Community Survey Report

Survey opened 6/1/2018
897 responses through 8/16/2018

Question 1: What kind of community do you want to live in?

n = 813

Word frequency:

162	safe	31	supportive	16	learning
106	friendly	31	programs	15	values
62	helpful	28	good	14	active
56	diverse	28	respect	14	close
56	kind	26	neighbors	14	free
50	caring	23	environment	14	social
46	clean	22	cultural	12	quiet
43	inclusive	22	happy	12	share
43	nice	21	healthy	11	connected
42	education	21	welcoming	11	involved
40	family	19	open	10	schools
40	kids	18	accepting	9	differences
38	fun	18	opportunities	8	parks
33	peaceful	18	together	8	reading

We grouped these words to explain four broad concepts that describe the kind of community in which people want to live:
- Our People: Friendly, helpful, kind, caring, nice, happy
- Our Environment: Safe, clean, environment, healthy
- Our Attitude Toward Others: Diverse, inclusive, respect, welcoming, open, accepting, differences
- Our Community: Supportive, neighbors, together, close, social, connected, involved
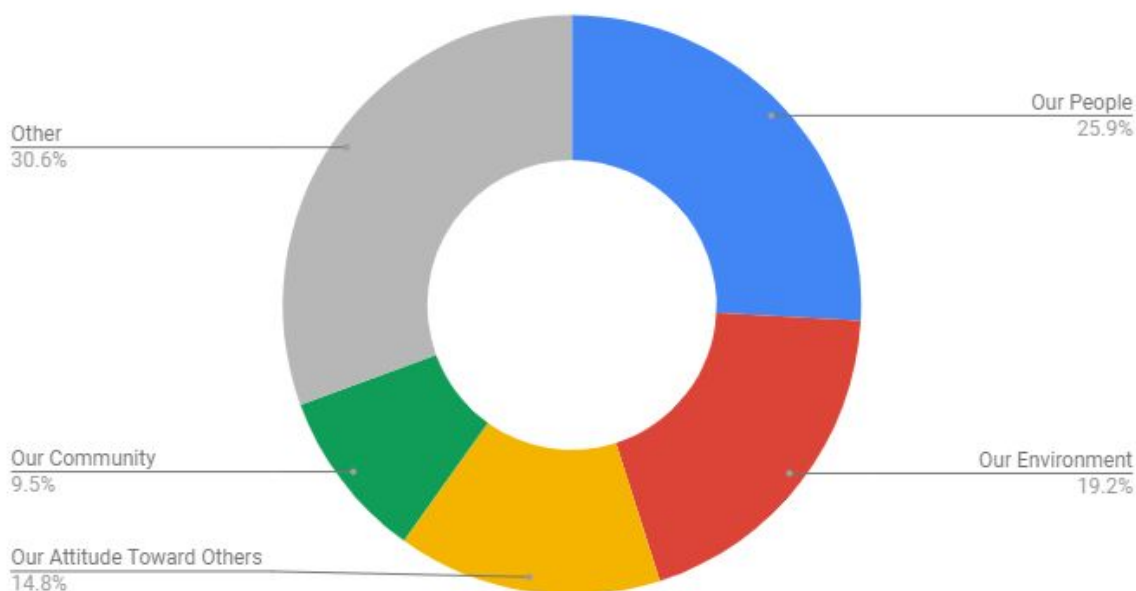
SCLSNJ can have the most impact in the segments that have to do with **our attitude toward others** and **our community**. The Library might focus on services, programs and initiatives that contribute to diverse, welcoming community where people can come together to connect with and support each other.

Questions 2, 3 and 4 are difficult to analyze in isolation, because they each refer back to the respondent's answer to question 1. We looked at answers to the following questions where the person's answer to question 1 fell into the two segments referenced above.

Where Question 1 was in the *Our Attitude Toward Others* segment...
n = 131

Question 2: Why is that important to you?
Word frequency (Our Attitude Toward Others):

43	community	7	inclusive	4	fun	3	perspectives	2	forward
40	people	7	safe	4	generation	3	raise	2	harmony
38	live	7	society	4	gives	3	relationships	2	hold
28	important	7	together	4	healthy	3	religion	2	home
27	want	7	value	4	love	3	seems	2	ideas
24	everyone	6	diversity	4	matter	3	special	2	interesting
23	feel	6	family	4	neighbors	3	thrive	2	less
18	others	6	happy	4	provides	3	time	2	media
17	all	6	kids	4	reading	3	treated	2	members
15	place	6	respected	4	school	2	accepting	2	minority
13	children	6	think	4	sense	2	afford	2	new
13	welcome	6	up	4	world	2	american	2	peace
12	different	5	believe	3	activities	2	available	2	principles
12	like	5	best	3	allows	2	avoid	2	pursue
11	better	5	create	3	build	2	backgrounds	2	quality
11	not	5	each	3	connected	2	become	2	race
10	kind	5	environment	3	equality	2	benefit	2	residents
9	nice	5	look	3	food	2	climate	2	resources
8	accepted	5	need	3	foster	2	communities	2	responsible
8	good	4	care	3	future	2	continue	2	right
8	grow	4	deserve	3	great	2	creates	2	see
8	help	4	enjoy	3	group	2	cultural	2	surroundings
8	learn	4	experience	3	interest	2	deserves	2	town
8	work	4	fear	3	make	2	enough	2	wish
7	cultures	4	friends	3	means	2	fit		

Question 3: How is that different from how you see things now?

Word frequency (Our Attitude Toward Others):

45	people	7	divided	5	change	4	open	3	money
39	not	7	everyone	5	current	4	quick	3	negative
37	community	7	make	5	neighborhood	4	treated	3	new
25	more	7	right	5	opportunities	3	adults	3	nice
24	others	6	accepting	5	programs	3	apart	3	offer
22	like	6	activities	5	seem	3	areas	3	pretty
19	see	6	close	5	welcoming	3	aware	3	problem
18	different	6	events	5	work	3	bad	3	race
14	feel	6	give	5	young	3	black	3	rude
14	now	6	groups	4	culture	3	care	3	same
12	have	6	know	4	future	3	comments	3	sit
11	library	6	needs	4	get	3	created	3	situation
10	kids	6	political	4	great	3	dangerous	3	society
10	live	6	public	4	hate	3	development	3	summer
10	much	6	respect	4	judge	3	direction	3	themselves
9	places	6	safe	4	learn	3	encourage	3	want
8	school	6	think	4	often	3	fit	3	ways
8	town	6	time	4	older	3	inclusive	3	white
7	diverse	5	better	4	one	3	little	3	worry

Question 4: What are some of the things that need to happen to create that kind of change?

Word frequency (Our Attitude Toward Others):

64	more	7	awareness	5	races	4	various	3	keep
45	community	7	create	5	social	3	accept	3	limiting
44	people	7	inclusion	5	start	3	another	3	look
42	need	7	knowledge	5	town	3	being	3	love
29	library	7	local	5	up	3	board	3	must
19	other	7	make	5	vote	3	books	3	neighbors
16	events	7	opportunity	5	ways	3	building	3	no
15	not	7	think	4	anti	3	bullying	3	offered
15	schools	6	activities	4	continuing	3	centered	3	outdoor
14	change	6	bring	4	especially	3	civil	3	park
14	open	6	education	4	face	3	classes	3	participation
14	our	6	many	4	get	3	come	3	planning
14	programs	6	new	4	good	3	concerns	3	politicians
14	who	6	promote	4	government	3	conversations	3	politics

12	all	6	support	4	groups	3	corporations	3	quality
12	help	6	together	4	history	3	cultures	3	really
11	like	6	welcome	4	kind	3	don't	3	shared
10	about	5	able	4	meet	3	drive	3	show
10	can	5	adults	4	pay	3	environment	3	showcase
10	from	5	country	4	public	3	even	3	skills
10	just	5	cultural	4	residents	3	example	3	smaller
10	leaders	5	diversity	4	resources	3	fair	3	society
10	space	5	encourage	4	respect	3	financial	3	something
9	better	5	great	4	see	3	find	3	state
9	each	5	happening	4	some	3	fun	3	students
9	talk	5	high	4	spanish	3	homes	3	such
8	access	5	housing	4	stop	3	hopefully	3	sure
8	different	5	kids	4	systems	3	hurt	3	tend
8	everyone	5	learning	4	teach	3	ideas	3	time
8	feel	5	less	4	types	3	institutions	3	training
8	things	5	live	4	understanding	3	interaction	3	updated
8	would	5	place	4	use	3	involvement		

Where Question 1 was in the *Our Community* segment...

n = 107

Question 2: Why is that important to you?

Word frequency (Our Community):

44	community	7	environment	5	sense	3	home	2	days
31	people	7	friends	5	small	3	involved	2	diversity
26	have	7	here	5	up	3	kind	2	enough
22	important	7	place	4	adults	3	look	2	fear
18	living	7	raise	4	being	3	many	2	future
18	want	7	think	4	care	3	means	2	lead
16	feel	7	town	4	closer	3	meet	2	library
14	make	7	work	4	common	3	moved	2	local
14	together	6	connected	4	education	3	new	2	personal
13	neighbors	6	each	4	happy	3	opportunity	2	quiet
12	all	6	kids	4	health	3	relationships	2	read
12	need	6	learn	4	nice	3	well	2	same
11	like	5	better	4	society	2	accepted	2	someone
10	children	5	bringing	4	times	2	actions	2	standards

10	help	5	different	4	trust	2	activities	2	style
9	everyone	5	family	3	afford	2	available	2	teach
8	grow	5	good	3	believe	2	belonging	2	technology
8	life	5	matter	3	city	2	big	2	thrive
8	love	5	others	3	create	2	book	2	trouble
8	more	5	part	3	decisions	2	build	2	way
8	safe	5	positive	3	fun	2	come	2	world
8	support	5	productive	3	gives	2	country		

Question 3: How is that different from how you see things now?

Word frequency (Our Community):

42	community	6	others	4	support	3	sit	2	future
36	people	5	area	3	apart	3	small	2	good
20	more	5	great	3	close	3	volunteer	2	hard
19	see	5	involved	3	come	3	well	2	initiatives
15	town	5	offer	3	complain	2	alone	2	interests
14	different	5	outside	3	connect	2	arts	2	isolated
13	library	5	residents	3	day	2	aware	2	learning
13	like	5	safe	3	education	2	bad	2	leave
11	live	5	together	3	events	2	bit	2	love
10	kids	5	want	3	face	2	black	2	members
9	neighbors	4	being	3	few	2	blend	2	nice
9	think	4	change	3	first	2	building	2	night
8	going	4	county	3	getting	2	busy	2	opportunities
8	know	4	divide	3	large	2	car	2	part
8	school	4	each	3	meeting	2	children	2	public
8	work	4	enough	3	museums	2	citizens	2	reasons
7	all	4	everyone	3	old	2	council	2	respect
7	feel	4	family	3	political	2	created	2	system
7	groups	4	grows	3	right	2	currently	2	technology
7	needs	4	help	3	same	2	decades	2	uncertainty
7	place	4	programs	3	seem	2	diversity	2	welcoming
6	activities	4	social	3	self	2	fit	2	white

Question 4: What are some of the things that need to happen to create that kind of change?
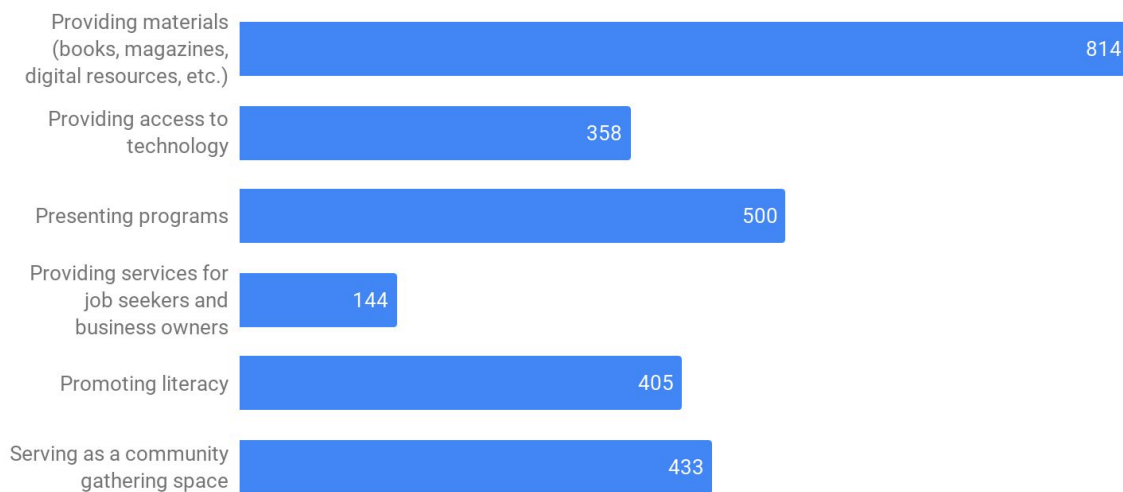
Word frequency (Our Community):

52	more	7	help	4	better	4	spaces	3	must
45	community	7	out	4	bring	4	system	3	nights

39	need	7	places	4	caring	4	town	3	only
29	people	7	public	4	county	4	us	3	open
16	other	6	different	4	decrease	3	age	3	outside
15	programs	6	great	4	efforts	3	between	3	participation
14	library	6	leaders	4	engagement	3	come	3	pay
14	our	6	schools	4	family	3	common	3	political
11	events	6	support	4	gatherings	3	communication	3	reach
10	activities	5	from	4	good	3	diversity	3	resources
10	opportunities	5	groups	4	government	3	down	3	respect
9	think	5	houses	4	interactions	3	inclusion	3	set
9	together	5	live	4	involved	3	invest	3	sort
8	change	5	not	4	kind	3	keep	3	take
8	like	5	promote	4	made	3	know	3	time
7	about	5	residents	4	neighbors	3	less	3	use
7	create	5	social	4	outreach	3	life	3	volunteers
7	each	5	up	4	parks	3	local		
7	education	5	work	4	screen	3	meaningful		
7	everyone	4	awareness	4	see	3	meeting		

Question 5: Which of the following services offered by SCLSNJ do you think are the most important?

Please select your top 3 choices

n = 889

- Providing materials (books, magazines, digital resources, etc.) — 814
- Providing access to technology — 358
- Presenting programs — 500
- Providing services for job seekers and business owners — 144
- Promoting literacy — 405
- Serving as a community gathering space — 433

Question 6: Which service, program, or resource do you wish the library offered, or offered more of?
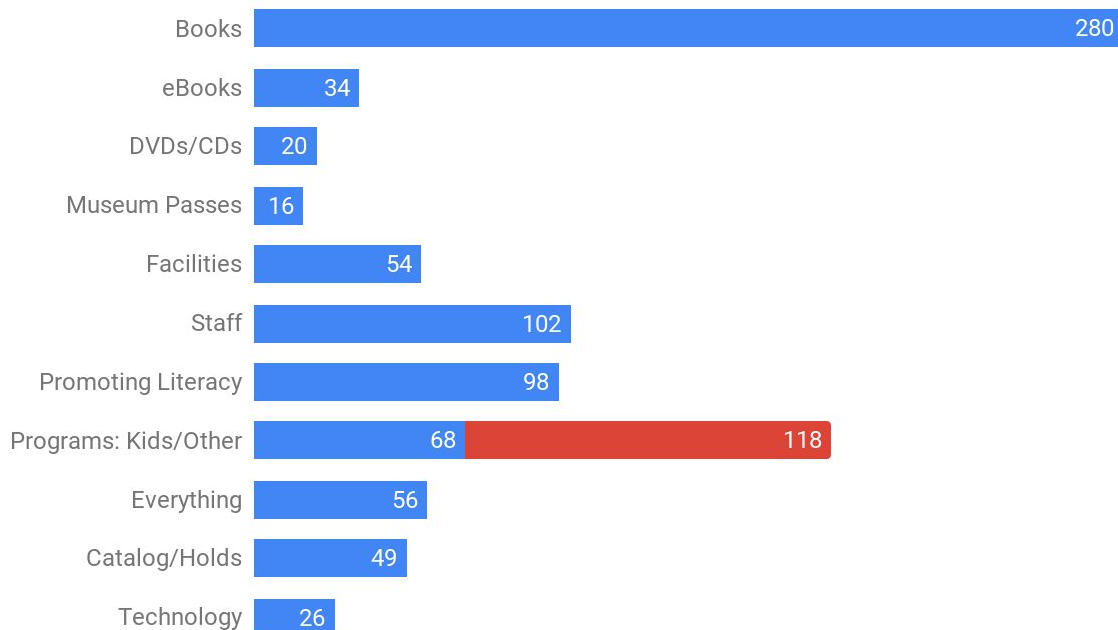
n = 665
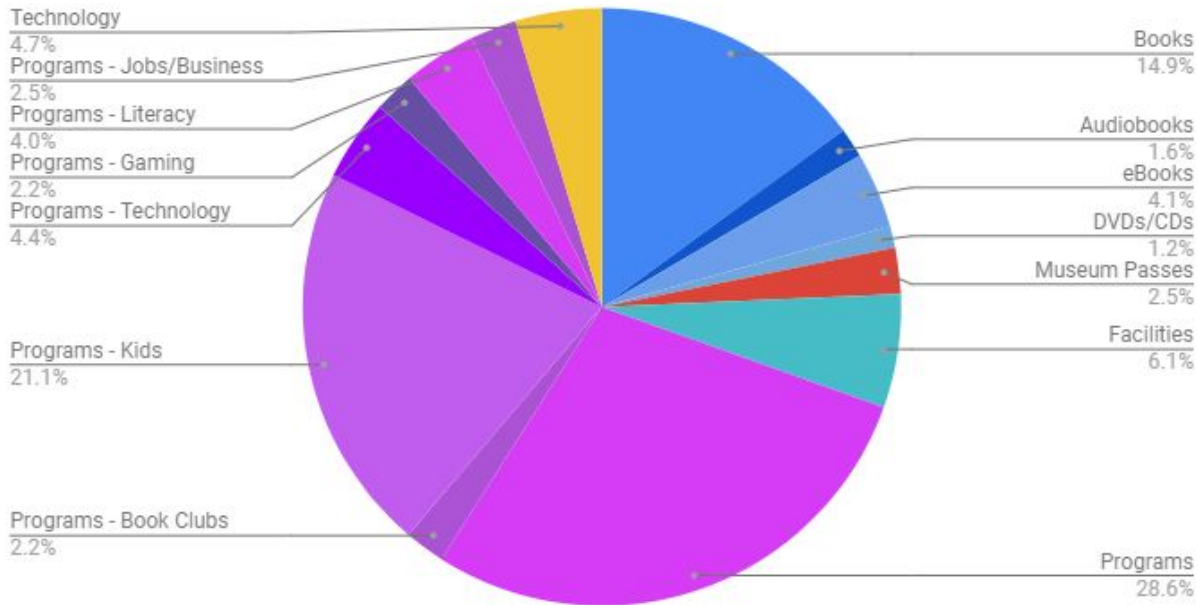
As is common in surveys regarding library services, respondents often indicate that they want more of what the Library is already providing much more frequently than they suggest services not currently offered. Almost two-thirds of responses were for more programs, whether generally, or of a specific type.

Question 7: What is SCLSNJ doing well?

n = 731

NOTE: All responses for Programs are grouped together, with the blue segment representing responses referring to programs for kids, and the red segment representing all other program-related responses.

As this was an open-ended question, each response was coded to parse out the categories that people mentioned.
- Many of the responses for books were along the lines of "Checkout books" or "Borrowing books."
- Responses for Facilities included mentions of facilities being clean, welcoming, having places to read, meet, study, etc.
- Since the survey period coincided with the Summer Reading Challenge, many of the Promoting Literacy responses were specifically about the role of the Challenge in encouraging a love of reading.
- Responses coded as Everything also included "Yes" responses (presumably a misreading of the question as "Is SCLSNJ doing well?").
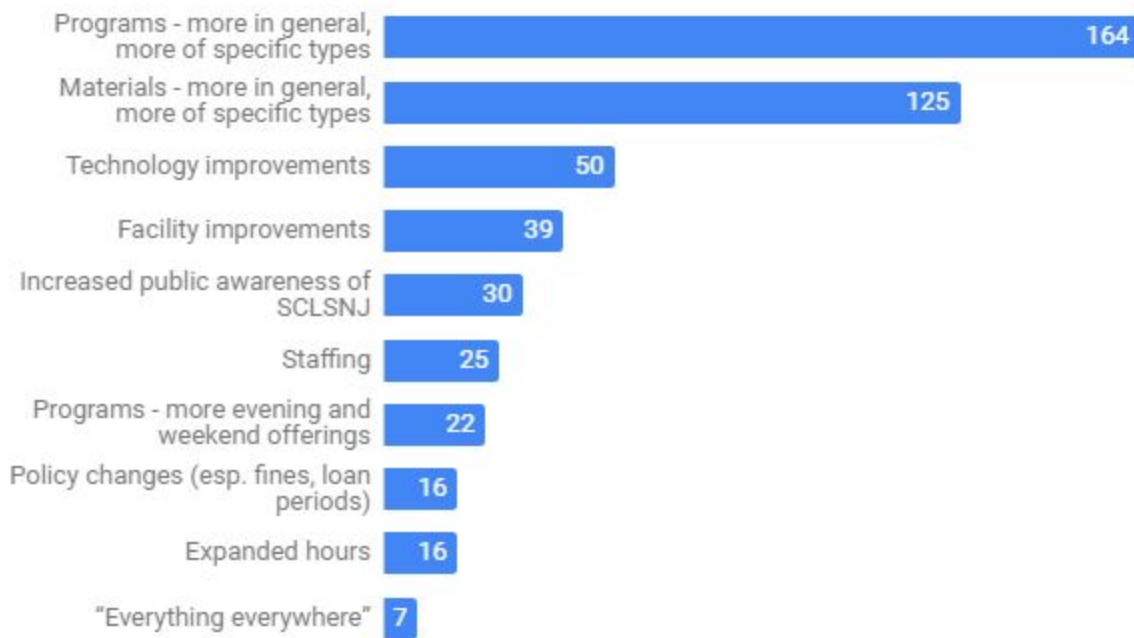
One respondent in particular said, "This is the best possible use of my tax dollars."

Question 8: How could SCLSNJ improve?
n = 743

Negative sentiment
3.6%

Positive sentiment
9.5%

Neutral sentiment
86.9%
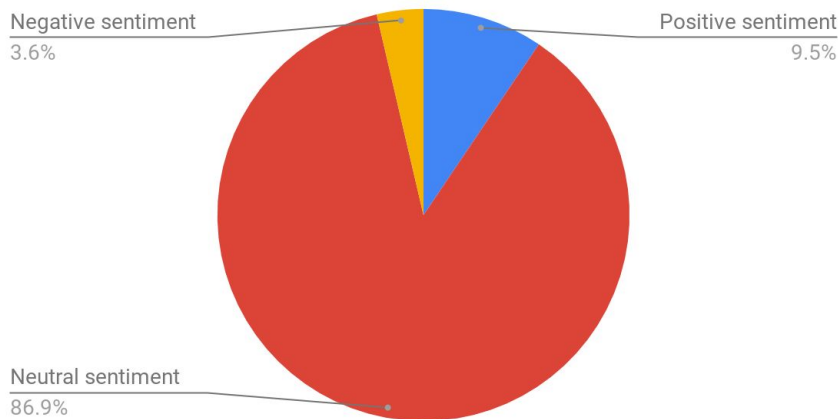
Broad categories for improvement

Patron comments about improvement are often in direct contradiction with each other:

website is improving - great job - it was unusable in the past	The new SCLSNJ web site is not as smooth and user friendly as the old one.
Review the materials offered to make sure there are materials that present all races and families in a positive light (e.g., there are many lists available for fiction books that represent strong positive African American characters; same for LGBTQ families).	Don't promote political agendas, especially in the children's department The activities planned for summer reading. "Reading Without Walls" is very thinly veiled political dig and is trying to push a globalization agenda.
Buying more of popular dvds to reduce wait times	Perhaps don't purchase so many copies of popular films in order to keep costs down.
Once again, it is a great library as it is but one of the main things I could think of is more lounging or study area for students By making more space for people to work	more books, less tables full of people getting tutored and meeting.
To me, I think the deadlines for the books checked out could be just a few days longer. Sometimes I cannot finish a book in that time, especially if I have a busy schedule.	More copies of the popular ebooks/digital audiobooks. Sometimes the wait lists are really long and people rarely return them earlier than their allotted 3 weeks (I don't think most people realize they can!)
By getting more books of other libraries have doubles or triples	Broaden your book base. I find that we don´t have many non mainstream options
Get more helpers, so if there are any other people who needs help, the don't have to wait.	More time open with less employees on site.
expand on prizes offered for reading program	SCLSNJ could improve by letting kids know that earning prizes isn't the reason why it's important to read.

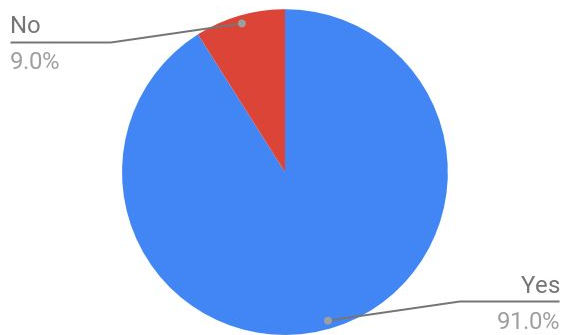| Offer programs at more than one location	I see similar programs at multiple locations. Why not streamline and have different branches specialize in different things?

Some of the more unusual suggestions for what we can do to improve include:
- To give us free books to keep forever like if you get one to borrow you could choose one to buy free.
- Give out free books on Social Studies and Science.
- They could have online ordering so if you can't get to the library you can order it online, and it could be delivered. Maybe with only a small fee
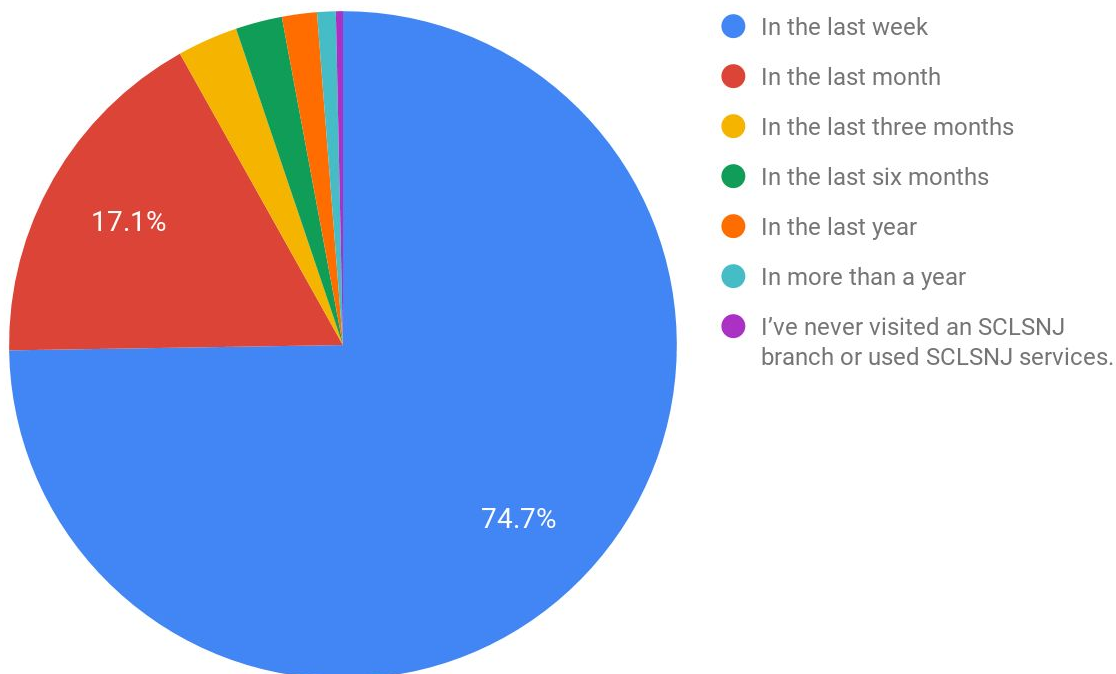- pet rental

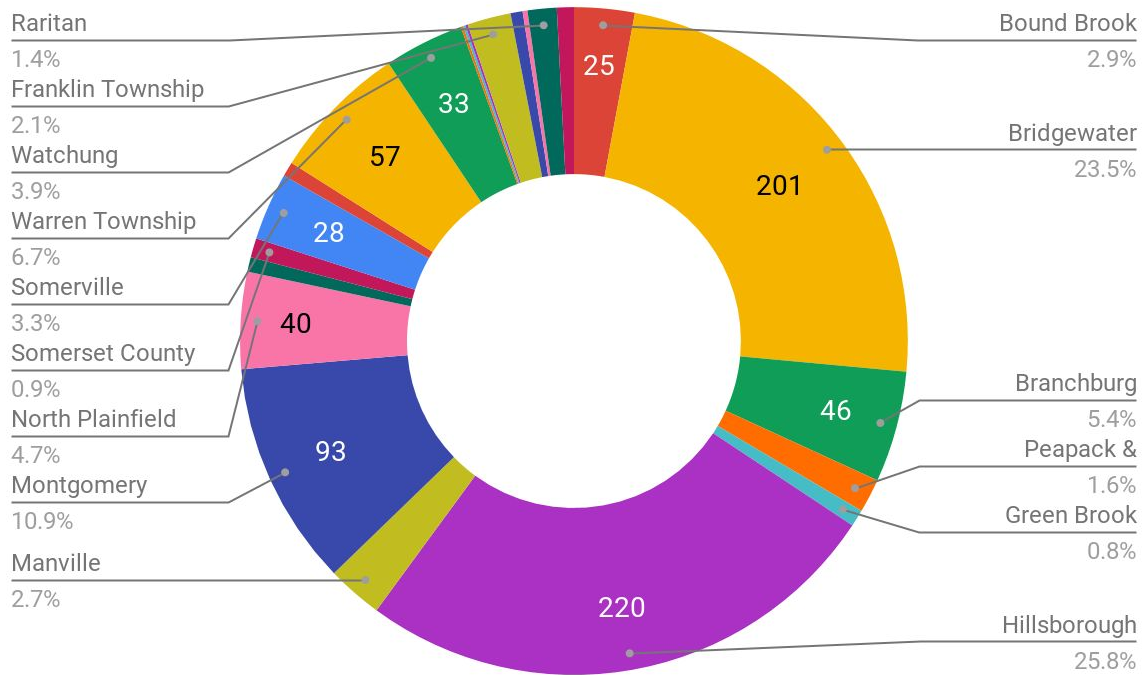## Question 9: Do you have an SCLSNJ library card?

n = 891

No
9.0%

Yes
91.0%

Question 10: When did you last visit an SCLSNJ branch or use SCLSNJ services?
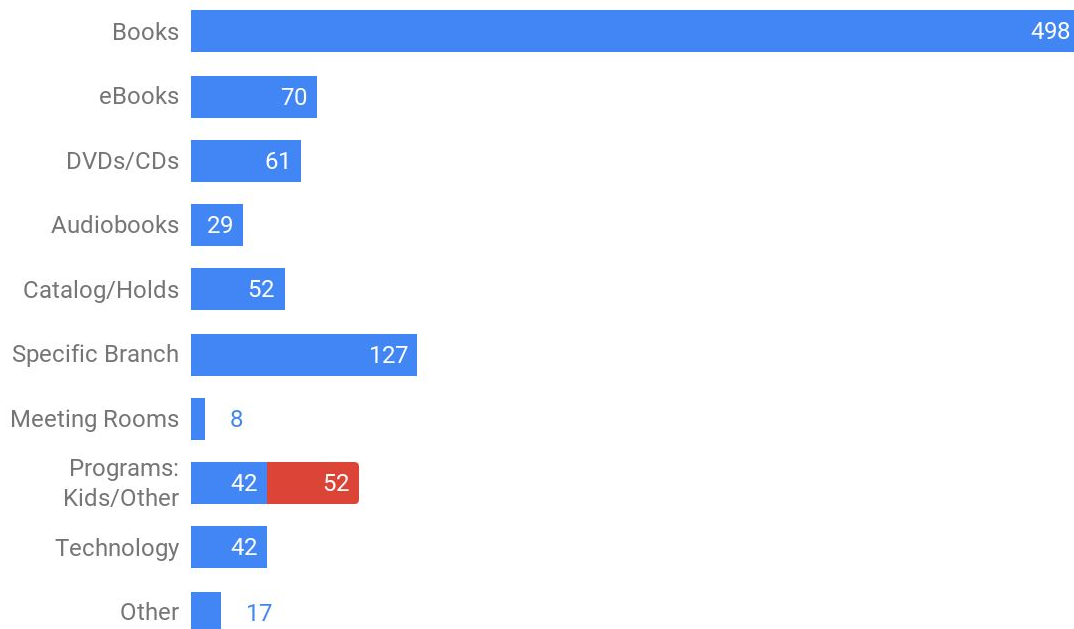
n = 890

17.1%

74.7%

- ● In the last week
- ● In the last month
- ● In the last three months
- ● In the last six months
- ● In the last year
- ● In more than a year
- ● I've never visited an SCLSNJ branch or used SCLSNJ services.

Question 11: What borough or township do you live in?

n = 854

Raritan 1.4%
Franklin Township 2.1%
Watchung 3.9%
Warren Township 6.7%
Somerville 3.3%
Somerset County 0.9%
North Plainfield 4.7%
Montgomery 10.9%
Manville 2.7%

Bound Brook 2.9%
Bridgewater 23.5%
Branchburg 5.4%
Peapack & 1.6%
Green Brook 0.8%
Hillsborough 25.8%

25, 33, 57, 28, 40, 93, 201, 46, 220

Question 12: What SCLSNJ service do you use most?

n = 853

Service	Count
Books	498
eBooks	70
DVDs/CDs	61
Audiobooks	29
Catalog/Holds	52
Specific Branch	127
Meeting Rooms	8
Programs: Kids/Other	42 / 52
Technology	42
Other	17

NOTE: All responses for Programs are grouped together, with the blue segment representing responses referring to programs for kids, and the red segment representing all other program-related responses.

As this was an open-ended question, each response was coded to parse out the categories that people mentioned. Many of the responses for books were along the lines of "Checkout books" or "Borrowing books." The other formats mentioned were most commonly in addition to a response that included books. Responses for a specific branch also included items like "Spending time in the library" or "Visiting the children's department."