

**Highlights From *Jewish Community Study of New York: 2002*
Focus on Jewish Households With Children on Long Island**

July 2006

This report describes the Jewish population on Long Island, with a focus on Jewish households with children. Long Island is home to one of the largest Jewish communities in the United States, comprising 380,000 people living in 134,000 Jewish households. More than one-third of Jewish households on Long Island have a child (under age 18) — more than the eight-county New York-area average of 28 percent. Significant differences exist, however, between the two counties of suburban Long Island. Brief summaries are below, with statistics drawn from published reports of the 2002 Jewish community study of New York as well as additional, previously unpublished data.¹

OVERVIEW: HOUSEHOLD AND POPULATION ESTIMATES

Nassau County contains 251,900 people residing in 89,400 Jewish households. People residing in Jewish households constitute 19 percent of the total population in the county, an increase of 2 percent from 1991. Seventy percent of the population is married (of which 17 percent is intermarried), 23 percent is age 17 and under, and 19 percent is age 65 and over. Nassau households are relatively economically secure. Nearly one-half of the households earn \$100,000 or more per year, compared with 31 percent overall in the eight counties.

In Suffolk County, there is a considerable difference between the number of people residing in Jewish households (127,600) and the number of Jewish people (90,200). This difference is attributable to the county’s intermarriage rate (41 percent), the highest of the eight counties, with the overall eight-county rate at 22 percent. The Jewish population as a proportion of the county’s total population (9 percent) has remained steady over the past decade. About 69 percent of the population is married; nearly one-quarter (24 percent) is age 17 and under; and 12 percent is age 65 and over, which is lower than the eight-county rate (18 percent). In terms of income profile, the highest proportion of Suffolk households (50 percent) earn between \$35,000 and \$99,999 per year.

Jewish Households, Jewish People, and All People Living in Jewish Households, 2002

	Nassau County	Suffolk County
Number of Jewish Households	89,400	44,300
Number of Jewish People	221,500	90,200
Number of People in Jewish Households	251,900	127,600

¹ Source: *The Jewish Community Study of New York: 2002: Geographic Profile*, Pearl Beck, Jacob B. Ukeles, and Ron Miller, Principal Investigators, UJA-Federation of New York, June 2004, and further analysis of the data set of the 2002 Jewish community study of New York by Jennifer Rosenberg. PDF versions of all Jewish community study publications are available at www.ujafedny.org/jewishcommunitystudy.

Nearly one-quarter of all people living in Jewish households on Long Island are children. Note that this figure includes both children being raised Jewish and children not being raised Jewish — see the discussion under “Children’s Jewish Education” for details.

Age Structure (Percentage of People in Jewish Households), Nassau and Suffolk Counties, 2002

	Nassau County		Suffolk County	
0 – 17	23%	57,900	24%	30,600
18 – 39	21%	52,900	27%	34,500
40 – 64	38%	95,700	37%	47,200
65 +	19%	47,900	12%	15,300

More than one-third of Jewish households in Nassau and Suffolk counties have children.

Jewish Households With Children, Nassau and Suffolk Counties, 2002

	Nassau County		Suffolk County	
Children Younger Than Age 18 in Household	34%	30,400	36%	15,800
No Children Younger Than Age 18 in Household	66%	59,000	64%	28,500
Total	100%	89,400	100%	44,300

* Here and throughout, numbers and percentages may not precisely add due to rounding for presentation.

DENOMINATIONAL IDENTIFICATION

The profile of denominational identification among Jewish respondents on Long Island has not changed much since 1991, with two exceptions: the percentage of respondents who consider themselves Orthodox has more than doubled in Nassau County (5 percent in 1991), and the proportion of Conservative Jews has declined in Nassau County (40 percent in 1991). Denominational shifts in Suffolk County, as well as among Reform and the other identification categories in Nassau County, have been minimal.

Jewish Respondent Denomination, Nassau and Suffolk Counties, 2002

	Nassau County		Suffolk County	
Orthodox	11%	8,800	3%	1,300
Conservative	35%	29,200	29%	10,800
Reform	39%	32,000	41%	15,300
Nondenominational – “Just Jewish”	11%	8,700	14%	5,100
Secular	4%	3,200	8%	2,800
Miscellaneous	1%	800	5%	1,900
All Other Households (respondent not Jewish, denomination refused)		6,700		7,300
Total	100%	89,400	100%	44,300

In Nassau County, Orthodox households are more likely than other Jewish households to have children (54 percent). Of Jewish households with children in Nassau County, the vast majority identify as Reform (41 percent) or Conservative (31 percent).

Households With Children and Denominational Affiliation, Nassau County, 2002

	Number of Households With Children	Percent of Denomination Households With Children	Percent of Households With Children That Identify With the Denomination
Orthodox Households	4,800	54%	18%
Conservative Households	8,500	29%	31%
Reform Households	11,200	35%	41%
Nondenominational Households	2,100	24%	8%
Secular Households	400	13%	2%
Miscellaneous Households	200	29%	<1%
All Other Households (respondent not Jewish, denomination refused)	3,600		
Total	30,400	N/A	100%

In Suffolk County, most households with children identify as Reform.

Households With Children and Denominational Affiliation, Suffolk County, 2002

	Number of Households With Children	Percent of Denomination Households With Children	Percent of Households With Children That Identify With the Denomination
Orthodox Households	200	12%	1%
Conservative Households	2,300	22%	20%
Reform Households	6,000	39%	52%
Nondenominational Households	1,100	23%	10%
Secular Households	1,000	37%	9%
Miscellaneous Households	1,000	53%	8%
All Other Households (respondent not Jewish, denomination refused)	4,200		
Total	15,800	N/A	100%

Suffolk County has a smaller proportion of teenagers in Jewish households than Nassau.

Estimated Numbers and Percentages of Children in Jewish Households, by Age and Denomination, Nassau and Suffolk Counties, 2002

	Ages 0 – 5		Ages 6 – 12		Ages 13 – 17		Total	Percent
	Nassau	Suffolk	Nassau	Suffolk	Nassau	Suffolk	Long Island	Long Island
Orthodox Households	2,600	<100	4,500	100	3,700	300	11,200	15%
Conservative Households	3,100	900	7,300	1,900	6,600	1,230	21,000	29%
Reform Households	3,900	3,000	6,300	5,400	8,100	3,300	29,900	41%
Nondenominational Households	1,200	1,200	1,700	500	900	<100	5,600	8%
Secular Households	300	300	100	700	200	900	2,500	3%
Miscellaneous Households	<100	200	<100	900	200	1,000	2,500	3%
Total	11,200	5,600	19,900	9,500	19,700	6,800	72,700	100%

Note: An estimated 15,800 children live in Long Island households in which the respondent is not Jewish or denomination was refused, making denomination categorization impossible, or insufficient information was provided for this detailed breakdown of ages.

CHILDREN'S JEWISH EDUCATION

Eighty percent of children on Long Island are being raised Jewish or “Jewish and something else,” and 20 percent of children on Long Island are not being raised Jewish. The difference between Nassau and Suffolk counties is dramatic, reflective of the high rate of intermarriage in Suffolk County. In the eight-county New York area, almost every child in an inmarried Jewish household is being raised Jewish (99 percent), and among conversionary households, 83 percent are being raised Jewish or “Jewish and something else.” In contrast, fewer than half of all children in New York intermarried households are being raised as Jews: 30 percent as Jewish and another 18 percent as “Jewish and something else.”

Are Children Being Raised Jewish, Nassau and Suffolk Counties, 2002

Children Are Being Raised	Nassau County	Suffolk County
Jewish or Jewish and Something Else	91%	59%
Note Being Raised Jewish	9%	41%

Households that reported they were raising their children Jewish were asked for the types of formal Jewish education, if any, their children have participated in. The majority of children on Long Island obtain their formal Jewish education in supplementary schools. National Jewish data (NJPS 2000 – 01) shows a similar education pattern for Jewish children, with 29 percent enrolled in a Jewish day school and just over 20 percent of Jewish children ages 6 to 17 without any formal Jewish education.

Jewish Education of Children Ages 6 to 17 Being Raised Jewish or Jewish and Something Else, Nassau and Suffolk Counties, 2002

	Nassau County	Suffolk County
Full-time Day School (Current or Previous)	32%	12%
Supplementary Jewish Education (Current or Previous)	58%	65%
No Jewish Education	10%	23%
Total	100%	100%

Survey respondents with at least one child aged 6 to 17 were asked if — during the five years preceding the survey — financial cost had prevented them from sending a child to a full-time Jewish day school. In Nassau County, 12 percent of household respondents replied affirmatively, indicating that cost had been a preventing factor at some time. In contrast, 20 percent of survey respondents with children in Suffolk County cited cost as a factor preventing day-school enrollment.

OTHER JEWISH CONNECTIONS

Jewish connections can be expressed through a variety of avenues — believing, behaving, and belonging. The following table explores the Jewish connections of households with children,

looking at such factors as synagogue membership, participation in Jewish cultural events, travel to Israel, and intermarriage, as well as at subjective perceptions of feeling part of a Jewish community. The significant differences on most measures correlate with other findings of the *Jewish Community Study of New York: 2002*, with higher rates of Jewish connections in Nassau County and lower levels in Suffolk County. As such, it is interesting to note that among families with children, fairly similar percentages in both counties reported attending a Jewish cultural event within the last year.

Jewish Connections of Households With Children, Nassau and Suffolk Counties, 2002

	Nassau County	Suffolk County
Household Belongs to Synagogue	70%	40%
Household Attended Jewish Cultural Event in the Last Year	69%	62%
Respondent Has Traveled to Israel	48%	21%
Respondent Said Being Jewish is "Very Important"	69%	50%
Respondent Feels Part of a Jewish Community	80%	48%
Intermarriage	19%	55%
Inmarriage or Conversionary Marriage	81%	45%