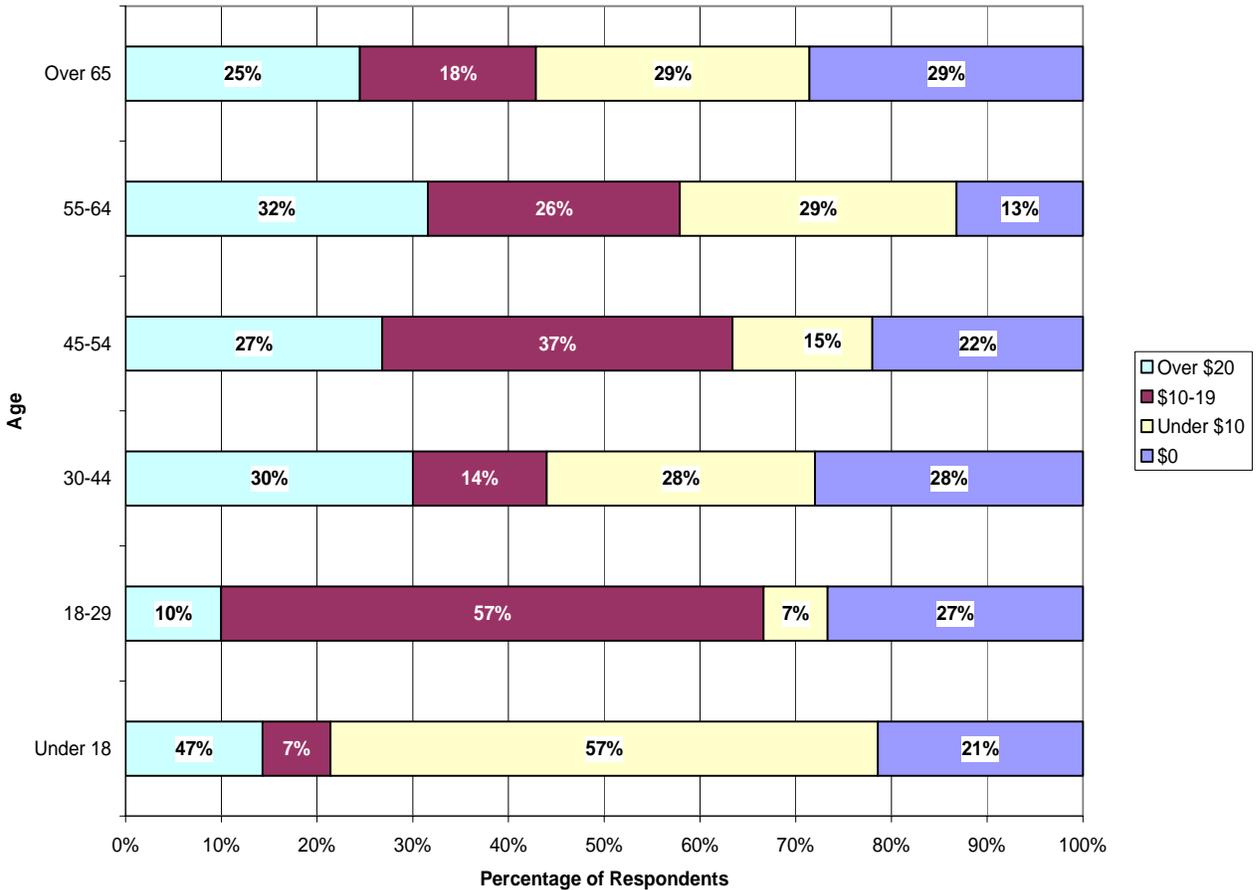
- Respondents aged 55-64 most often reported that it would cost more than twenty dollars to fulfill their information needs outside the library (see FMPL Chart 46).
- Respondents aged 30-44 reported it costing the least for them to fulfill their information needs outside the library; more than a quarter (28%) said it would not cost any money.

Ft. Morgan Public Library

Conclusions

Data provided here may not apply to the entire clientele of the Ft. Morgan Public Library. Still, a few interesting trends are evident:

- Young respondents (under 18 years old) were more likely than older respondents to read in the library, and were also more likely to access computers in the library frequently. This implies that while young people do use the library in non-traditional ways, they also read books as a part of their library experience.
- Those respondents who were not employed were most likely to read in the library.
- Respondents earning the most money annually ($100,000 or more) were least likely to access a computer in the library.
- In general, respondents identifying as Hispanic were more likely to read in the library than respondents identifying as white. Respondents identifying as Hispanic were also more likely to access computers in the library.
- Women were more likely than men to report a higher cost of fulfilling information needs outside the library.

.

Notes:

Percentages were rounded to the nearest whole number; in some cases percentages do not add up to 100%.

Respondents may overlap groups, especially ethnicities. Respondents were encouraged to mark as many categories as described them. Similarly, certain ethnic groups were discussed whereas others were not. This is because statistically significant numbers from only a few ethnic groups responded from this library.

Mesa County Public Library District

The Return on Investment Study conducted by Library Research Service revealed some significant demographic data among the libraries that participated. The following questions provided significant statistics for Mesa County Public Library District after cross-tabulation analysis was conducted. These demographic highlights are those that are most significant for Mesa County Public Library, and may not be comparable to demographics for other libraries participating in the survey.

How many times have you read a journal, magazine or newspaper in the library during the last twelve months?

MCPLD Chart 47
Return on Investment: Mesa County Public Library District
Periodicals Read in Library, by Gender
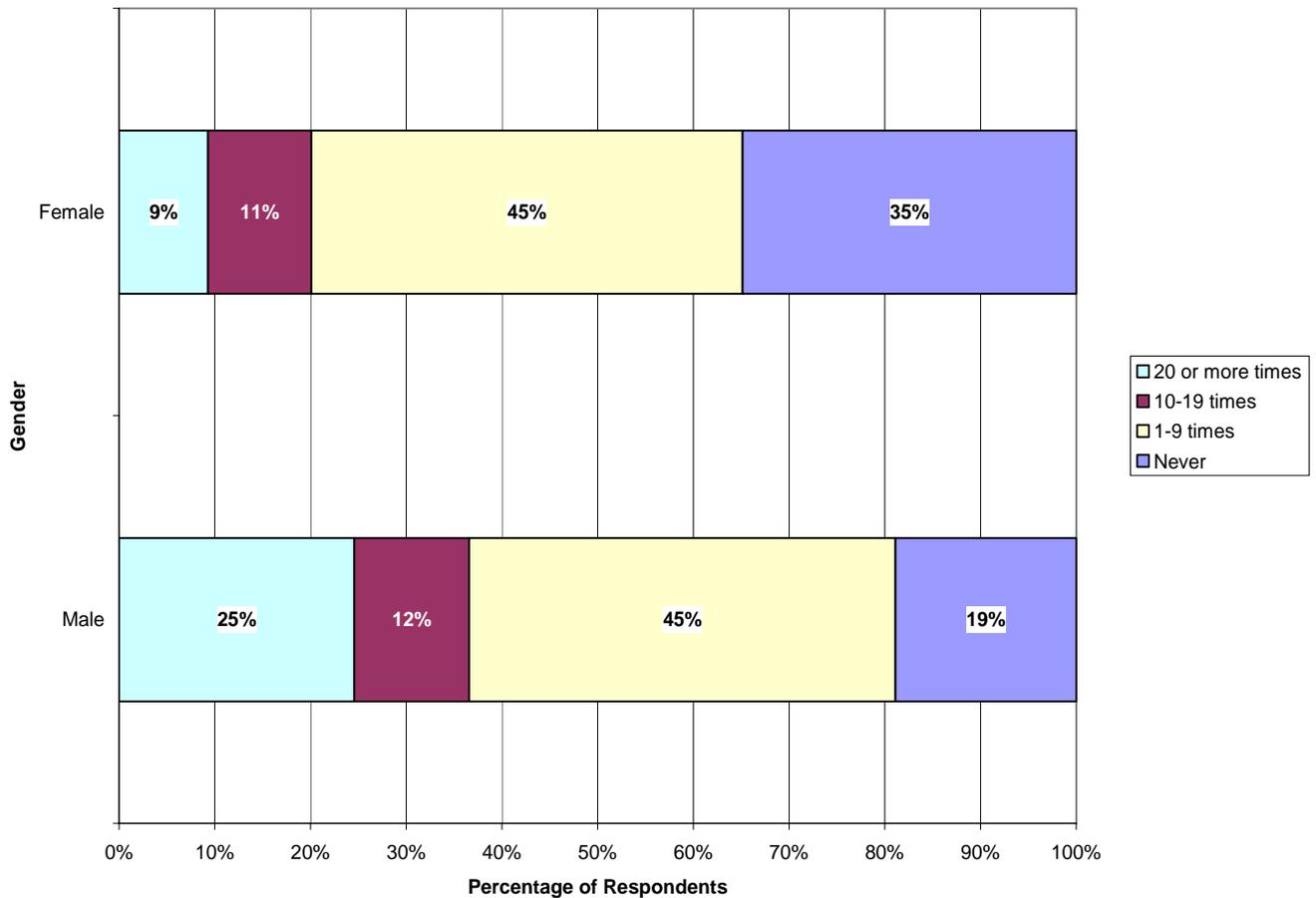
- In general, men were more likely than women to read periodicals in the library. A quarter of male respondents reported reading periodicals in the library twenty or more times during the previous year (see MCPLD Chart 47).
- Over one-third of women reported never having read a periodical in the library during the previous twelve months.

Mesa County Public Library District

MCPLD Chart 48
Return on Investment: Mesa County Public Library District
Periodicals Read in Library, by Age
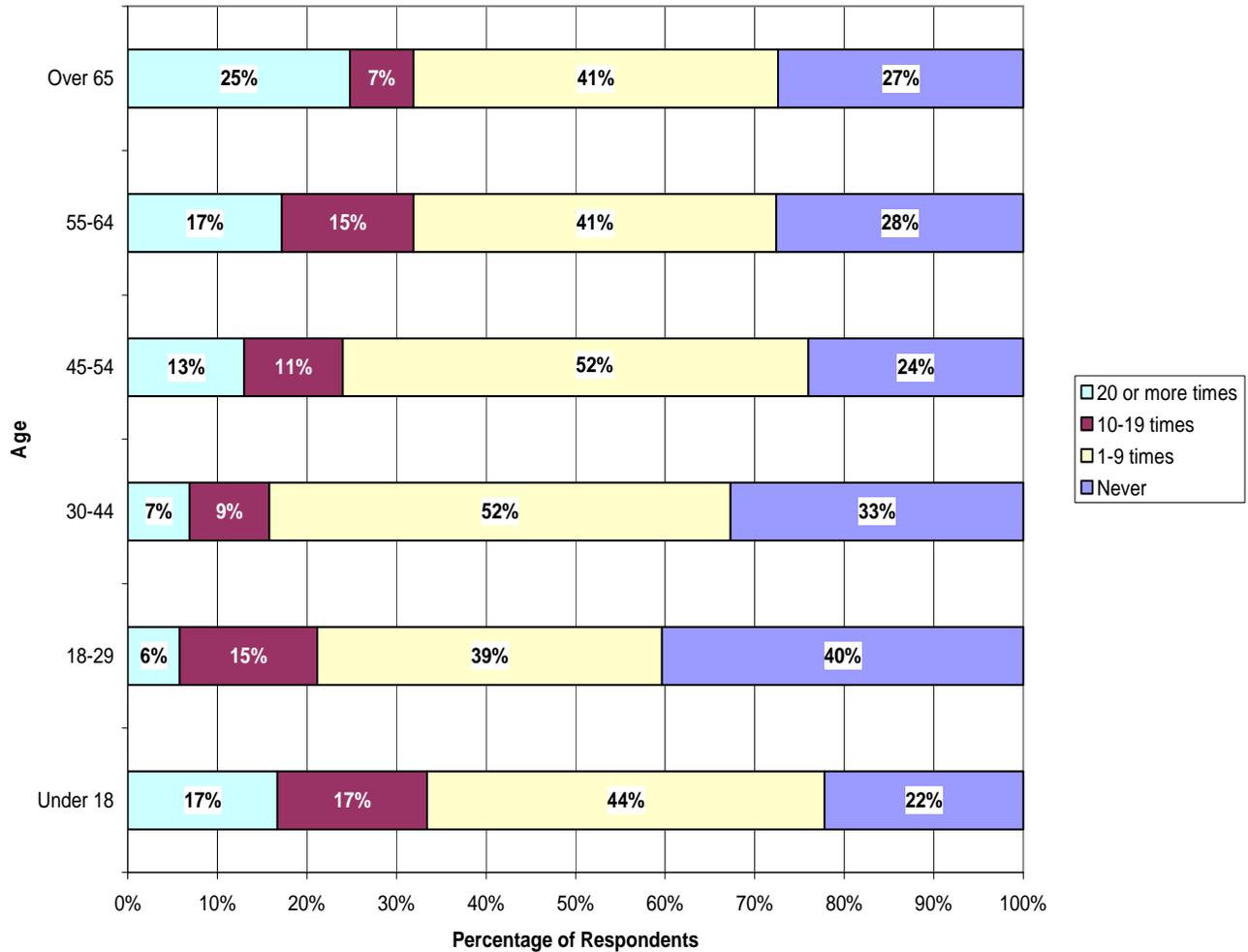
- Respondents under 18 years old were most likely to have read periodicals in the library (see MCPLD Chart 48).
- One in four respondents over age 65 reported having read a periodical in the library twenty or more times during the previous year.

Mesa County Public Library District

MCPLD Chart 49
Return on Investment: Mesa County Public Library District
Periodicals Read in Library, by Household Income
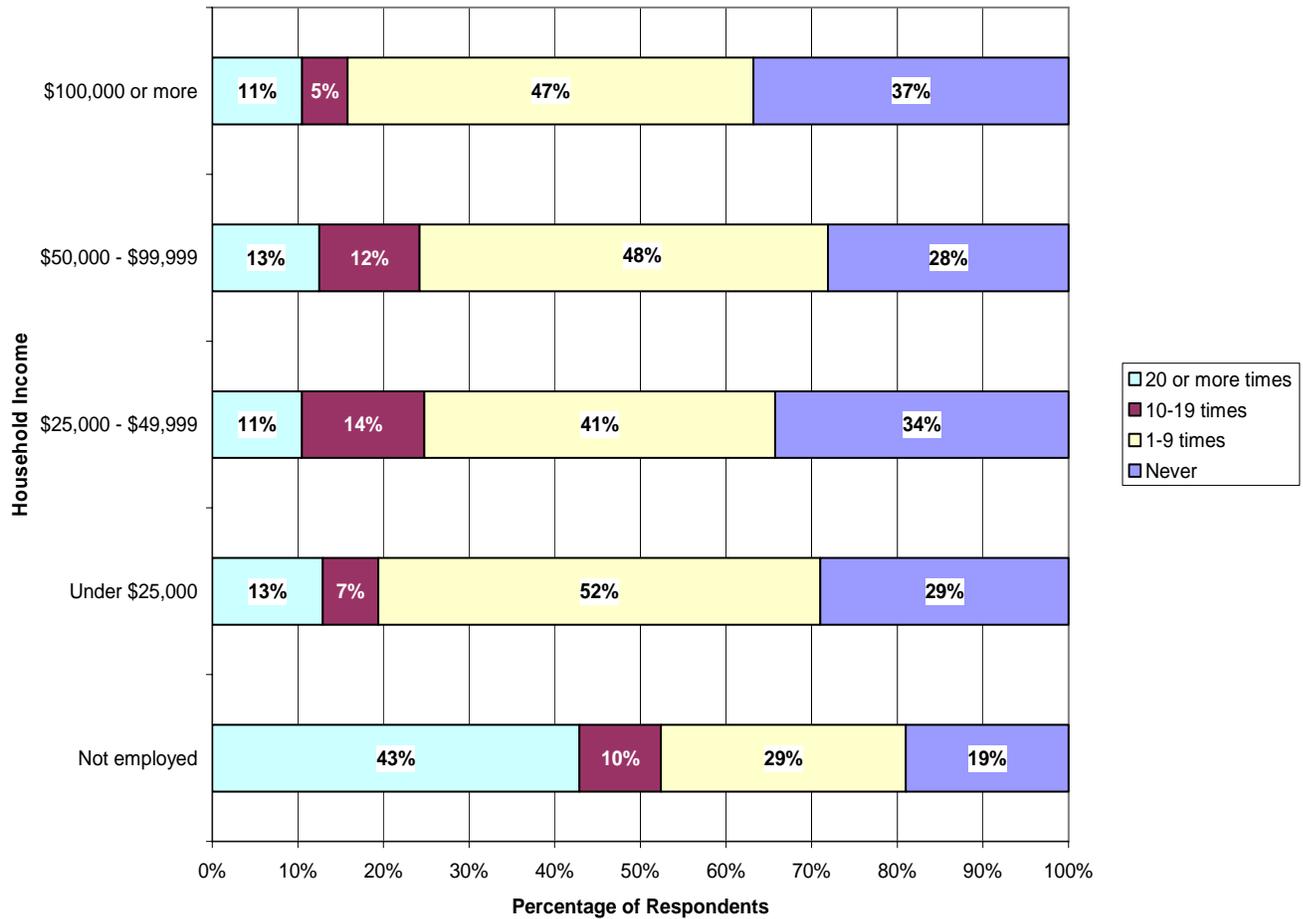
- In general, frequency of reading periodicals in the library decreased as annual income increased (see MCPLD Chart 49).
- Almost half (48%) of respondents who were not employed at the time of the survey reported reading periodicals in the library twenty or more times during the previous year.
- Respondents earning the most annual income ($100,000 or more) were least likely to have read periodicals in the library during the prior twelve months.

Mesa County Public Library District

How many times have you attended a program, class, or received instruction in the library during the last twelve months?

MCPLD Chart 50

Return on Investment: Mesa County Public Library District
Instruction Received in the Library, by Gender
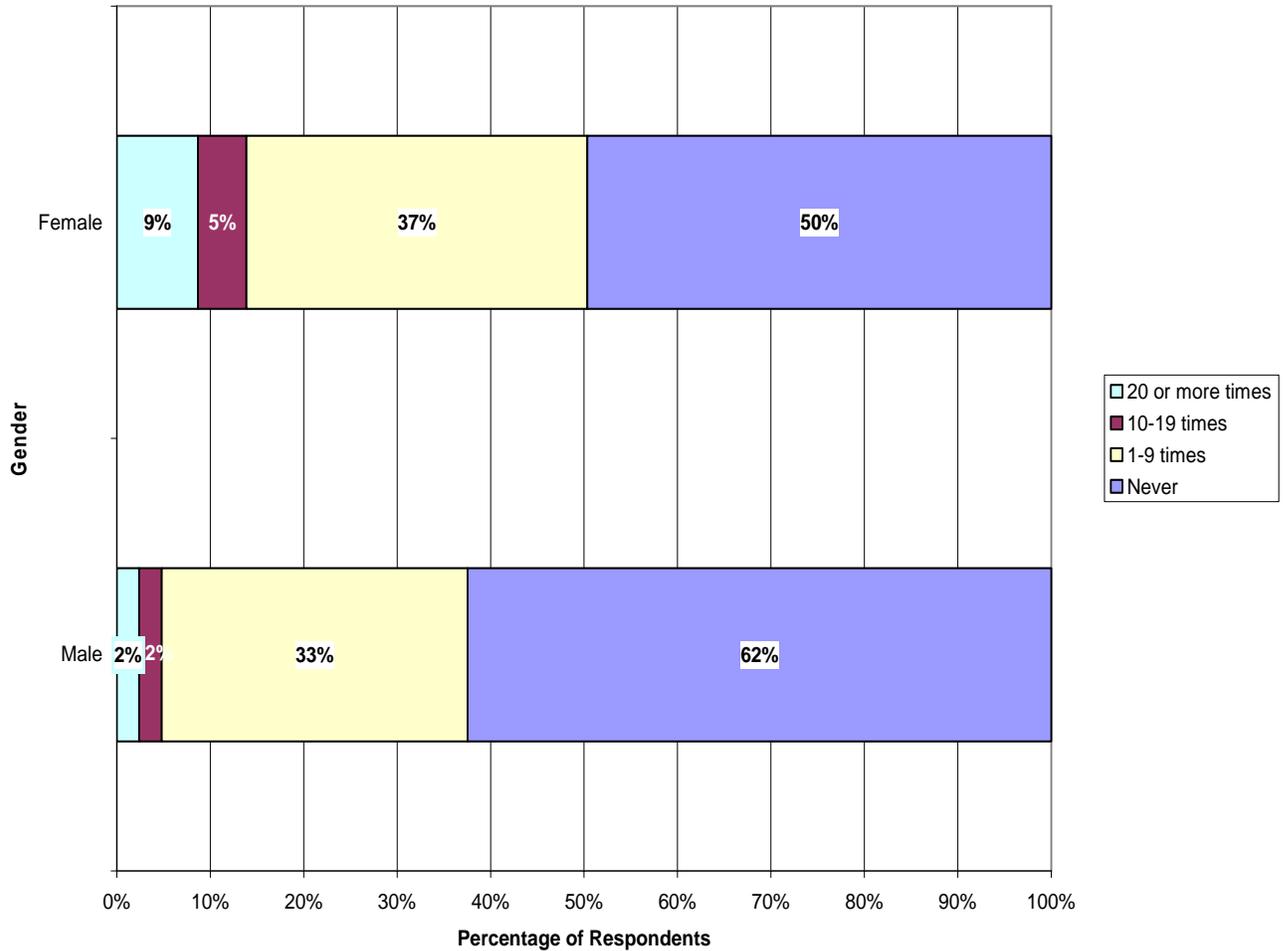
- Women were more likely than men to report having received instruction in the library during the previous year (see MCPLD Chart 50).
- About three out of every five male respondents reported never having received instruction in the library during the previous twelve months.

Mesa County Public Library District

MCPLD Chart 51
Return on Investment: Mesa County Public Library District
Instruction Received in the Library, by Age
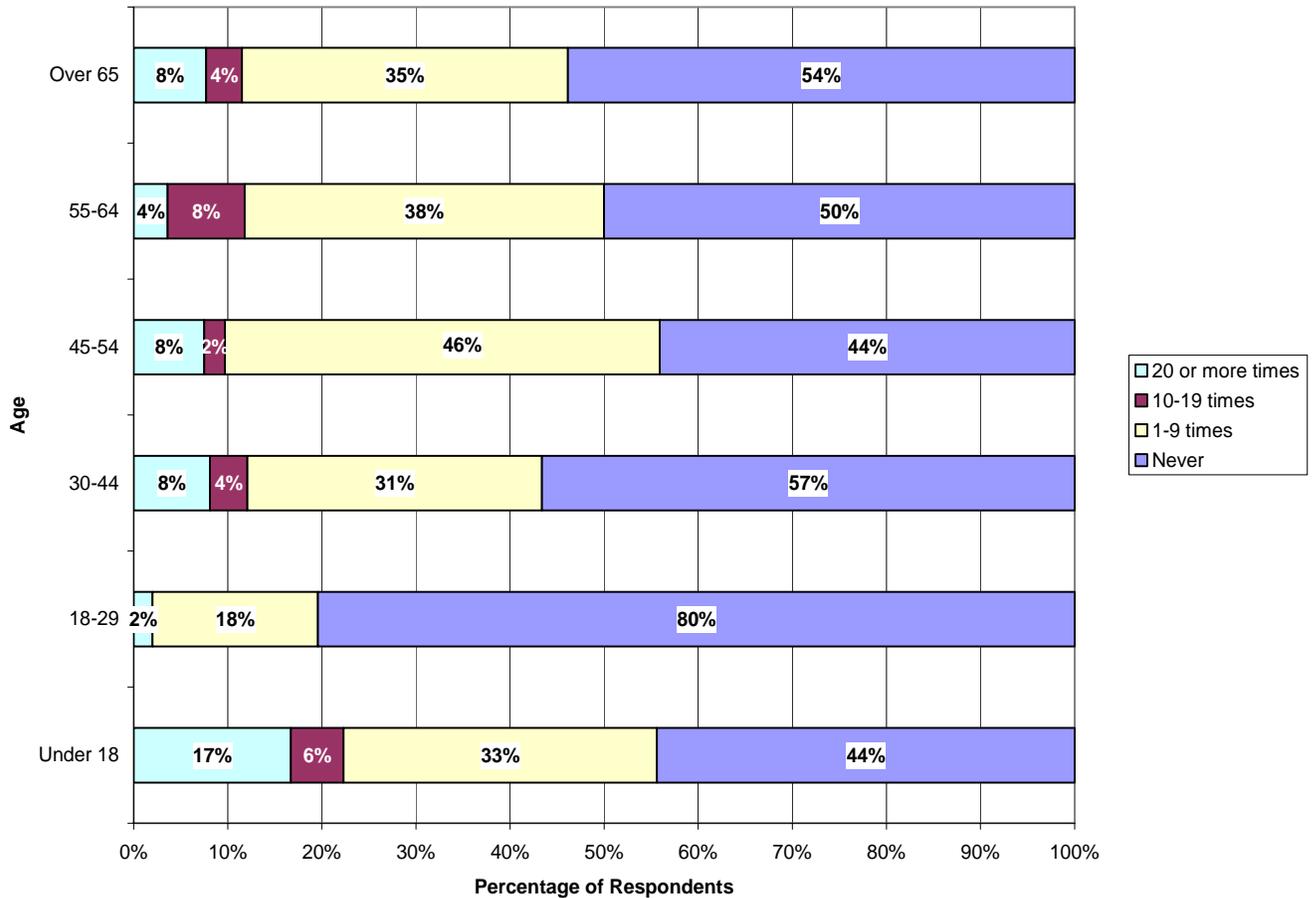
- Most respondents in all age groups reported never having received instruction in the library during the prior year (see MCPLD Chart 51).
- The age group least likely to have received instruction in the library was 18-29 years old, with eighty percent reporting never having received instruction during the previous year.
- The age group receiving most frequent instruction was under 18 years old, with seventeen percent receiving instruction twenty or more times during the prior twelve months.

Mesa County Public Library District

MCPLD Chart 52
Return on Investment: Mesa County Public Library District
Instruction Received in the Library, by Education Level
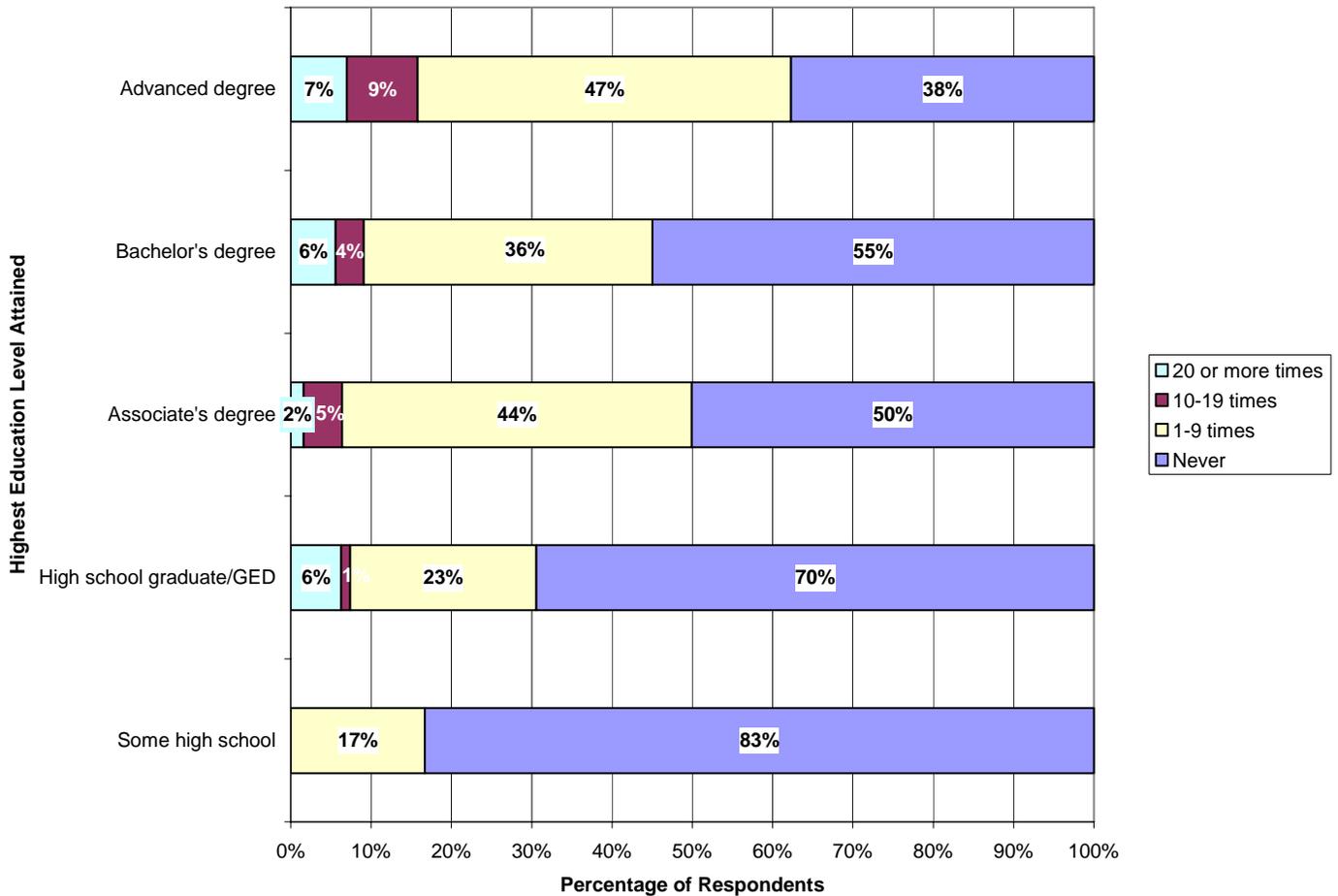
- In general, frequency of library instruction received increased with educational attainment (see MCPLD Chart 52).
- Respondents with some high school experience but without a high school diploma were least likely to have received library instruction; eighty-three percent reported never having received such instruction during the previous year.
- The only group with more than half (63%) of respondents reporting having received library instruction was the group holding advanced degrees.

Mesa County Public Library District

How many times did you connect to a Colorado public library remotely during the last twelve months?

MCPLD Chart 53
Return on Investment: Mesa County Public Library District
Remote Access to a Colorado Public Library, by Gender
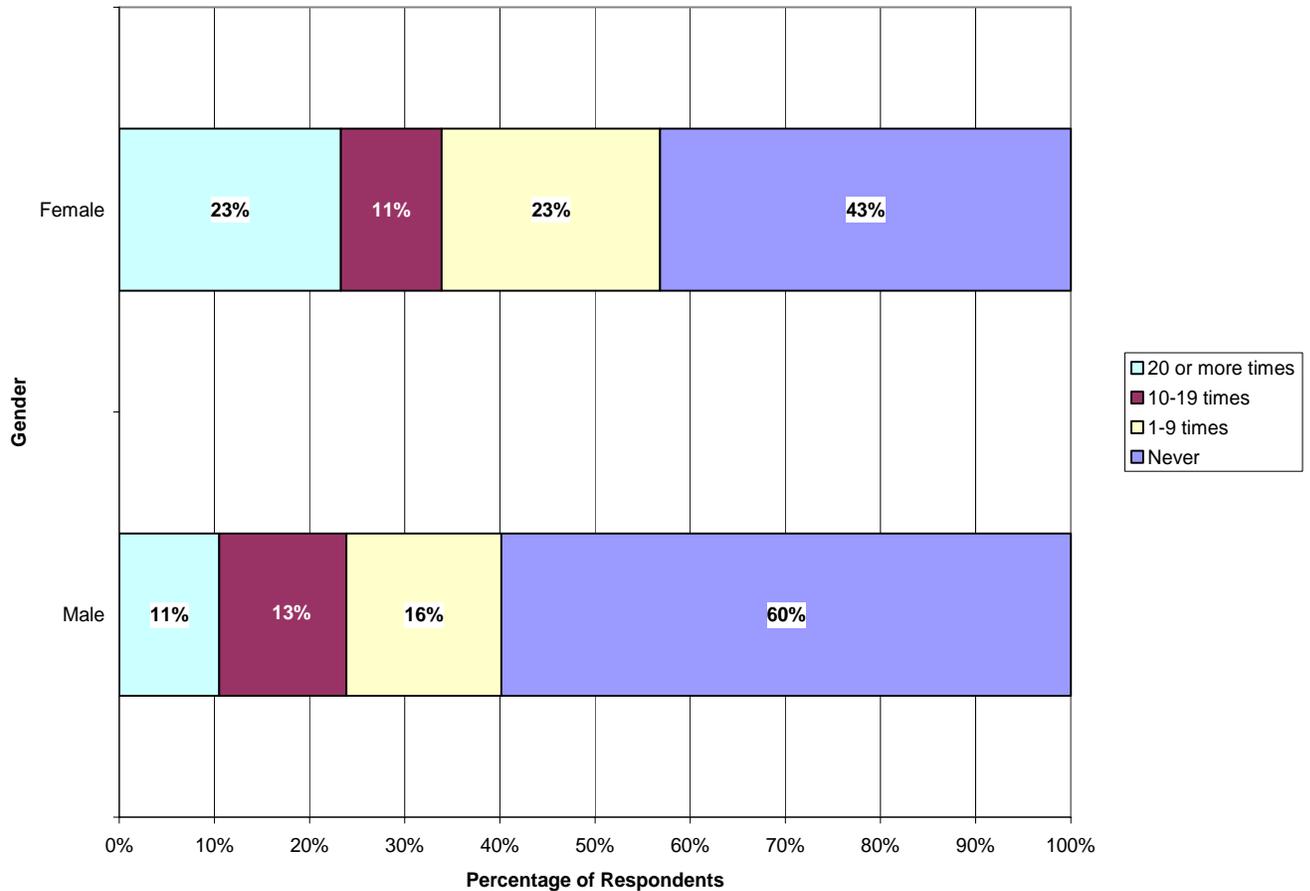
- Over half (60%) of male respondents reported never having accessed a Colorado library remotely during the previous year (see MCPLD Chart 53).
- Almost one in four (23%) female respondents reported having connected remotely twenty or more times during the prior twelve months.

Mesa County Public Library District

MCPLD Chart 54
Return on Investment: Mesa County Public Library District
Remote Access to a Colorado Public Library, by Age

- In general, remote access to Colorado libraries decreased as age increased (see MCPLD Chart 54).
- Over a quarter (28%) of respondents under 18 years old reported accessing a library remotely twenty or more times during the previous year.
- The age group least likely to have accessed a Colorado library remotely was over 65, with sixty-eight percent reporting never having done so during the prior twelve months.

Mesa County Public Library District

Conclusions

Data provided here may not apply to the entire clientele of the Mesa County Public Library District. Still, a few interesting trends are evident:

- Men were more likely than women to read periodicals in the library, whereas women were more likely than men to report receiving instruction in the library. Women were also more likely to report connecting to a Colorado library remotely during the previous year.
- Respondents under 18 years old were the most likely age group to read periodicals in the library.
- Respondents aged 18-29 were least likely to report receiving library instruction.
- Younger respondents, especially those under 18, were most likely to access a Colorado public library remotely.
- Respondents who were unemployed were most likely to read periodicals in the library, whereas those earning the most annual income ($100,000 or more) were least likely to read periodicals in the library.
- Respondents with the highest level of educational attainment reported receiving the most instruction in the library. Amount of instruction decreased steadily as educational attainment decreased.

.

Notes:

Percentages were rounded to the nearest whole number; in some cases percentages do not add up to 100%.

Montrose Library District

The Return on Investment Study conducted by Library Research Service revealed some significant demographic data among the libraries that participated. The following questions provided significant statistics for Montrose Library District after cross-tabulation analysis was conducted. These demographic highlights are those that are most significant for Montrose Library District, and may not be comparable to demographics for other libraries participating in the survey.

How many times have you checked out a book from the library during the last twelve months?

MLD Chart 55
Return on Investment: Montrose Library District
Books Checked Out, by Age
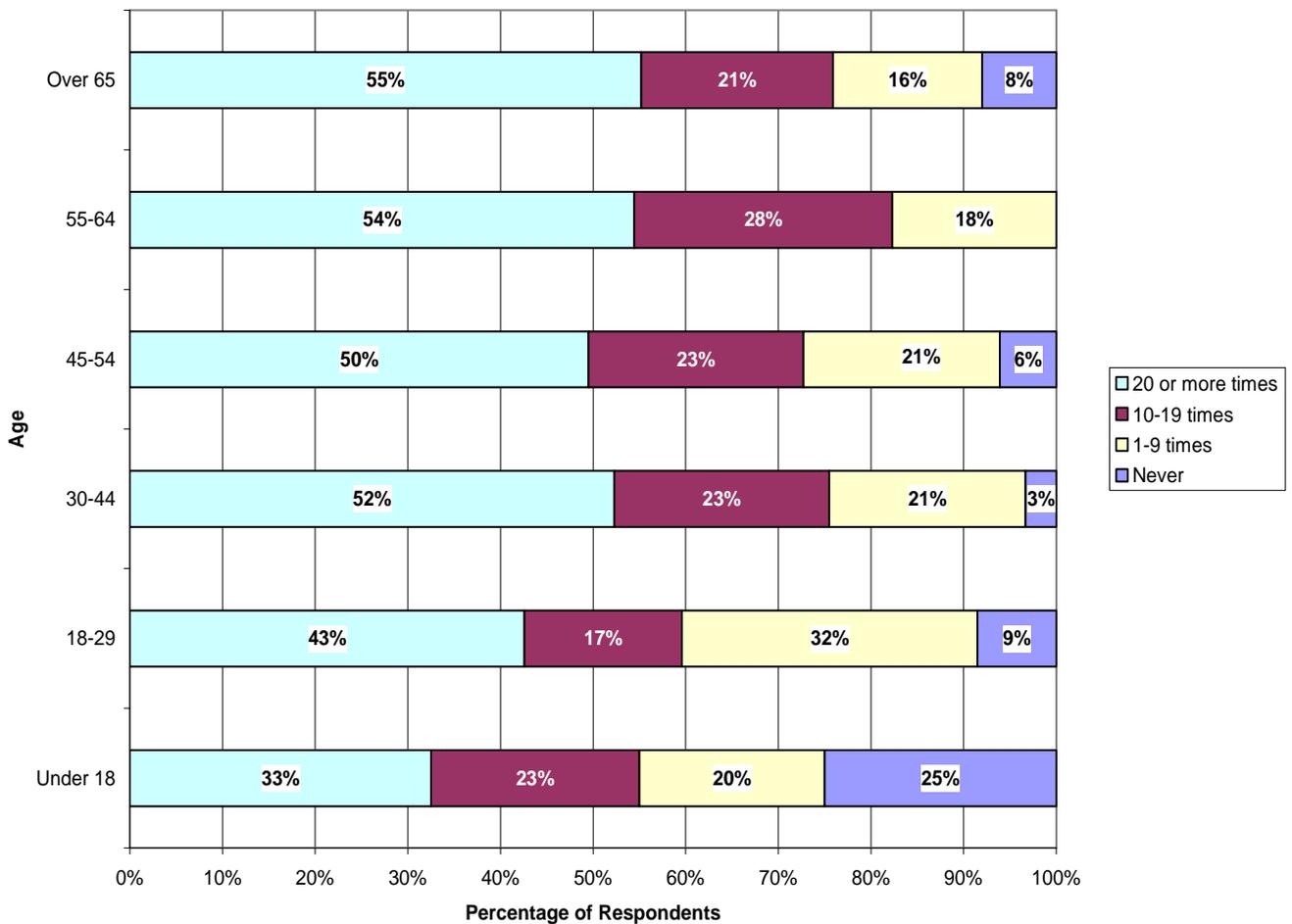
- The number of books checked out generally increased as age increased (see MLD Chart 55).
- Over half (55%) of respondents over 65 years old reported having checked books out twenty or more times during the previous year.
- The group least likely to check books out was under 18 years old, with one quarter reporting never having checked out a book during the prior twelve months.

Montrose Library District

MLD Chart 56
Return on Investment: Montrose Library District
Books Checked Out, by Education Level
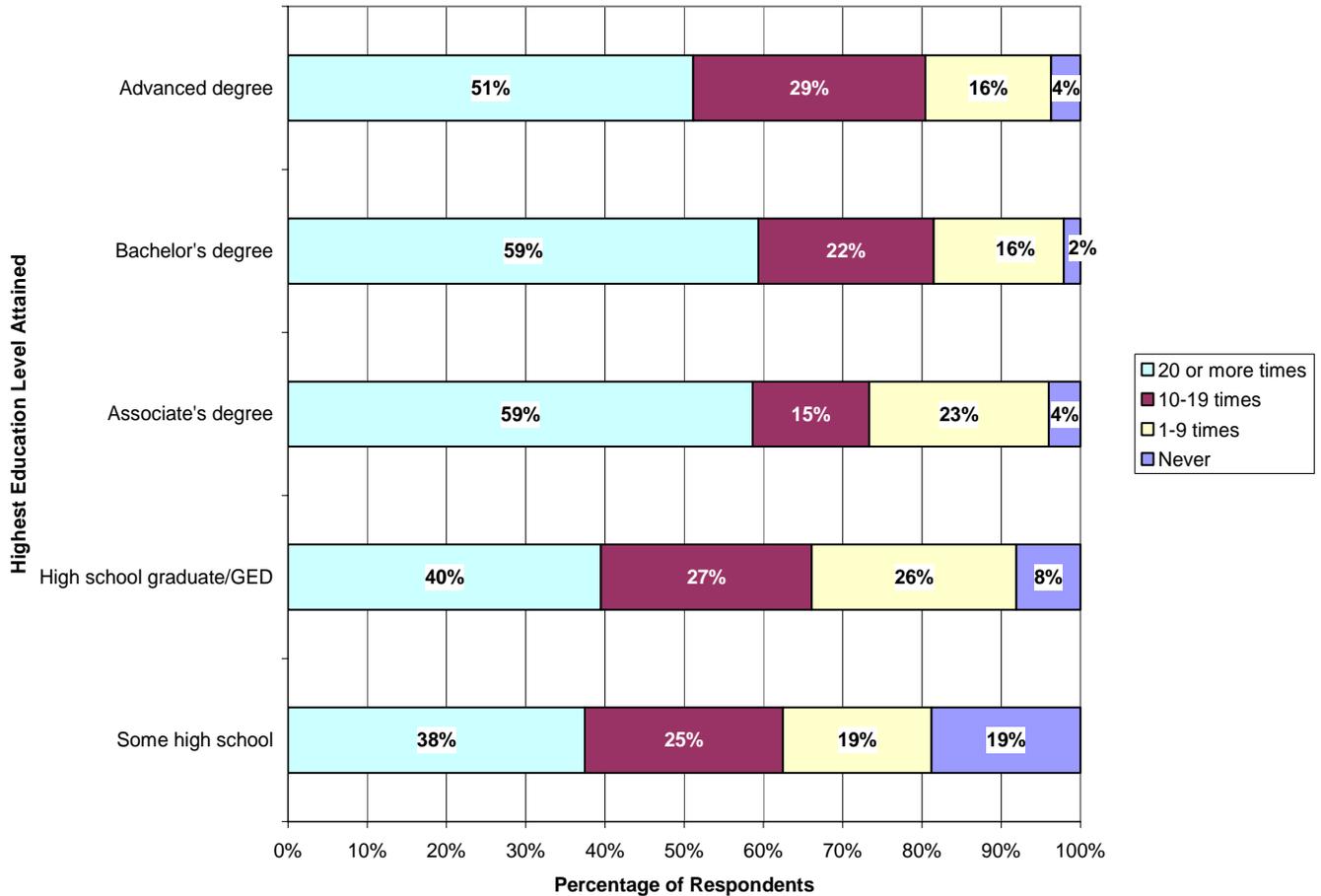
- In general, frequency of book checkouts increased as educational attainment increased, with a slight decrease among those having earned advanced degrees (see MLD Chart 56).
- The group least likely to have checked out a book during the previous year had completed some high school, but did not hold a high school diploma.
- Over half of all respondents holding an associate's degree or higher reported having checked books out from the library twenty or more times during the previous twelve months.

Montrose Library District

How many times have you checked out a DVD or tape from the library during the last twelve months?

MLD Chart 57
Return on Investment: Montrose Library District
DVD or Video Checkouts, by Gender
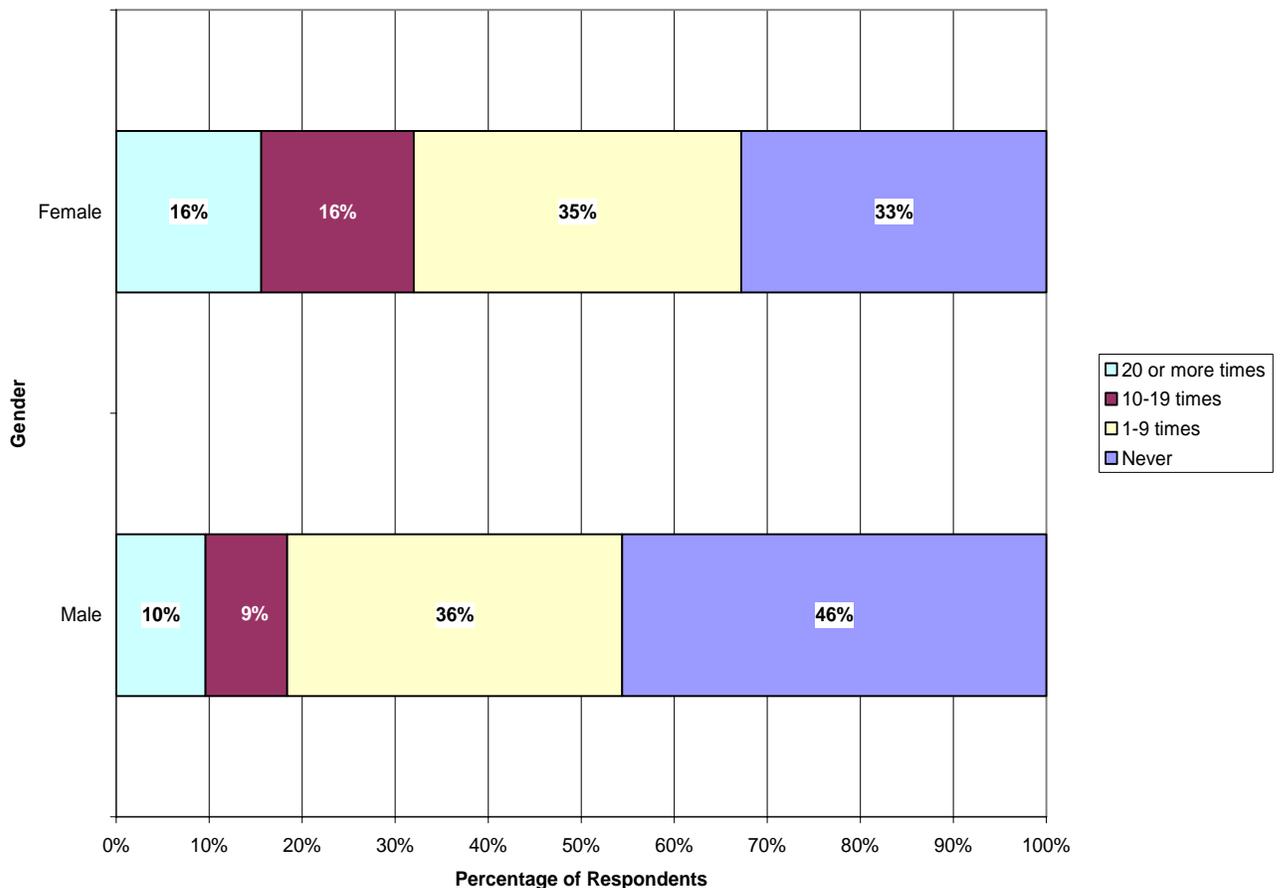
- Women were more likely than men to report having checked out a DVD or video from the library during the previous year (see MLD Chart 57).
- Almost half (46%) of male respondents reported never having checked out a DVD or video from the library during the prior twelve months.
- Sixteen percent of women reported having checked out a DVD or tape twenty or more times during the prior year.

Montrose Library District

MLD Chart 58
Return on Investment: Montrose Library District
DVD or Video Checkouts, by Age
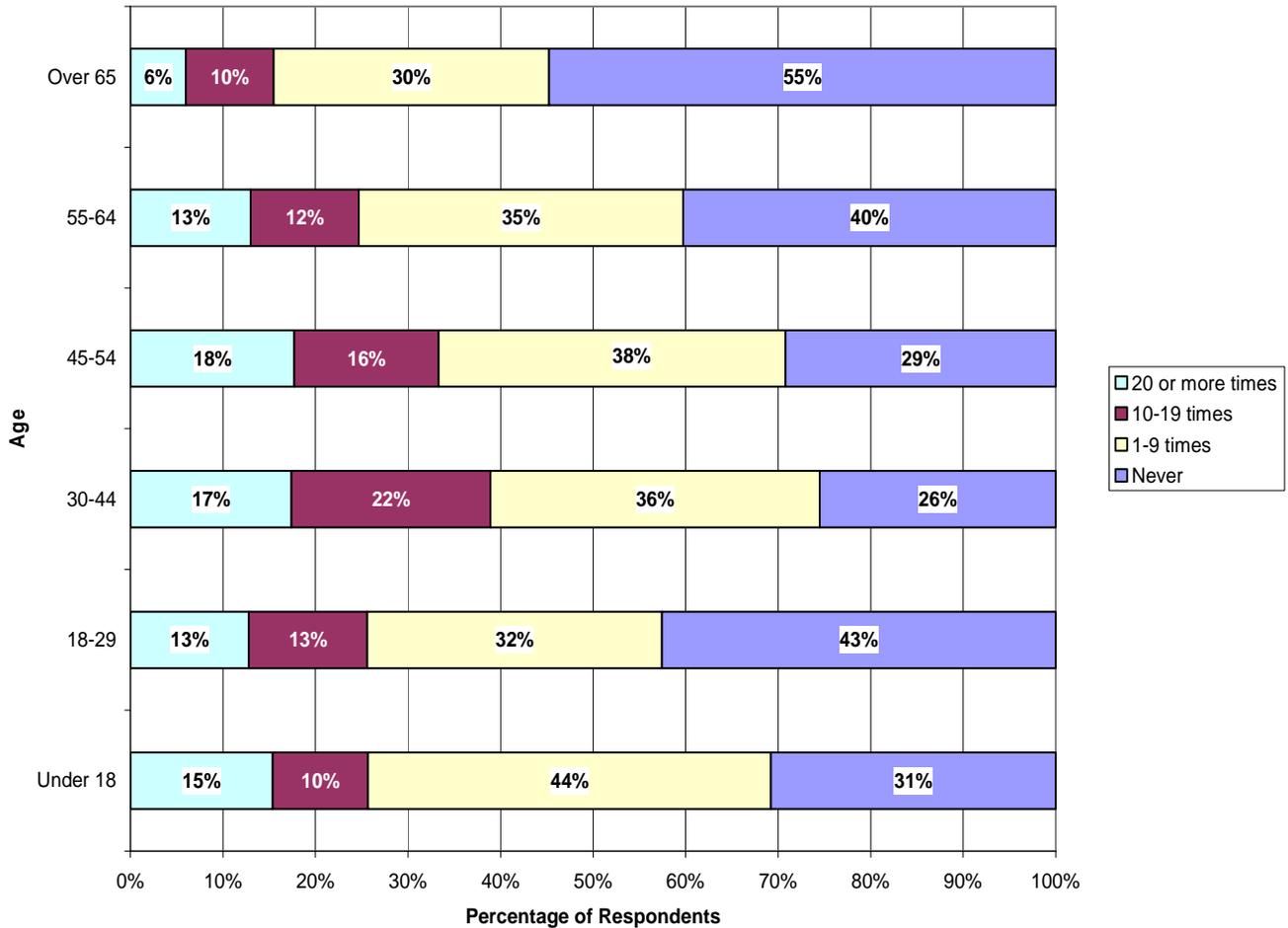
- After age 30, DVD or tape checkouts decreased as age increased (see MLD Chart 58).
- Over half (55%) of respondents over age 65 reported never having checked out a DVD or tape during the previous year.
- Respondents aged 30-44 were most likely to have checked out a DVD or tape during the prior twelve months.

Montrose Library District

How many times have you used a library computer to access software, free information on the Internet, or research resources during the past twelve months?

MLD Chart 59
Return on Investment: Montrose Library District
Use of Library Computers, by Age
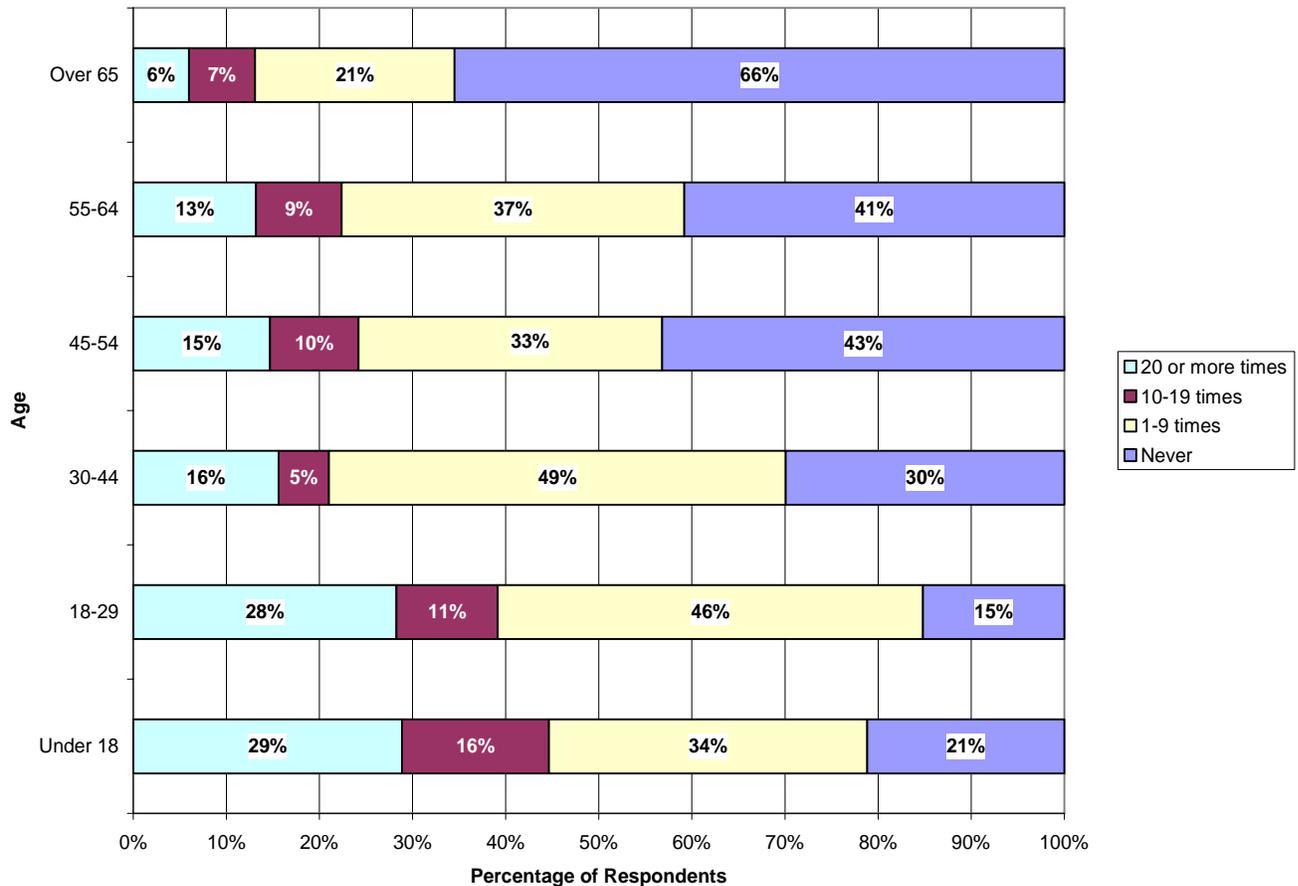
- In general, use of library computers decreased as age increased (see MLD Chart 59).
- Over half (66%) of respondents over 65 years old reported never having accessed a library in the computer during the previous year.
- Almost one third (29%) of respondents under age 18 reported having used a computer in the library twenty or more times during the previous twelve months.

Montrose Library District

MLD Chart 60
Return on Investment: Montrose Library District
Use of Library Computers, by Education Level
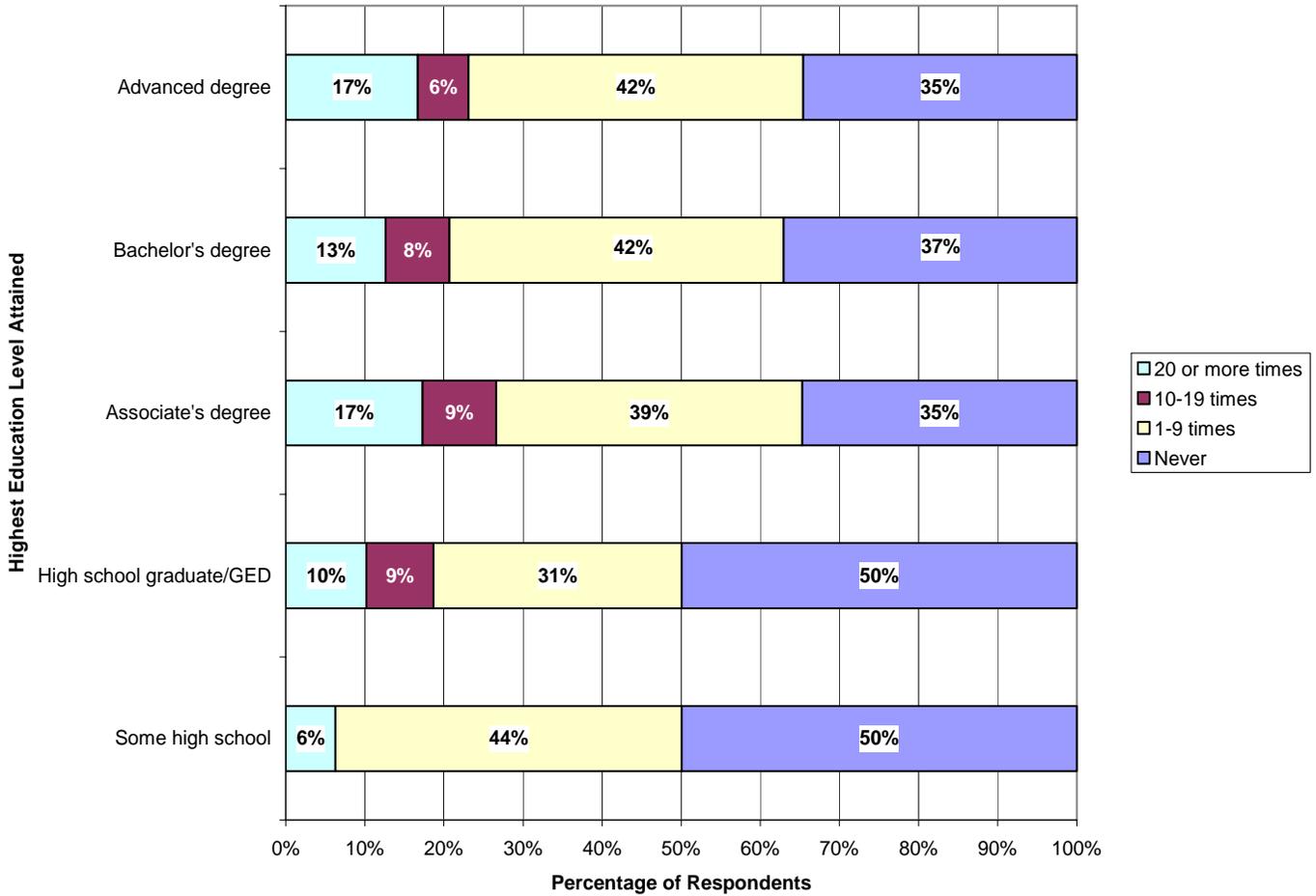
- Half of respondents with either some high school or with high school diplomas/equivalences reported never having used a computer in the library during the previous year (see MLD Chart 60).
- Respondents holding advanced degrees and associate's degrees were most likely to have used a computer in the library, with seventeen percent from both groups reporting access more than twenty times during the prior year.

Montrose Library District

How many times did you connect to a Colorado public library remotely during the last twelve months?

MLD Chart 61
Return on Investment: Montrose Library District
Remote Access to a Colorado Public Library, by Age
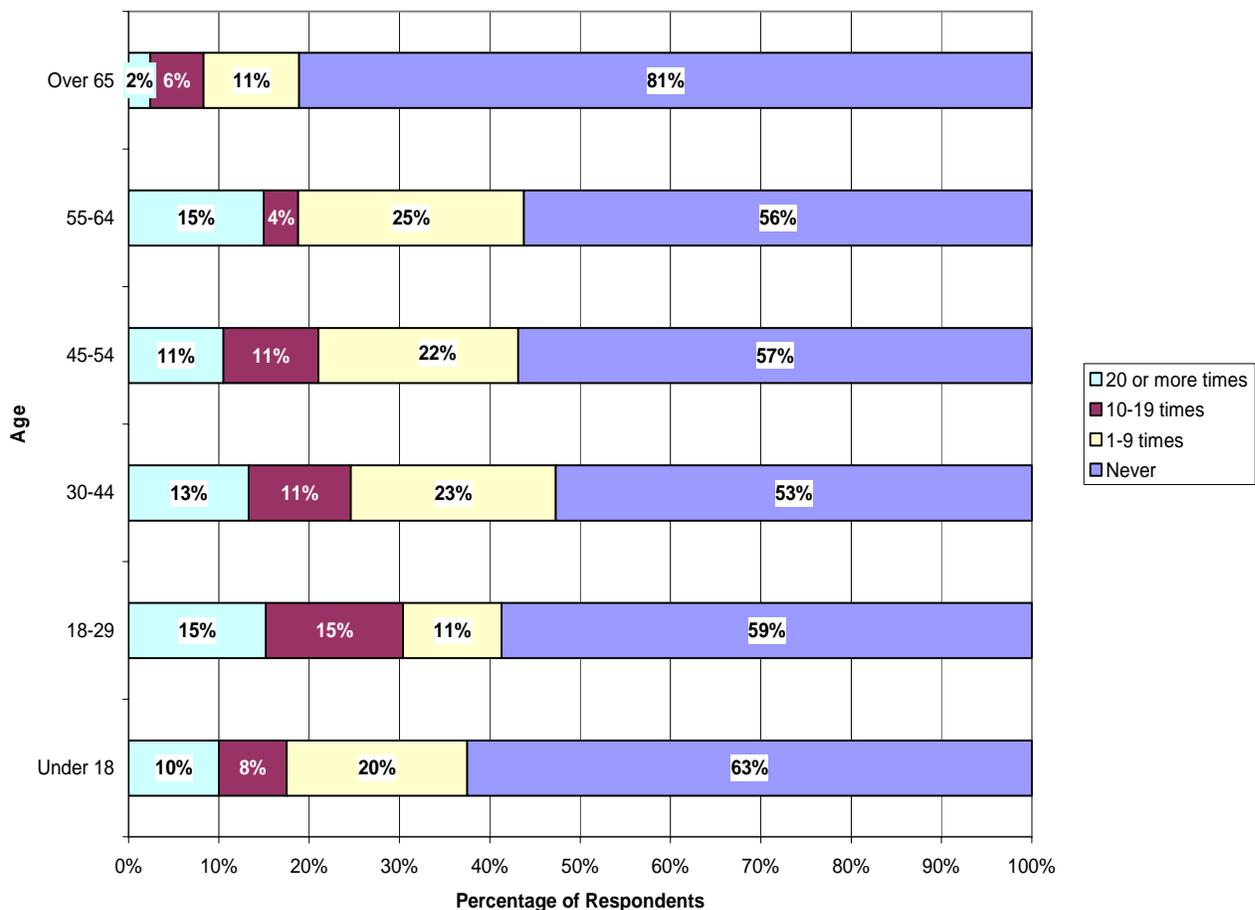
- Most respondents in all age groups reported never having accessed a Colorado public library remotely during the previous year (MLD Chart 61).
- The age group least likely to have accessed a library remotely during the prior year was the group aged 65 or older.
- Respondents aged 30-44 were most likely to have accessed a library remotely, with forty-seven percent reporting having accessed the library website at least once during the prior twelve months.

Montrose Library District

MLD Chart 62

Return on Investment: Montrose Library District
Remote Access to a Colorado Public Library, by Education Level
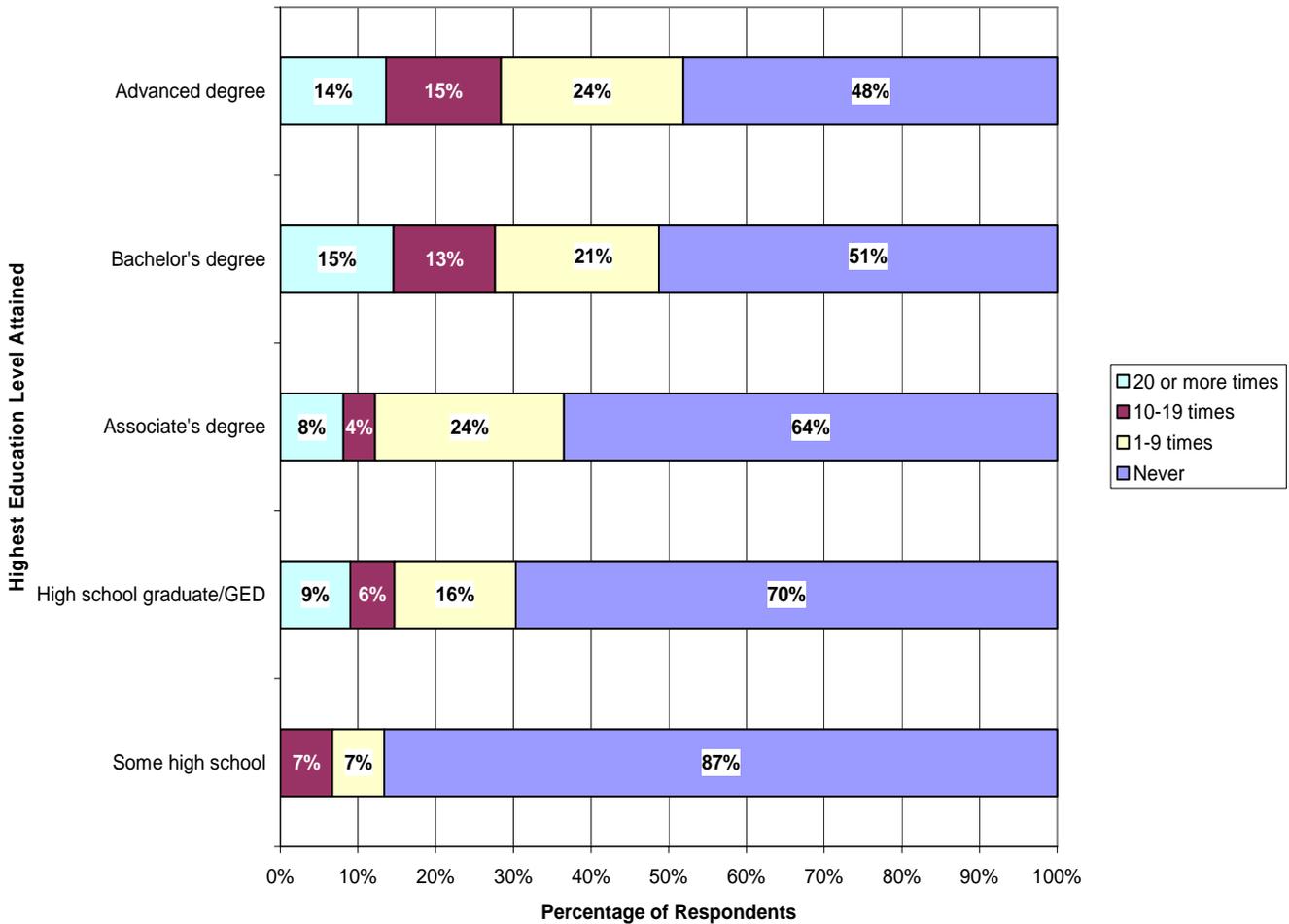
- Remote access to Colorado public libraries increased with educational attainment (see MLD Chart 62).
- Those holding advanced degrees were most likely to have accessed a library website remotely during the prior twelve months.
- Eighty-seven percent of respondents with some high school experience, but without diplomas, reported never having accessed a Colorado public library remotely during the previous year.

Montrose Library District

<u>Conclusions</u>

Data provided here may not apply to the entire clientele of the Montrose Library District. Still, a few interesting trends are evident:

- Older respondents were more likely to have checked out a book during the previous year, whereas younger respondents were more likely to have used a library computer. Older respondents (especially those over 65 years old) were least likely to have checked out DVDs or tapes, and were also least likely to have accessed a library website remotely. This suggests that older respondents continue to use the public library in more traditional ways, whereas younger respondents may be inclined to access technology and new media formats.
- As educational attainment increased, so did the number of books checked out and the likelihood of accessing a Colorado public library remotely. Similarly, an increase in educational attainment usually also meant greater likelihood of computer use in the library.
- Women were more likely than men to check out non-traditional media formats such as DVDs or tapes.

Notes:

Percentages were rounded to the nearest whole number; in some cases percentages do not add up to 100%.

Rangeview Library District

The Return on Investment Study conducted by Library Research Service revealed some significant demographic data among the libraries that participated. The following questions provided significant statistics for Rangeview Library District after cross-tabulation analysis was conducted. These demographic highlights are those that are most significant for Rangeview Library District, and may not be comparable to demographics for other libraries participating in the survey.

About how many times have you visited the library within the last year?

RLD Chart 63
Return on Investment: Rangeview Library District
Library Visits, by Age
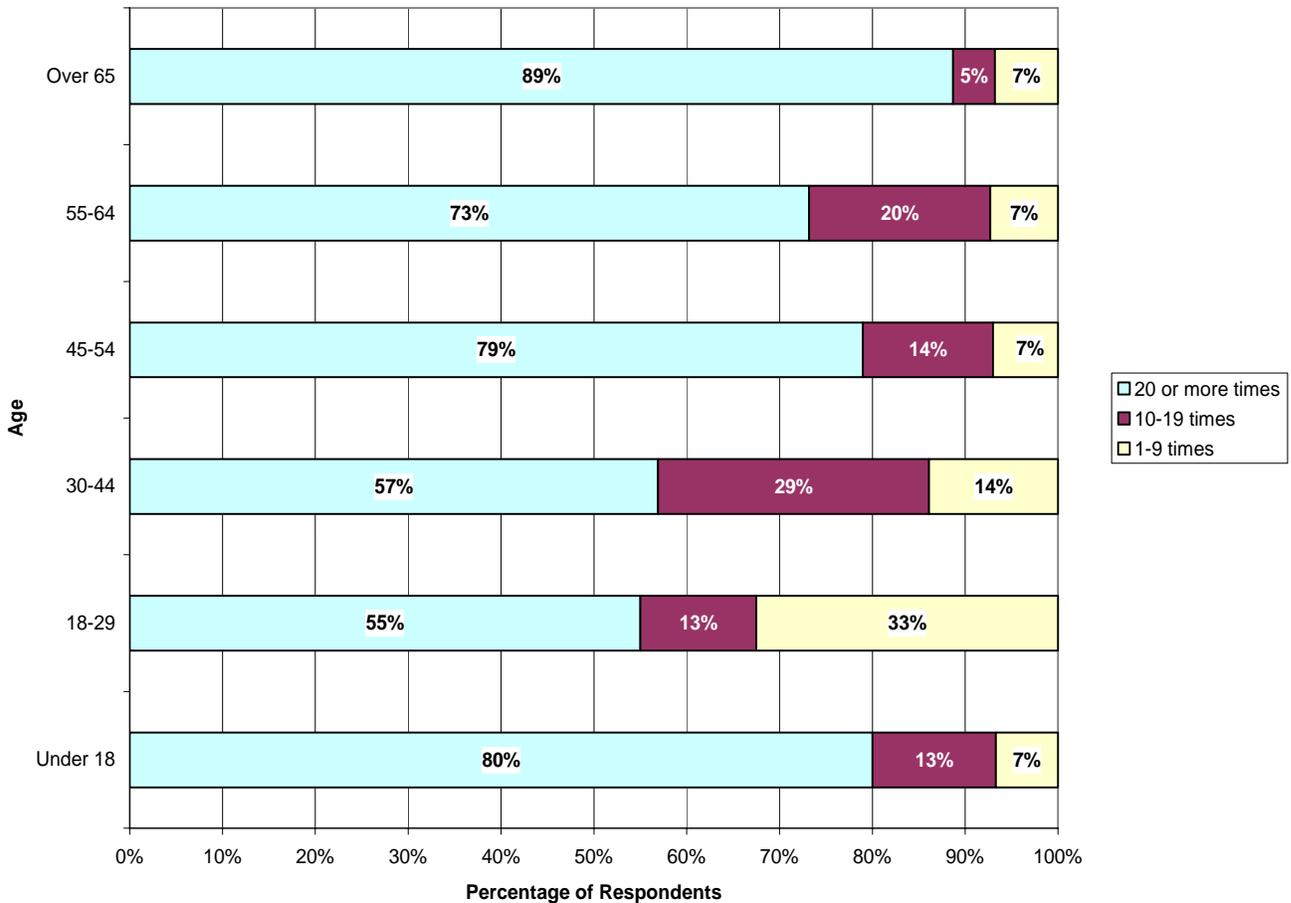
- Over half of respondents in all age groups reported visiting their library twenty or more times during the prior year (see RLD Chart 63).
- The two age groups most likely to have visited the library twenty or more times during the previous year were the oldest (over 65) and youngest (under 18).

Rangeview Library District

RLD Chart 64
Return on Investment: Rangeview Library District
Library Visits, by Ethnicity
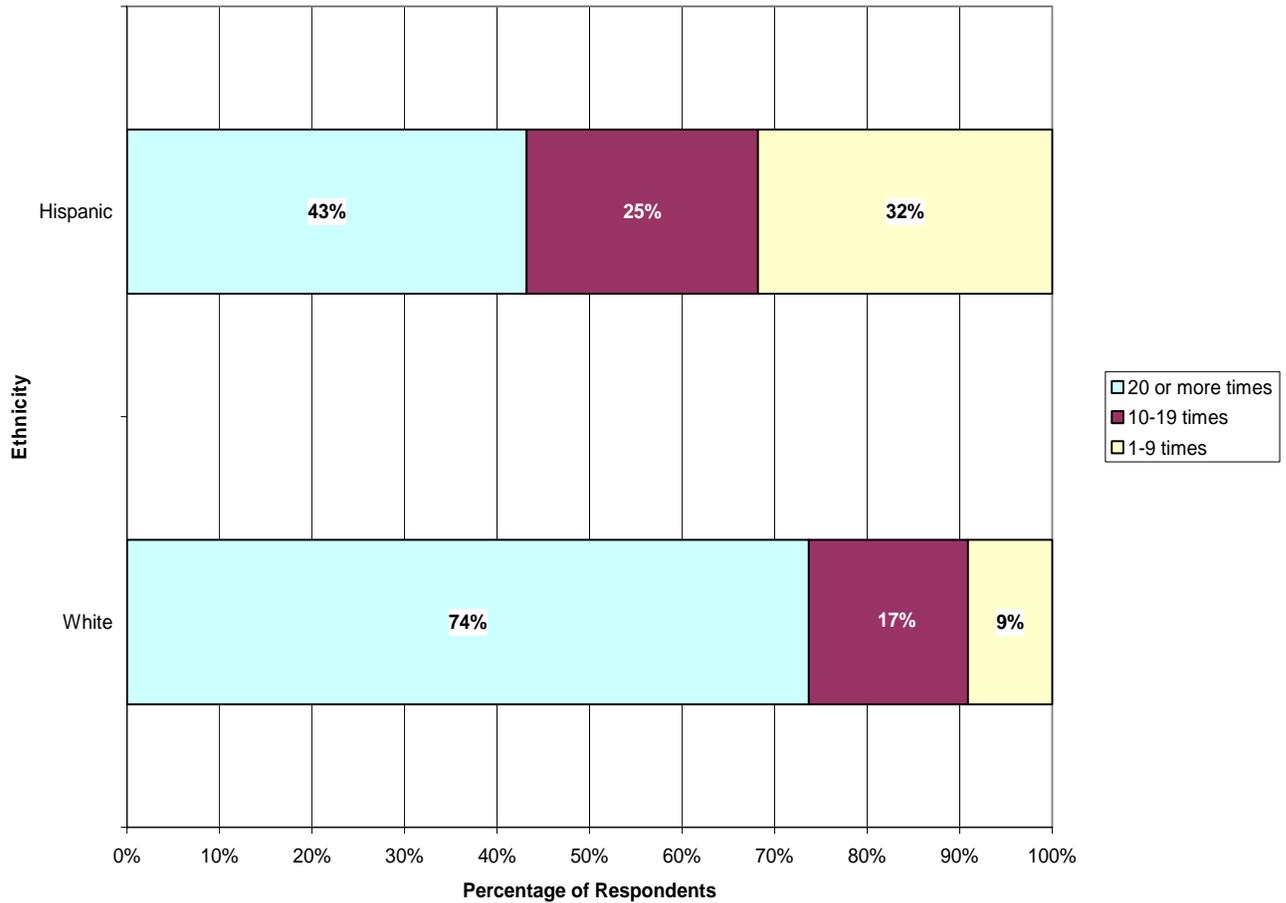
- Respondents identifying as white were more likely to have visited the library frequently than respondents identifying as Hispanic (see RLD Chart 64).
- Almost three-fourths (74%) of respondents identifying as white reported having visited the library twenty or more times during the previous year.

Rangeview Library District

How much time, if any, did you last spend using a library computer for access to free Internet information?

RLD Chart 65
Return on Investment: Rangeview Library District
Time Spent on Internet, by Age
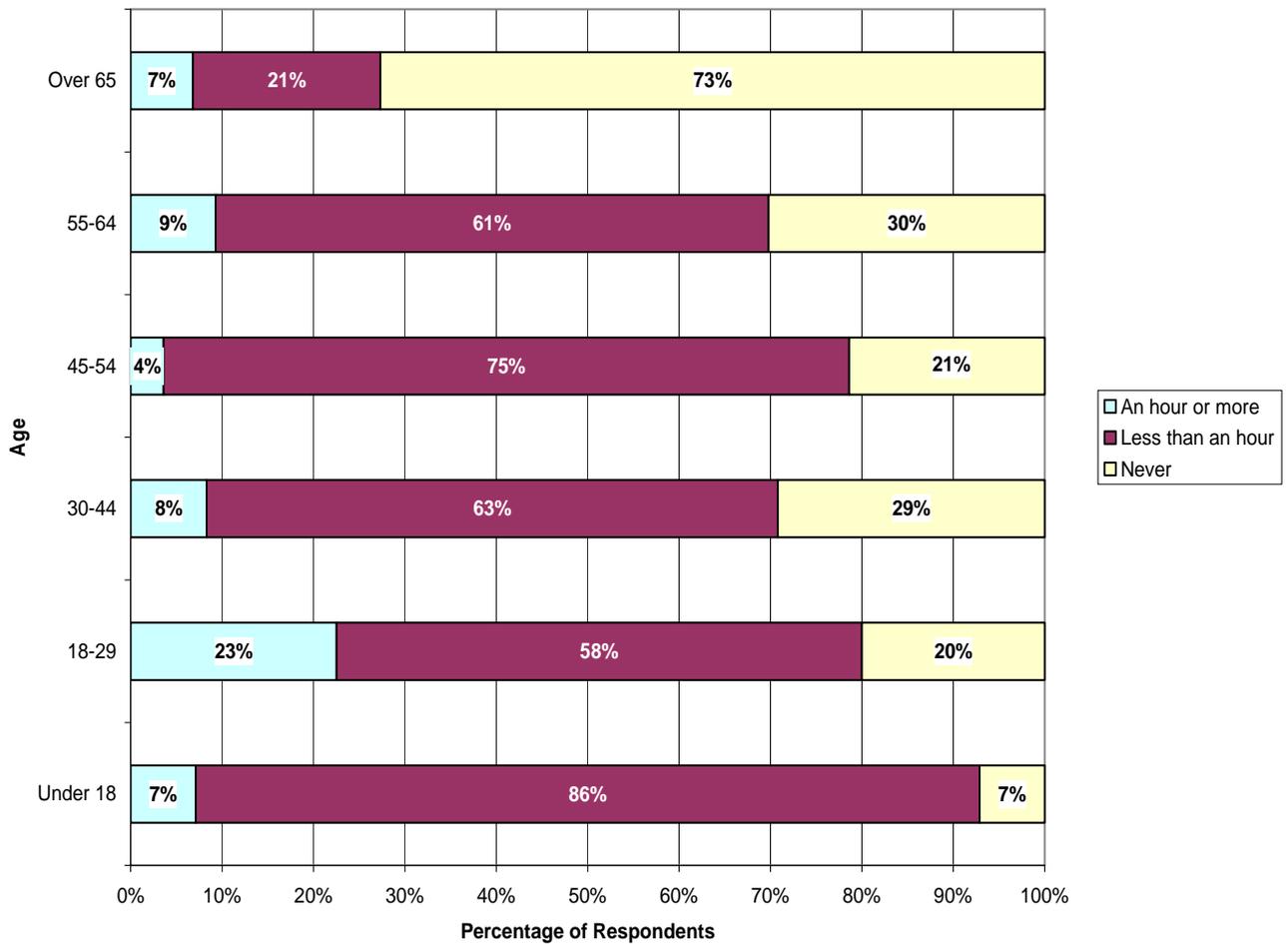
- In general, the amount of time spent on the Internet at the library decreased as age increased (see RLD Chart 65).
- Almost three out of four respondents over 65 reported never having accessed the Internet in the library during the previous year.
- Respondents under 18 years old were most likely to have accessed the Internet at the library during the previous year, with only seven percent reporting never having done so.

Rangeview Library District

RLD Chart 66

Return on Investment: Rangeview Library District
Time Spent on Internet, by Ethnicity
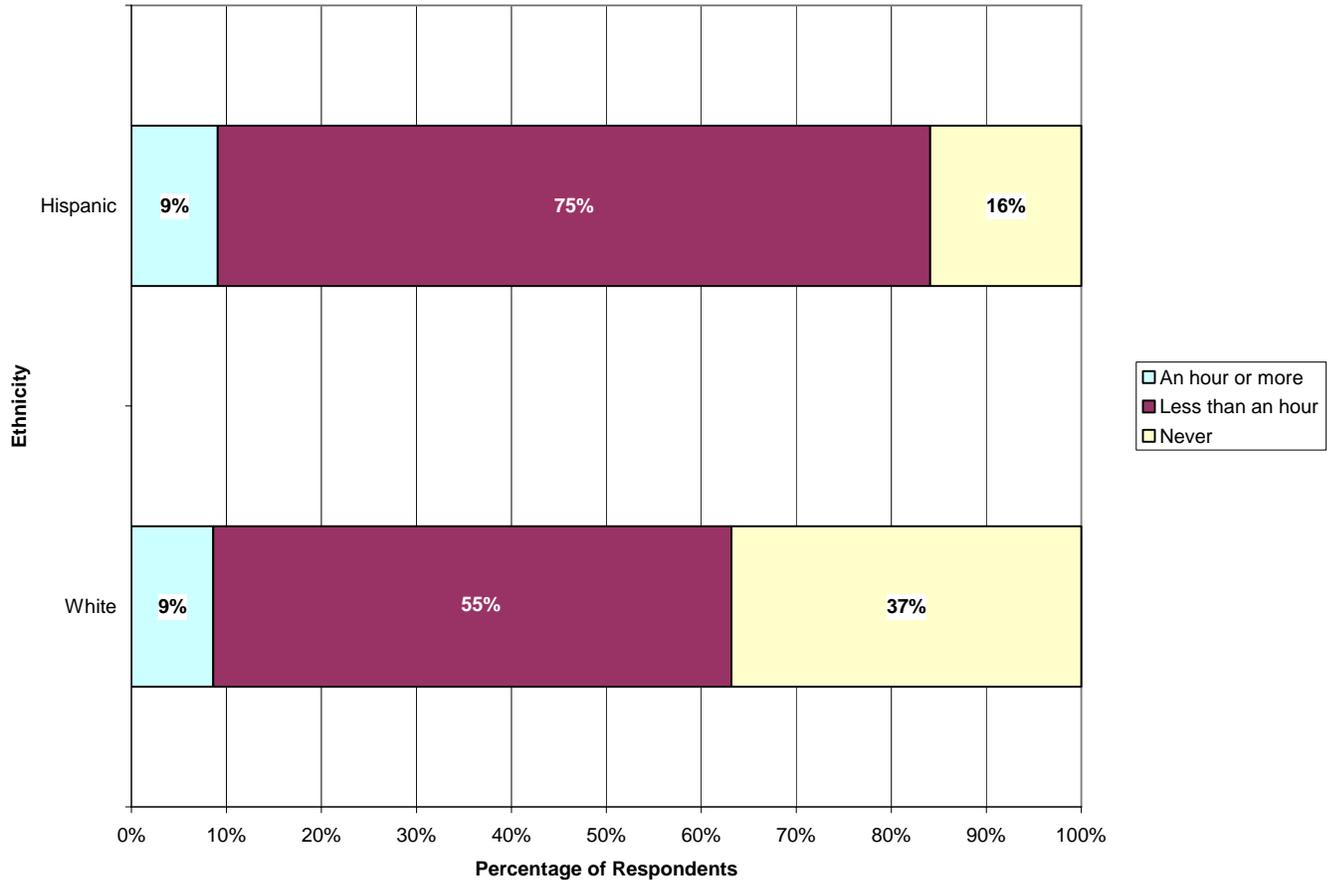
- Respondents identifying as Hispanic were more likely to spend time on the Internet at the library than respondents who identified as white (see RLD Chart 66).
- Nine percent of both white and Hispanic respondents reported accessing the Internet at the library for an hour or more.
- Only sixteen percent of respondents identifying as Hispanic reported never accessing the Internet at the public library during the previous year.

Rangeview Library District

How many times have you checked out a book from the library during the last twelve months?

RLD Chart 67

Return on Investment: Rangeview Library District
Books Checked Out, by Age
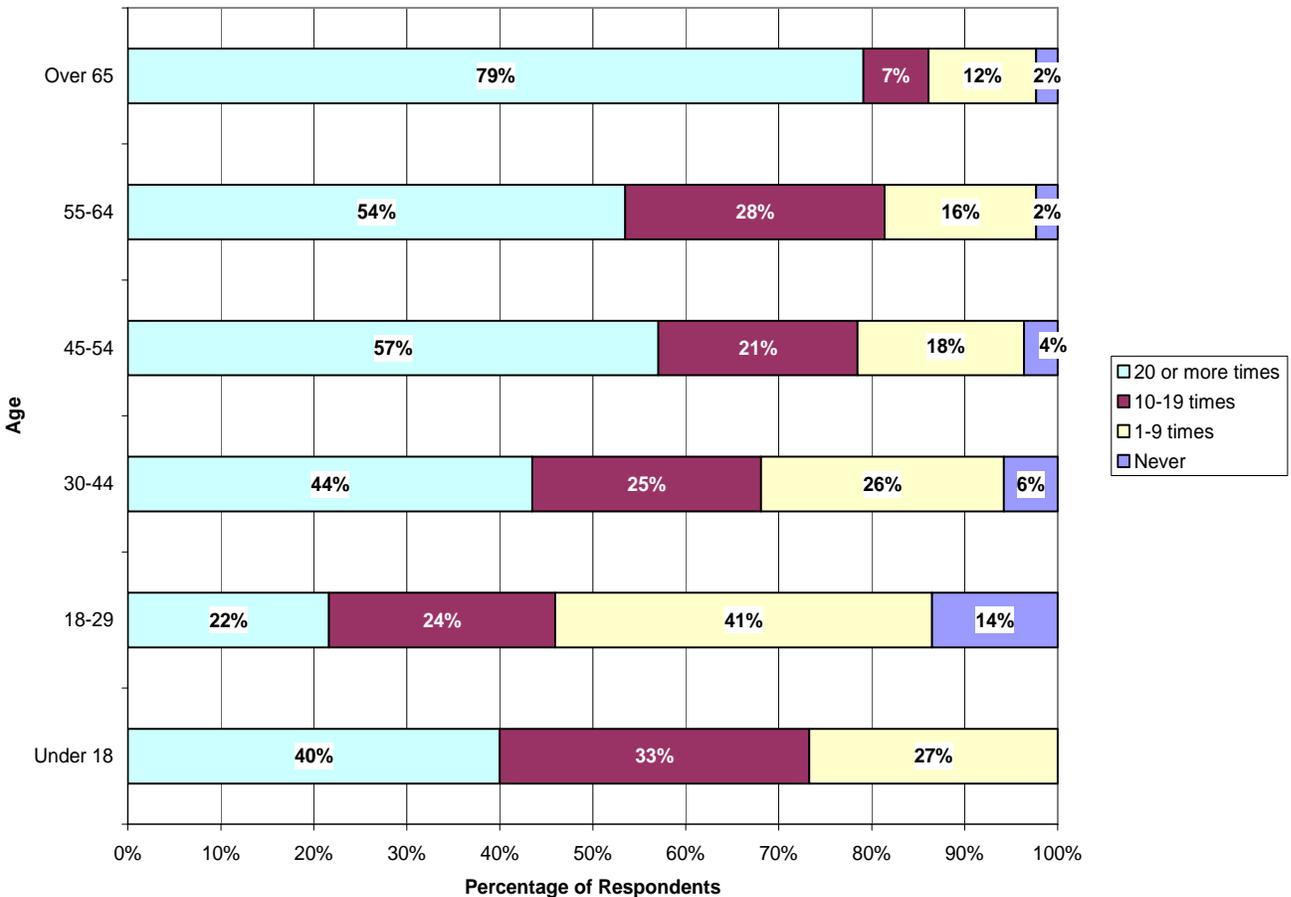
- In general, the frequency of book checkouts increased with age (see RLD Chart 67).
- Over three-fourths (79%) of respondents over 65 years old reported checking out books twenty or more times during the previous year.
- The group least likely to have checked out a book during the previous year was aged 18-29.

Rangeview Library District

RLD Chart 68
Return on Investment: Rangeview Library District
Books Checked Out, by Ethnicity
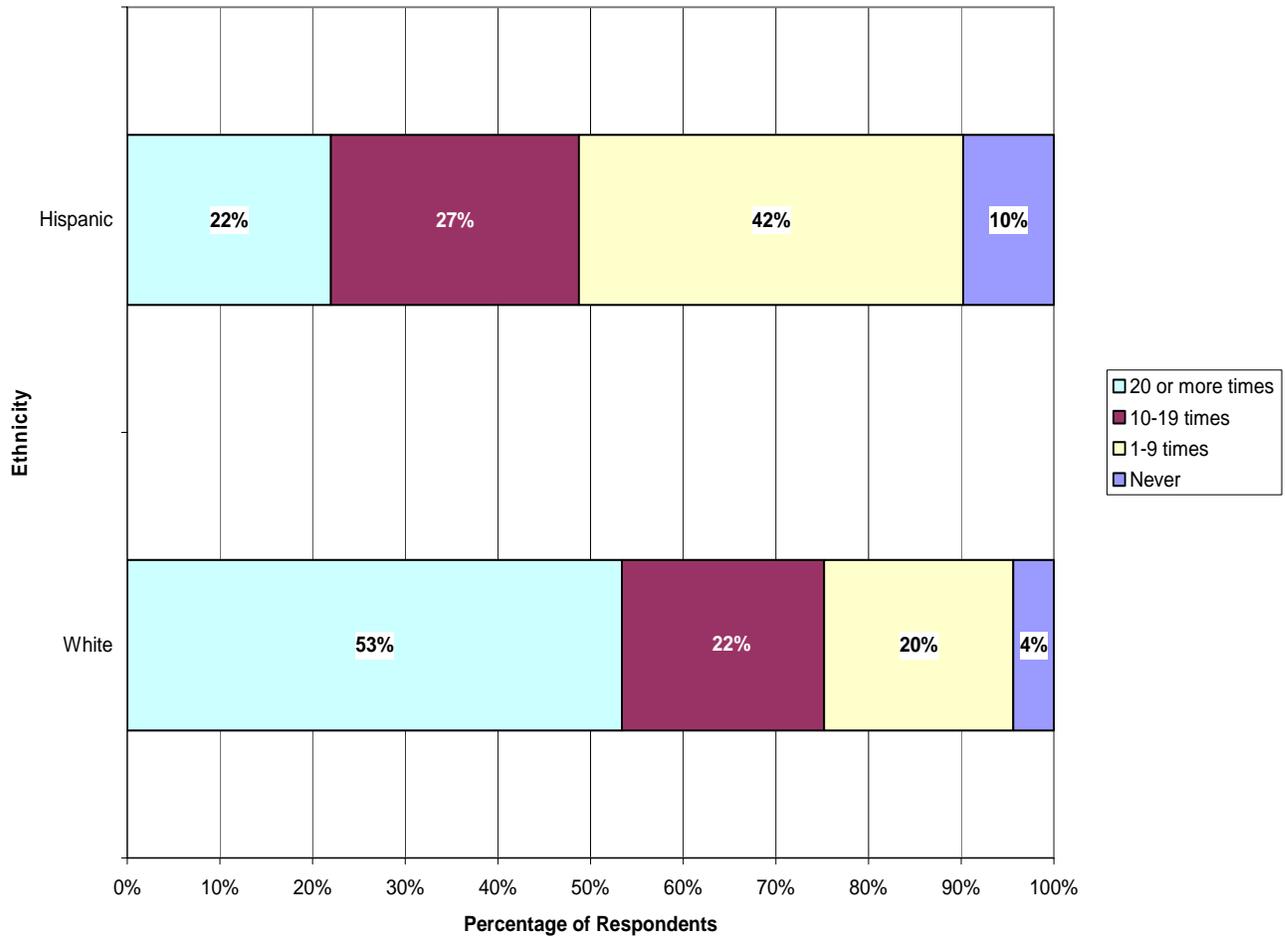
- More than half (53%) of respondents identifying as white reported checking out books twenty or more times during the previous year RLD Chart 68).
- Ten percent of respondents identifying as Hispanic reported never having checked out a book during the prior year. Four percent of respondents identifying as white reported the same.

Rangeview Library District

How many times did you connect to a Colorado public library remotely during the last twelve months?

RLD Chart 69
Return on Investment: Rangeview Library District
Remote Access to a Colorado Public Library, by Age
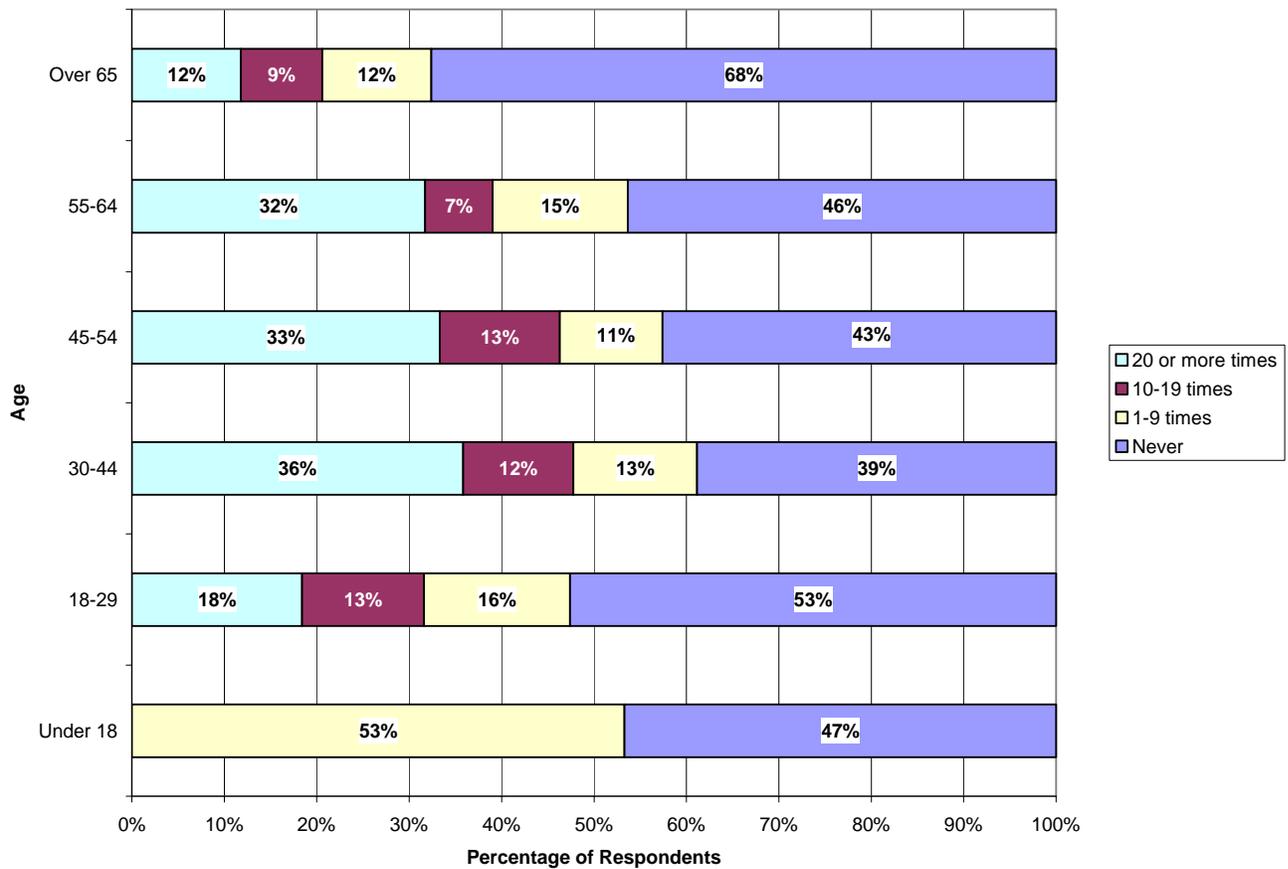
- In general, remote access to Colorado public libraries decreased with age (see RLD Chart 69).
- Respondents over 65 years old were least likely to have accessed a Colorado public library website remotely, with sixty-eight percent reporting never having done so during the previous year.
- The group aged 30-44 was most likely to have accessed a library website remotely, with thirty-six percent reporting having done so twenty or more times during the prior twelve months.

Rangeview Library District

RLD Chart 70
Return on Investment: Rangeview Library District
Remote Access to a Colorado Public Library, by Household Income
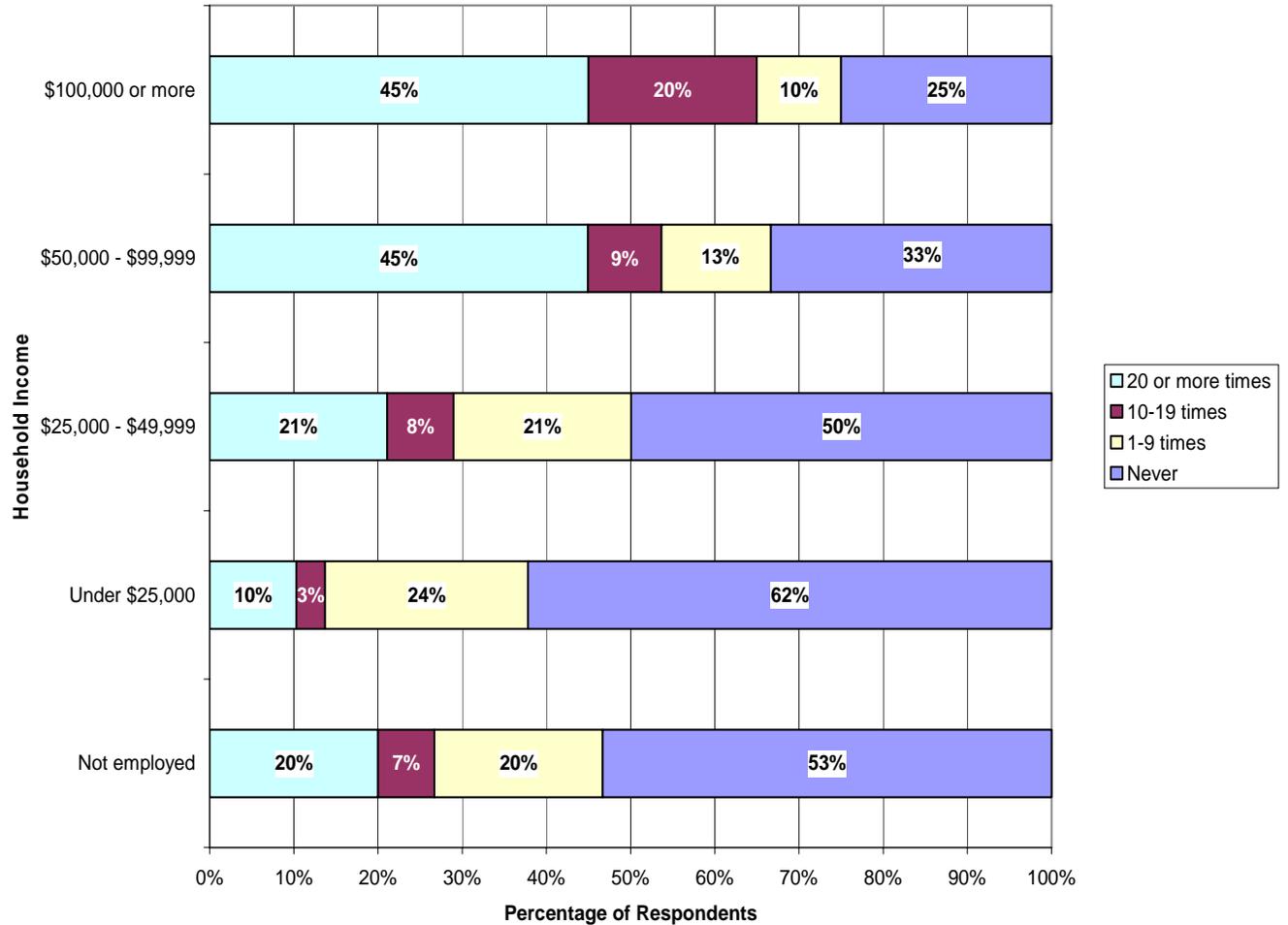
- In general, remote access to Colorado public libraries increased as annual income increased (see RLD Chart 70).
- Those earning the most income ($100,000 or more) were most likely to have ever accessed the library website remotely during the previous year.
- The group least likely to have accessed a Colorado public library remotely was the group earning under $25,000 annually; more than half (62%) had never accessed the library's website outside the library.

Rangeview Library District

Conclusions

Data provided here may not apply to the entire clientele of the Rangeview Library District. Still, a few interesting trends are evident:

- All age groups were very likely to have visited the library twenty or more times during the previous year.
- Older respondents were less likely to spend time on the Internet than younger respondents. Similarly, older respondents were less likely to access a Colorado public library website from outside the library.
- Older respondents were more likely to check out books from the library.
- Respondents identifying as white were more frequent visitors to the library, and also checked out more books than respondents identifying as Hispanic. Respondents identifying as Hispanic, however, spent a greater amount of time on the Internet in the library than those identifying as white.
- Respondents earning more annual income were more likely to access the public library's website from outside the library.

.

Notes:

Percentages were rounded to the nearest whole number; in some cases percentages do not add up to 100%.

Respondents may overlap groups, especially ethnicities. Respondents were encouraged to mark as many categories as described them. Similarly, certain ethnic groups were discussed whereas others were not. This is because statistically significant numbers from only a few ethnic groups responded from this library.

Appendix C

What's It Worth To You?
A Return on Investment Study of Selected Colorado Public Libraries

Library Survey

Library Name _____

For the latest available complete year, please report circulation for the following formats. Include circulation from all outlets—central library, branches, and bookmobile(s).

Format	Number of transactions
Books (print volumes)	
Audio books (books on tape/CD)	
E-books	
Periodicals (magazines & newspapers)	
Music CDs/cassettes	
DVDs/video cassettes	
Other formats	
Total circulation	

For the latest available complete year, please report how much your library spent with vendors and contractors located within your library's legal service area, in Colorado, and elsewhere.

Category of Vendor/Contractor Expenditures	Expenditures by Type of Vendor/Contractor		
	Vendors/ contractors located within your library's legal service area	Vendors/ contractors located elsewhere in Colorado	All other vendors/ contractors
Human resources (other than salaries/wages and benefits for regular staff—include temporary staff costs, and costs associated with recruiting and training staff, including trainers' fees, workshop fees, individual association dues, and conference registration fees, if paid or reimbursed by library)			
Library collection (physical formats and electronic information resources, such as licensed databases)			
Information technology (include hardware, integrated library system, other software, Internet Service Provider—but not licensed databases and other online information resources)			
Utilities (electricity, natural gas, basic telephone service)			
Supplies & equipment (e.g., office supplies, photocopiers, postal meters, postage)			
Facilities management (custodial, security, bookmobile)			
Other products and services (e.g., organizational dues and fees, insurance, accountants, lawyers, program speakers' fees)			
Total			

Appendix D

What's It Worth to You?

A Return-on-Investment Study of
Selected Colorado Public Libraries

The Colorado State Library and your local public library are cooperating on an important study to measure the benefits and value of public libraries to Coloradans. Your participation is essential to the success of this project.

Please take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire and submit it by any one of the following methods:

Leave the survey in your library's designated drop-off area.	Take the survey online at http://www.LRS.org/ROI.	Mail it using your own envelope to: Debra Gettings Library Research Service 201 East Colfax Avenue Suite 309 Denver, Colorado 80203 *(Please mail within 2 days if possible)*

All responses are anonymous.

If you have questions about the study, please ask a staff member at this public library.

This is a particularly important study about your library, and your participation will be beneficial to public library users throughout Colorado and beyond.

We appreciate your time and input.

Thank you.

Mark the name of the library for which you are responding:

- ❑ Cortez Public Library
- ❑ Denver Public Library
- ❑ Douglas County Libraries
- ❑ Eagle Valley Library District
- ❑ Fort Morgan Public Library
- ❑ Mesa County Public Library District
- ❑ Montrose Library District
- ❑ Rangeview Library District

1. Indicate about how many times you have visited a public library within the last year. Mark one.

- ❑ 1–4 times
- ❑ 5–9 times
- ❑ 10–14 times
- ❑ 15–19 times
- ❑ 20–24 times
- ❑ 25 times or more

2. How much time did it take you to get to the library on this particular visit? Mark one.

- ❑ Less than 14 minutes
- ❑ 15-29 minutes
- ❑ 30-44 minutes
- ❑ 45-59 minutes
- ❑ 1 hour or more

3. How many miles did you travel to get to the library on this visit? Mark one.

- ❑ Less than 1 mile
- ❑ 1-2 miles
- ❑ 3-5 miles
- ❑ 6-10 miles
- ❑ 10 miles or more

4. How did you get to the library on this visit? Mark all that apply.

- ❑ Walked/rode bicycle
- ❑ Drove
- ❑ Public transportation (bus, shuttle, senior van)
- ❑ Taxi

5. How much did it cost you to get to the library on this visit (parking, fares, tolls)? Mark one.

- ❑ Nothing
- ❑ Less than $5
- ❑ $5-$9
- ❑ $10-$14
- ❑ $15-$19
- ❑ $20-$24
- ❑ $25 or more

6. In addition to this visit to the library, are you including any other activities or errands on this trip? Mark one.

❑ Yes ❑ No

6a. If "Yes", please mark all that apply.

- ❑ Visit restaurant/coffee shop
- ❑ Shopping
- ❑ Medical appointment
- ❑ Post office
- ❑ Bank
- ❑ Personal business
- ❑ Other (Please specify) _____

6b. How much did you spend, or do you anticipate spending, on these other activities? Mark one.

- ❑ $0
- ❑ Less than $5
- ❑ $5-$9
- ❑ $10-$14
- ❑ $15-$19
- ❑ $20-$24
- ❑ $25 or more

7. Have you ever used one of the library's computers? Mark one.

❑ Yes ❑ No

8. How much time, if any, did you last spend using a library computer for access to free Internet information? Mark one.

- ❑ Never use library computer
- ❑ Less than 15 minutes
- ❑ 15-29 minutes
- ❑ 30-44 minutes
- ❑ 45-59 minutes
- ❑ 1 hour or more

9. How much time, if any, did you last spend using a library computer to access software programs (e.g., Word, Excel, PowerPoint)? Mark one.

- ❑ Never use library computer
- ❑ Less than 15 minutes
- ❑ 15-29 minutes
- ❑ 30-44 minutes
- ❑ 45-59 minutes
- ❑ 1 hour or more

10. Below is a list of library services. Please indicate how many times you have used each of the following library services during the last 12 months. Mark all that apply.

Services Used	Number of Times During Last 12 Months						
	Never	1-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25 +
Read a book in the library	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Read a journal, magazine or newspaper in the library	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Checked out a book	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Checked out a CD and/or tape from the library	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Checked out a DVD and/or video from the library	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Used print reference materials in the library	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Asked a librarian to help in finding information in the library or on the Internet	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Attended a lecture, class or other sort of program	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Attended literacy instruction or program	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Received technology instruction	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Used a library computer to access software (Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.)	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Used a library computer to access free information on the Web	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Used a library computer to access online research resources (databases) you can only reach via your library's website	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Connected online to a Colorado public library remotely from your home computer	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Connected online to a Colorado public library remotely from a school computer	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Connected online to a Colorado public library remotely from a work computer	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Downloaded an eBook, audio book, eFlick, or Podcast from the library's website using your home computer	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Downloaded an eBook, audio book, eFlick, or Podcast from the library's website using a work computer	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏
Downloaded an eBook, audio book, eFlick, or Podcast from the library's website using a school computer	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏	❏

11. Please indicate the primary reason you used the library on this particular visit. Mark one.

To meet my needs:

❏ As a student
❏ As a home-schooling parent
❏ As an educator/educational administrator
❏ Related to a job search
❏ Related to current job
❏ Related to establishing/running a business
❏ For personal interests and/or recreational purposes
❏ Other (please specify)_____

12. If the public library had not existed, what would you have done to address your reason for this visit? Mark one.

❏ I would have tried to get the information from another source
❏ I would not have tried to get the information from another source
❏ I would not have known where else to go to get the information
❏ Other (please specify) _____

13. If you would have tried to get the information from another source, which one(s) would you have used? Mark all that apply.

❏ Bookstore
❏ Fee-based public Internet access (airport, hotel, café)
❏ Internet access at home
❏ Internet access at work
❏ University/college/school
❏ Video store
❏ Other (please specify) _____

14. If you marked another source in question 13, how much of your time would it have taken you to use this source? If you marked more than one source in question 13, total up the time spent on all of them. Mark one.

❏ Less than 15 minutes
❏ 15-29 minutes
❏ 30-44 minutes
❏ 45-59 minutes
❏ 1 hour or more

15. Approximately how much money would it have cost for you to use the other source(s) you marked in question 13? Please estimate the total costs if you marked multiple sources. Mark one.

   ❏ It would not have required any money
   ❏ Less than $5
   ❏ $5-$9
   ❏ $10-$14
   ❏ $15-$19
   ❏ $20-$24
   ❏ $25 or more (please specify amount) _____

16. Considering the same costs listed above, if you paid a price for your public library card each year, instead of paying taxes, how much would you be willing to pay for it? Please check next to the amount that best applies.

   ❏ $1-$19
   ❏ $20-$39
   ❏ $40-$59
   ❏ $60-$79
   ❏ $80-$99
   ❏ $100 or more (please specify amount) _____

17. What is your gender?

   ❏ Female   ❏ Male

18. Please indicate your age group. Mark one.

   ❏ Under 18
   ❏ 18–29
   ❏ 30–44
   ❏ 45–54
   ❏ 55–64
   ❏ 65 +

19. What is your highest level of education? Mark one.

   ❏ Some high school, but did not graduate
   ❏ High school graduate or GED
   ❏ Associate's degree
   ❏ Bachelor's degree
   ❏ Advanced degree (Masters, Doctorate, Professional)
   ❏ Other (please specify) _____

20. Which of the following describes you? Mark all that apply.

   ❏ White
   ❏ Hispanic
   ❏ Black or African-American
   ❏ Asian or Pacific Islander
   ❏ American Indian/Alaskan Native
   ❏ Other (please specify) _____

21. In which of the following broad ranges do your personal and household incomes fall? **Please mark responses for both the personal and the household ranges.** This information is needed to calculate the return on investment.

   Remember, this income information is anonymous and will not be connected to any individual.

	Personal	Household
Not employed	❏	❏
Under $25,000	❏	❏
$25,000 - $49,999	❏	❏
$50,000 - $99,999	❏	❏
$100,000 or more	❏	❏
Don't know	❏	❏

22. Do you have anything else to say about your public library?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

Appendix E

Overview

As part of the Library Research Services (LRS) study, "Public Libraries – A Wise Investment a Return on Investment Study of Colorado Public Libraries," key informant interviews were conducted to supplement the data collected through the library and patron surveys. Key informant interviews are a method of obtaining qualitative data about the community through in-person, telephone, or electronic interviews with experts within that community. In this case a specific organization in the community--the library--was the focus of the interviews.

All eight of the libraries that participated in the RIO study were given the opportunity to identify staff and community members for the key informant interviews. Five libraries chose to participate in the key informant interviews, which were conducted by LRS staff in-person and over the phone and e-mail. Information from the key informant interviews was shared with each participating library, and interviewees for all but one library gave permission for the interviews to be shared.

To identify key informants, LRS reached out to contacts at the five participating libraries and asked the contacts to identify one or more specific collections, services, or programs offered by the library that exemplify the library's efforts to serve organizations and individuals involved in education and/or economic development. The library contacts were also asked to identify a specific staff member for LRS to speak with about the exemplary services or collections.

Staff member interviews were completed for each of the five libraries that chose to participate in the key informant interviews. Staff members were asked to describe when the service(s) began, what resources were involved, what needs the service or program met, how the service or program is offered, and any success stories about the program or service. LRS also asked the staff member to identify someone in the community who has benefited from the service and would be willing to speak to LRS about their experiences.

Three of the participating libraries were able to provide referrals to community members for key informant interviews. These community member key informants included a member of the Cortez Chamber of Commerce, a counselor from the Aurora Business Development Center who uses Denver Public Library to conduct courses to help people create business plans, and members of the Perl Mack Genealogy Group in the Rangeview Library District. LRS asked these community members how they benefited from the service and how they believed others benefitted from the service or program. The community members were also asked, if they we willing, to estimate the economic value of the service to them and the savings to their organization, what they believe they would have to pay for the service, and what they would have been willing to pay for the service.

Cortez Public Library

Joanie Howland – Library Director
Cortez Public Library
April 3, 2007
Telephone Interview

Joanie indicated that there are 25,000 people and 3 libraries in Montezuma County; 8,000 people in the city of Cortez. She discussed some of the successful programs that the Cortez Public Library provides for the Cortez community:

- Summer Reading Program
  - Runs June - August
  - Been up and running since before she got there in the 1970's
  - Encourages kids to read
  - Last year (2006), kids logged 14,800 hours of reading
    - This = 616, 24-hour days that kids read
  - Log book that kids fill out
    - For every 10 hours read = 1 envelope with book coupon, and a sticker with their name on it that they hang up in prominent place as recognition for having read
    - Rewards are given as extra incentive (ice cream and other local vendor gift certificates)
    - For every 10 hours a kid reads they get to choose a free book

- Thursday Programs that have professional performers
  - Theatre Group, Musicians, Jugglers, Animals
  - ***260 people on average attend these events (Joanie is very proud of this—as it is a good turn out considering the population of Cortez and surrounding areas in Montezuma County)
  - Children's Librarian advertises events in local newspaper
  - General advertising in the library ahead of time

- Pre-School Story Hour
  - Occurs weekly
  - Moms who don't work
  - Day Care groups
  - County-wide group
  - Targeting early literacy

- All 7th Graders and Kindergartners
  - Come 1 time a year
  - All Get library cards
  - 7th graders do library Treasure hunts
  - Kindergartners get story hour

- Cortez Public Library is the official academic library for Pueblo Community College's branch in Cortez.

- Economic Development
  - Many patrons use library to get info on:
    - Small business
    - Payroll issues
    - Taxes

Cortez Public Library

- ▪ Job hunting and application submission, using the free public computers (she knows this because she and other librarians often will help patrons get to the webpage so they can fill out online job applications)

- o Marcy Cummins of Cortez Chamber of Commerce (Economic Development Key Informant) will be discussing her perspective on the Cortez Public Library- possibly the business related classes held at the library every Thursday evening

Cortez Public Library

Marcy Cummins – Executive Director
Cortez Chamber of Commerce
April 23, 2007
Email Interview

I am the Cortez Library's #1 fan. I have had a card since I was six years old (that would have been 1957) and except for the times when I was away at college and then graduate school, I've used the library just about every week. Some of my best memories of childhood are lying on the floor in front of the big stone fireplace in the old library with a Nancy Drew I hadn't read. Mrs. Fredericks, the librarian, taught me to love reading and writing and I will always be thankful to her!

1. **How did you, professionally, or your organization/place of business benefit from a particular service, collection, and/or program at the Cortez Public Library? (provide as much detail about this as possible)**

   The chamber utilizes the library for a business planning course called LEAD (I've attached the PDF file to describe the program). As a part of the class, students walk over to the library (about a block and a half from the Chamber) to do research and learn what resources are available to the local business person. Because of lack of funding, the business section of the library is not extensive, but they will order anything the students want, which arrives quickly. Many of our members do not have Internet access and use the library for that purpose. We have several areas of our county that only has dial-up Internet access, which is unworkable for most people--for instance, there is a deep canyon where wine producers, organic farmers and bed and breakfasts are situated. They have no Internet access other than dial up. We also use the library's conference room for community meetings. There are publications too costly for individual businesses to own that can be accessed through the library. Joanie Howland is a member of the chamber and an active participant, which keeps her up-to-date on members' needs. She is very responsive to those needs.

2. **How do you believe it might benefit others?**

   I know people who are considering starting a business use the library business collection, also. Potential entrepreneurs use the library Internet access.

3. **Would you be willing to estimate the economic value of the service, collection, or program?**

   The business section of the library is about twelve shelves. At 30 books per shelf and $20 per book, that would be approximately $7,000 worth of books.

4. **What have been or will be the savings to your organization/business?**

   This data is part of that elusive, "unknown and unknowable" essential information. Every time the business community doesn't have to buy a book there is a savings.

Cortez Public Library

5. What do you believe you would have had to pay for this service, collection, or program elsewhere if the Cortez Public Library had not offered it?

The kind of things we access are available for people via bookstores or the library by Fort Lewis College in Durango, CO. (50 miles away). Most of the people taking our classes are also running their own businesses. Making a trip to Durango to access that library would be difficult.

6. What would you have been willing to pay for the service, collection, or program?

Unfortunately, the Cortez Area Chamber of Commerce is a small organization serving the needs of businesses that have only limited funds for dues. Because of that, we would have to do without rather than purchase the business stacks ourselves. If we were to provide Internet access for our members it would mean purchasing multiple computers, etc. and find a place for them in our building, which would be difficult.

Denver Public Library

Dixie Malone—Adult Outreach Librarian
Denver Public Library
April 10, 2007
Face-to-Face Interview

- Dixie is the Adult Outreach Librarian at DPL.
    - One of her main roles is to help patrons understand what Business Research is, which she defines it as follows: "Business Research is looking for numbers".
    - Business is all about numbers and more credibility is given to resources that provide those numbers needed to start and operate a business.
    - She helps patrons find the materials and to use the resources that benefit their businesses and them as business owners. She both proactively networks in the community and works with patrons on a one-on-one basis, with groups, and through workshops such as SCORE and Next Level, organizations that help people start up and run their small businesses.
    - She mentioned also that DPL has been hosting the Small Business Resource Fair since 1999 and will be hosting the 8th Annual Small Business Resource Fair on August 16, 2007.
        - The Fair brings together the organizations that help small or micro-businesses get started and keep running. Regardless of how she's interacting with patrons, she emphasized the importance of the DPL's policy "never say no" to a patron who may request assistance in learning how to use Business Reference materials or to a business group that wishes to tour the library and learn about its services.
- Dixie indicated that, "People don't necessarily equate a public library with business".
    - She stated that a typical response she receives after demonstrating just what the library can offer and what librarians can do is, "I had no idea".
    - Even large corporations that typically rely upon their in-house resources are becoming aware of what DPL can do which is why networking is key in dealing with larger businesses and corporations in letting them know what the library can do.

Denver Public Library

Chuck Hahn
City of Aurora – Aurora Business Development Center
http://www.aurorasbdc.com/index.html
April 26, 2007
Phone Interview

Referred by Dixie Malone—Adult Outreach Librarian -- Denver Public Library

- Chuck is a counselor at the Aurora Business Development Center and conducts Next Level Workshops — 15-week courses to help people put together business plans.
  - A Major component of the courses is using the library's resources.
  - Early in the 15 week period, the members of the course go to Denver Public Library, where Dixie Malone, Adult Outreach Librarian, teaches them how to use the available reference books, databases, and other business materials.
  - They also get a tour of the library and sign up to get their library card.

- Chuck has always recommended using the library.
  - When asked what he and the Aurora Business Development Center would do without the library, he indicated that this would not be a good situation since there would be no other alternative (at least affordable alternative) to the services and materials the library provides.
  - He stated, the "library is a fundamental component…absolutely vital".
  - Chuck went on to explain that the databases and reference materials are cost prohibitive to individuals starting a business and that knowing how to use them also takes the experienced guidance of a librarian.

- Chuck informally tries to track the connection of business planning/preparation with library use and asks that people let the Business Librarians know who referred them to use the library or how they were prompted to go to the library.
  - He stated, "We want them to go to the library…we want them to see the bigger picture", referring to how the business resources provide valuable industry and business world information that people may not realize would be of value.
- Chuck stressed the importance in learning the skills of business research by saying, "This is information they can use throughout the life of their business" and that this "knowledge is power".
  - If someone is looking for information on restaurants, and knows how to use the library resources, this could take you "15 seconds". "That's pretty powerful".
  - He added, "I love all the libraries…they all have a common purpose…what they do compresses the time that it takes to find information".
  - When asked what the value libraries and librarians are to his work and to those starting a business, he emphasized that they provide a "tremendous amount of value" by accelerating the process of getting the right information to the right person and that if you had to pay someone to do that, it would cost a lot of money.

Ft. Morgan Public Library

Cathy Bosley – Director
Fort Morgan Public Library
April 2, 2007
Phone Interview

Cathy discussed that the library has been partnering with educational groups within the Fort Morgan community. She speaks a little Spanish and the community outreach allows her to practice her Spanish while interacting with the Spanish-speaking community

List and details of some of the services mentioned:

- Centennial BOCES (http://www.cboces.org)
  - Cathy approached BOCES (she used to work with them)
    - Migrant Education Program
      - Works with the school system but goes beyond to involve the families
      - Helps families transition culturally to USA
      - Educate them about the surrounding community and the resources available to them (including the library)
      - Holds two programs each year involving the Spanish-speaking community, children and their families
  - Cinco de Mayo
    - Started 2005
    - Rainbow Dancers group-showcasing traditional Mexican dances from all regions
    - Families both watch and participate
    - Cathy personally welcomes them, shows them collection (Spanish and English), and shows them how to get a library card
  - El Dia de los Muertos
    - Stories and legends (La Llorona)- in both Spanish and English
    - Again, involves family participation
    - Demonstrate how to use library and services, get library cards

- Cargill Corporation (they contacted Cathy in 2005)
  - Twice a year workplace education for both English and Spanish speakers
  - Lunch hours, before or after work for workplace education
  - Cathy and possibly other staff go to Cargill's site to talk about library services, what the library has to offer, how workers can use the library and librarians to help further their education or otherwise meet their needs
  - Gets the employees signed up for library cards
  - Book and other item give-aways to employees

- ABLE (Adult Basic Literacy Education)
  - In conjunction with Morgan Community College (http://www.morgancc.edu/)
  - Provides program support for GED, ESL and other Adult education
  - For working adults or adults that stay at home to raise kids who find traditional educational programs non-accommodating
  - Night school
  - Students come to the library for tour and to do assignments

Ft. Morgan Public Library

Tonya Richardson – Children's Librarian
Fort Morgan Public Library
April 2, 2007
Phone Interview

List and details of some of the services mentioned:

- Books for Kindergartners
  - Includes tour of the library and doing a craft project
  - Kids get to take home a book (books provided by Friends of the Library funds)

- Books for Babies
  - Hospital provides board books
  - Shows mothers how important it is to read
  - Moms come in with preschoolers for preschool story time

- Community College – Literature Professor
  - Tonya works with a local professor teaching Literature Class
  - She gathers all books that students will use during course
    - Translated books, multicultural books

- Summer Reading Program
  - "Get a clue @ your library"
  - 6-week program
    - 1 hour of reading = 1 book buck that can be spent in the spy store open on Fridays
  - Not just reading but includes activities
    - Magic tricks
    - Detective work (police department comes in to help)
    - Lip-printing identification (local Avon representative donated lipstick samples so kids could give their lip prints
    - Courtroom/jury with a mock jury and tour of the court house

Rangeview Library District

Ed Stephen – Literacy Coordinator
Rangeview Library District
Thornton Branch
May 8, 2007
Face to Face Interview

- Ed Stephen has been the Literacy Coordinator for the Rangeview Library District since 1987.
  - When the program began, its primary focus was to help adults who had problems with reading.
  - About ten years ago, the program was expanded to include English as a Second Language (ESL) which has quickly become the most prominent component of the program.

- The ESL classes are free and only require basic registration information such as the person's name and phone number.
  - There are three levels in the ESL classes: beginning, intermediate, and conversation. Ed compiles the material used for the ESL classes and the booklets are provided free of charge.

- Ed trains the adult literacy tutors and the ESL tutors.
  - The adult literacy tutors train for 2-3 sessions to learn how to work with other adults.
  - Adult literacy tutors work one on one with people who have problems with reading.
  - In many instances, adult student with reading problems, have learning disabilities.

- ESL tutors work in teams, and teach small groups of ESL students in a classroom environment.

- The ESL classes continue to expand by word of mouth rather than by advertising.
  - At this time, the ESL classes are held only at the Brighton and Commerce City branches.
  - Ed is planning to have ESK classes at the Northglenn and Thornton branches starting in September of this year.
  - There will be a point person at all of the branches to recruit tutors and sign up students for the classes.

- He indicated that the 2006 statistics showed approximately 198 people were involved either as students or tutors in the ESL and adult literacy programs.
  - This number should increase significantly when the ESL classes are offered at the Northglenn and Thornton branches.

- When asked about what people would do without this service, Ed indicated there are other resources that people can and do use, such as churches, other libraries, and organizations like the Intergenerational Learning Center.
  - But, going to these other venues would frequently take more effort and cost to get there and would require people to provide personal information many are reluctant to give.
  - He reiterated that in the Rangeview Library District's Literacy Program, no questions are asked except name and phone #.
  - He stated that ESL-specific benefits are that the classes are low-key, and for many participants, "This is like survival…the fact that it's free, is huge", and that the "library is a safe environment…healthy environment…non-threatening".

Rangeview Library District

- Ed mentioned some of the benefits people have received over the years as a result of their involvement in the programs at the various branches.
  o There have been several former adult literacy students who went on to receive full high school diplomas from Vantage Point High School. (Vantage Point is a District 12 adult high school in Thornton for people who dropped out of high school.)
  o Vantage Point has referred students to the adult literacy program. Sometimes a student's skills might not be high enough to be accepted into a high school program.
  o The adult literacy program helps adults increase their skills so they can get into the high school program.
  o This year, a 57-year old Denver woman who was in the Adult Literacy program, went on to continue her education at Vantage point and graduated in May.

- One of the ESL tutors apparently enjoyed teaching ESAL and wanted to more; he went to Viet Nam to teach English as a Second Language.

Rangeview Library District

Georgia Neilsen- Coordinator
Rangeview Library District
Perl Mack Branch
May 8, 2007
Face to Face Interview

- Georgia Neilsen is the Coordinator of the Perl Mack Genealogy Group in the Rangeview Library District.
  - She has been the group's Coordinator for past 5 years and has over 25 years of Genealogy experience.
  - The Genealogy Group began in September 2002 when some of the Perl Mack library patrons wanted more intensive assistance with their genealogy research.
  - The group currently has 28 active members.
  - There are no membership dues or required applications and it is open to everyone who is interested.

- In 2004 Georgia and the group created their Genealogy and Western History Collection containing several hundred volumes of books and magazines; some that circulate, others are reserved for Reference.
  - This Collection also contains a continually growing and developing Vertical File Holdings — a "how-to" file of information on doing research with foreign country resources, U.S. resources, state, county, cities, and other local resources.
  - Outside of the monthly, formalized group meetings, Georgia also works with individuals and groups with their research requests.
  - Her enthusiasm and work have made an impact so that others within the Genealogy circuit have been reported to say this about Georgia, "People have been saying good things about you".
  - To correspond with the collection and the Vertical File Holdings, Georgia and another Perl Mack employee, Catherine Meis created a great website for the Genealogy Group, http://www.du.edu/~cmeis/index.htm).
  - Along with containing information on the group as well as links to other genealogical resources, it states the group's three-fold purpose:
    - Promote an interest in genealogy
    - Encourage research
    - Uphold genealogy standards

- When asked what she thought would happen if the Perl Mack Branch no longer offered this collection and service: she indicated that there would be other options for people to use like online resources and other genealogy-related organizations, but this group won't let that happen.
  - When there was talk of possibly closing the Perl Mack branch, Georgia stated that the Genealogy group was "…one of the staunchest…who fought to keep the Perl Mack branch open".

- Georgia provided written comments from members of the Perl Mack Genealogy Group confirming just how much these community members value their library and the resources found within it. (See separate attached print copy of Genealogy members' comments)
  - The library not only provides the resources for the community to do their research but also allows the community to come together for a common purpose and to interact with each other.

Rangeview Library District

- o The Perl Mack Branch makes this possible by housing the growing genealogy collection and by having someone like Georgia Neilsen whose enthusiasm and subject knowledge keep the group coming back for more.

Rangeview Library District

Genealogy Group Members
Rangeview Library District
Perl Mack Branch
May 8, 2007

1. **How long have you been a member of Perl Mack Genealogy Group?**

    My husband and I are some of the lucky people who attended the first meeting of the Perl Mack Genealogy Group.

2. **How does the genealogy group serve you? Does it meet your needs? Explain.**

    The group is a source of information that novices like us have a hard time finding on our own. Georgia always has something new at every meeting. She knows so much about how and where to search. She is so gracious and so willing to help anyone who is interested. I know she has brought a large number of people to the library by having the collection, the meetings and the ability to show them how to use the computers to search for their families.

    The meetings are a good source of information, too. The attendees have varying degrees of experience and are very willing to share their experiences and ask for help in problem areas. It is a great time to meet other people with similar interests and learn more from them. The group meets my needs by providing a growing collection of books, materials, sources on the internet and the information Georgia has at each meeting.

    The group has been growing and all the members have an active interest in the group. You can tell we are very enthused about the meetings and collections. We have come up with ways to raise money to increase the Genealogy collection. Georgia has found a number of books to compliment the existing collection.

3. **How does the genealogy collection serve you? Does it meet your needs? Explain.**

    The genealogy collection contains many helpful items. For example the CD of Colorado marriages was very helpful. The collection is close to me so I don't have to fight traffic or parking to try to find things I am interested in. It is easy to make more trips to the library. It serves most of my needs. Of course, it does not have some of the things that are offered in larger collections, but the people are so helpful and try to help you find the information you are looking for. I am grateful there is a collection in the Perl Mack Library.

4. **Does the terms of the group/collection work for you?**

    Yes. I am very happy with the Genealogy group and the Genealogy Collection. I have no problem with the terms of either.

5. **Any improvements/suggestions?**

    I would like to see more books, CD's and other genealogy materials added to the collection. Georgia would be the person who could recommend what items would be the most useful. I would suggest using her knowledge and experience to expand the collection. I also think more advertising to make people aware of the collection, the meetings and the experienced person you have at Perl Mack.

    Georgia is a great asset to the Rangeview Library District. Thanks to her hard work and dedication and expertise the Genealogy group keeps growing. She is a wonderful speaker and makes every meeting enjoyable and educational. We appreciate all that she has done and look forward to many more interesting meetings and a larger genealogy collection at the Perl Mack Library.

Rangeview Library District

1. **How long have you been a member of Perl Mack Genealogy Group?**

   We came to the Perl Mack group when the North Metro Genealogy group disbanded that was about 2005/05. NOTE: Money from the disbanded group was used to buy books for the Genealogy collection at Perl Mack.

2. **How does the genealogy group serve you? Does it meet your needs? Explain.**

   The group has as many diverse objectives as it has members, but Georgia uses the programs at the meetings as a way to give some enlightenment to everyone.

3. **How does the genealogy collection serve you? Does it meet your needs? Explain.**

   I must confess that I do not use the collection as much as I should. I belong to Ancestry.com and use this to do my research. I have used the Heritage Search engine that used to be available, but the board discontinued that service.

4. **Does the terms of the group/collection work for you?**

   The group/collection has given me several leads that have enabled me to get though road blocks.

5. **Any improvements/suggestions?**

   I would like to see the Heritage renewed and made available to be accessed form home. It would be nice to have access to the materials and computers in the meeting room to help with the programs.

Rangeview Library District

1. **How long have you been a member of Perl Mack Genealogy Group?**

   I'm not sure. I know I was attending early in 2004

2. **How does the genealogy group serve you? Does it meet your needs? Explain.**

   Every topic that is presented is of interest to anyone doing genealogical research. George puts her heart and soul into each presentation, doing lots of research, giving hand outs and has books displayed that are about the topic of each presentation. We have guest speakers on genealogical topics and do fun things.

   Georgia and all members of the group are willing to assist members and help with any question.

   We collect aluminum cans for recycle, have a donation can and use these monies to defray costs (this is strictly voluntary.

3. **How does the genealogy collection serve you? Does it meet your needs? Explain.**

   I must confess I do not use the Perl Mack Genealogy collection like I should, but I have donated to the collection and I was a member of North Metro and we voted to give our monies to purchase materials for the Perl Mack collection. I have my own personal computer and I belong to Ancestry.com and do research on this site.

4. **Does the terms of the group/collection work for you?**

   The way this group works together and grows under the leadership of Georgia provides that we don't have to be a society with dues etc. Yes this works for me. I have belonged to Nebraska State Genealogical Society for many years and do not get as much from this organization as I receive from Perl Mack Genealogy Group.

5. **Any improvements/suggestions?**

   When Perl Mack is remodeled I would like to see the collection, a work area, fiche, microfilm readers and computers for genealogical research and any patron of the library, perhaps our meetings could be held in this area.

Rangeview Library District

1. **How long have you been a member of Perl Mack Genealogy Group?**

   Since it started, what 10 years ago.

2. **How does the genealogy group serve you? Does it meet your needs? Explain.**

   Gives me a chance to get more information, share with others and help work out problems in obtaining more data, it is my psychiatrist.

3. **How does the genealogy collection serve you? Does it meet your needs? Explain.**

   Other than doing the work for me, yes, more heads help with the problems of working through brick walls, how to access, how to work with the computer, where to go for special info.

4. **Does the terms of the group/collection work for you?**

   Absolutely, I even got info to go to UK to get someone there to do some research for me. I knew it was legit because it was on Ancestry.com and also because Georgia had tried it and had good results with it, I did too and will use that resource again.

5. **Any improvements/suggestions?**

   So few computers and so many wanting to use them. Could we set up a day or sometime where it is dedicated to genealogy use?

Rangeview Library District

This input was handwritten by the group member. The numbered responses do not correspond with the previous set of questions.

45 yrs library customer – first Bookmobile, then library by Scott Carpenter Swimming Pool, then present one.

1. Excellent service – all pleasant library personnel. No better library – need a new area for computer for children, separate from adults…area for the Genealogy Section
2. Excellent place to get out of library material for my family history. Would research the United States for my research books (old books) not charged to get them.
3. Started the Genealogy Class – Georgia does a lot of research, hard work for the programs each month.
4. Georgia Nielsen started the Genealogy library getting research books, source books, family histories, magazines, Heritage Quest, Genealogical Helper, etc.
5. Have meetings like a writer to help with family history stories, special Christmas programs, trips to cemeteries like Riverside (Denver's oldest cemetery).
6. Excellent Children programs
7. Best of all internet programs like Ancestry.com www.familysearch.com, www.Google.com, etc. All keep up with up to date written addition material. Have been a great source of information for my family history and my husband's family. I won't have a much information as I have now, if it were not for our library system…Keep it going
8. They have used book donated and used books from library for patrons of the library to donate money to buy new books. Gotten art books, history books, etc.