

City of Schertz

Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2014: Live and Play!

Chapter 5

*Citizen Survey and
Public Input*

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Public Input*

**City of Schertz
Recreation
Center
621 Westchester**

Diversity
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Public Input Regarding Schertz’s Current State

The recommendations of the 2014 Schertz Strategic Parks and Recreation Master Plan are designed to reflect the recreational needs and desires of the citizens of Schertz. Citizen input was key to determining what facilities are most used, where key needs exist, and what level of emphasis the citizens of Schertz would like to place on key recommendations of the plan.

Public involvement is a key part of the process of developing the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The goal of public involvement was to obtain input from the City of Schertz residents about their community priorities and understand the unique characteristics of the City of Schertz and its various neighborhoods. The input process also familiarized citizens with the master planning process and created awareness of opportunities for improvement. The benefits of having citizens involved in the planning process developed a sense of ownership and support for the overall Master Plan.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to gather citizen input.

Public input methods included:

- An online survey, available to any resident of the community so that all people had the opportunity to specifically voice their opinion.
- Multiple interviews with representatives of governmental entities in Schertz and key stakeholder groups.

Online Survey

Citizens were given the opportunity to log onto the City of Schertz’s website and take a survey pertaining to parks and recreation. The survey was modeled after the questionnaire from the public input meetings with the questions being the same. The extensive questionnaire asked about topics such as beautification in the city, connectivity with trails and bike lanes, preservation of natural resources, recreation and programming, and funding strategies for the department. The purpose of the questionnaire and the other surveys was to establish a philosophy which the citizens of Schertz wanted the Parks and Recreation Department to follow.

One-on-One Interviews

One-on-one interviews were conducted with community leaders and other departments within the city government. The individuals were selected based upon consultation with city staff. These interviews provided a broad but varied understanding of needs and concerns, as well as a historical perspective. The interviews also afforded the opportunity to provide these community leaders with a project overview. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to gather citizen input.

Reliability of Survey Data

Confidence Interval & Confidence Level

The **confidence interval** (also called margin of error) is the plus-or-minus figure usually reported in newspaper or television opinion poll results. For example, if you use a confidence interval of 4 and 47% percent of your sample picks an answer you can be "sure" that if you had asked the question of the entire relevant population between 43% (47-4) and 51% (47+4) would have picked that answer.

The **confidence level** tells you how sure you can be. It is expressed as a percentage and represents how often the true percentage of the population who would pick an answer lies within the confidence interval. The 95% confidence level means you can be 95% certain; the 99% confidence level means you can be 99% certain. Most researchers use the 95% confidence level.

When you put the confidence level and the confidence interval together, you can say that you are 95% sure that the true percentage of the population is between 43% and 51%. The wider the confidence interval you are willing to accept, the more certain you can be that the whole population answers would be within that range.

Factors that Affect Confidence Intervals

There are three factors that determine the size of the confidence interval for a given confidence level:

- Sample size
- Percentage
- Population size

Sample Size

The larger your sample size, the more sure you can be that their answers truly reflect the population. This indicates that for a given confidence level, the larger your sample size, the smaller your confidence interval. However, the relationship is not linear (i.e., doubling the sample size does not halve the confidence interval).

Percentage

Your accuracy also depends on the percentage of your sample that picks a particular answer. If 99% of your sample said "Yes" and 1% said "No," the chances of error are remote, irrespective of sample size. However, if the percentages are 51% and 49% the chances of error are much greater. It is easier to be sure of extreme answers than of middle-of-the-road ones. When determining the sample size needed for a given level of accuracy you must use the worst case percentage (50%). You should also use this percentage if you want to determine a general level of accuracy for a sample you already have. To determine the confidence interval for a specific answer your sample has given, you can use the percentage picking that answer and get a smaller interval.

Population Size

This may be the number of people in a city you are studying, such as the number of actual people, or the number of household, regardless of the number of people in each household. Often you may not know the exact population size. The mathematics of probability proves the size of the population is irrelevant unless the size of the sample exceeds a few percent of the total population you are examining. This means that a sample of 500 people is equally useful in examining the opinions of a state of 15,000,000 as it would a city of 100,000. Population size is only likely to be a factor when you work with a relatively small and known group of people (e.g., the members of an association).

The confidence interval calculations assume you have a genuine random sample of the relevant population. If your sample is not truly random, you cannot rely on the intervals. Non-random samples usually result from some flaw in the sampling procedure. An example of such a flaw is to only call people during the day and miss almost everyone who works. For most purposes, the non-working population cannot be assumed to accurately represent the entire (working and non-working) population.

Survey methodology - Residents throughout the city were able to complete an on-line survey from October 2012 through March 2013. The survey link was placed on the City's main web site with a pop-up feature that informed visitors of the survey. Additionally, citizens were advised of the survey by an article in the City's Schertz Tales Magazine and a notification line added to mailed city water bills. Survey administration included the use in IP address filtering, thereby only allowing each location to take the survey one time. This was done in order to limit the survey to one attempt per household.

A total of 329 surveys were completed from a survey population size of approximately 10,916 households in the City of Schertz.

In our survey, 329 respondents based on a population of 10,916 households yielded a 90% confidence level with an error interval of $\pm 4.5\%$.

The confidence level indicates that on any given question, the responses received reflect the way most residents of Schertz would respond to the same question. This was a slight increase from the survey conducted when developing the 2007 Schertz Parks & Open Space Master Plan, where 252 individuals participated in the survey.

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Survey Results

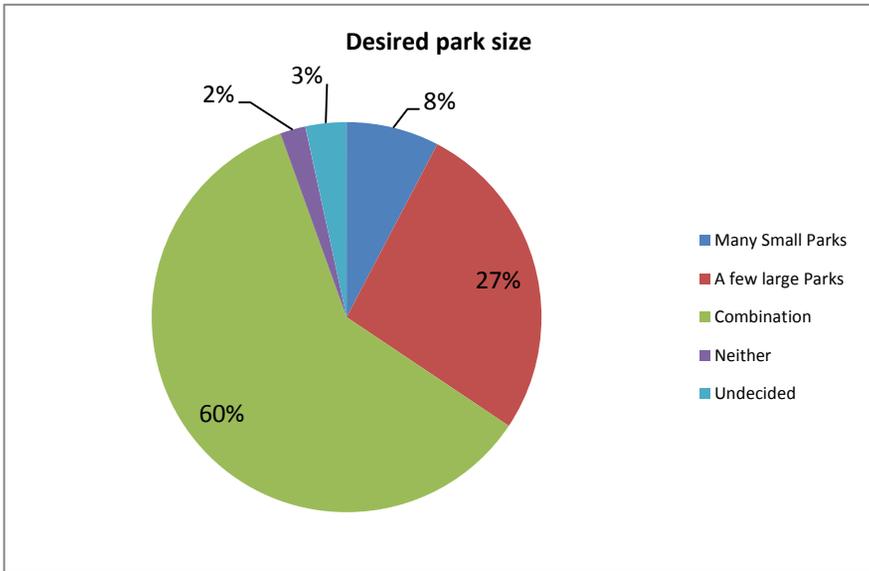
Question 1 – Which of the following do you think is/are important for the City of Schertz public parks and recreation facilities to provide for its citizens (check all that apply)

Area	Response
Accessible place to enjoy nature	75.2%
Fun for participants and observers	69.7%
Improved physical and mental health	67.2%
Improve quality of life	63.8%
Increase in community pride	50.8%
Structure and supervision for children and youth	43.7%
Attraction for new business	23.2%
Cultural education	22.0%
Increase in tourism	14.2%
Other	12.7%

Question 2 – Check the park and recreation facilities which you or members of your household have used in the past year.

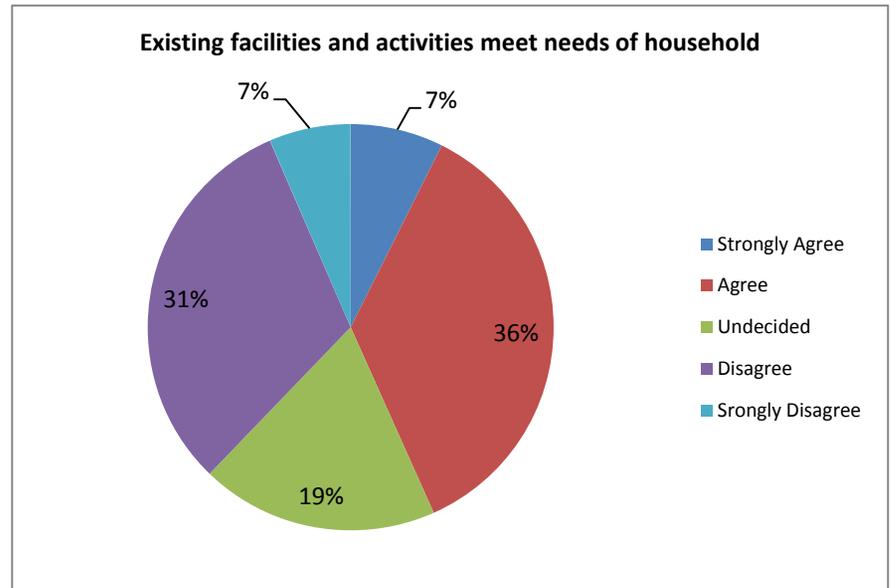
Facility	Response
Pickrell Park	74%
Schertz (YMCA)	39.7%
Schertz Library Playscape	32.3%
Existing Trails	29.7%
Crescent Bend Nature Park	27.7%
Schertz Community Center	27.3%
Schertz Baseball Fields	22.3%
Ashley Park	18.7%
Northcliffe Park	15.3%
Woodland Oaks Park	15.0%
Schertz Soccer Complex	11.7%
Thulemeyer Park	7.3%
Cut Off Park	6.7%
Northcliffe Community Center	6.7%
Forest Ridge Park	5.0%
Gutierrez Xeriscape Park	2.7%
Lone Oak Park	2.3%

Question 3 – Would you prefer to have many small parks developed within the city or would you prefer to have a few large parks developed?



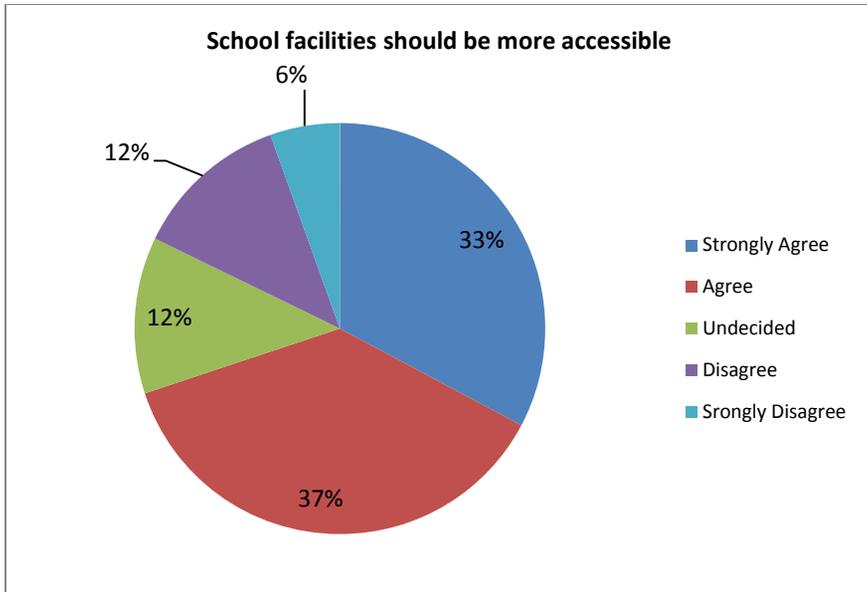
When asked if they preferred many small parks, few larger parks, a combination or neither, the majority (60.1%) preferred a combination of large and small parks, with an additional 26.7% preferring large parks.

Question 4 – Which of the following best describes your feeling on the following statement: “the existing facilities and activities for the City of Schertz Parks & Recreation are adequate and meet the needs of my household.”



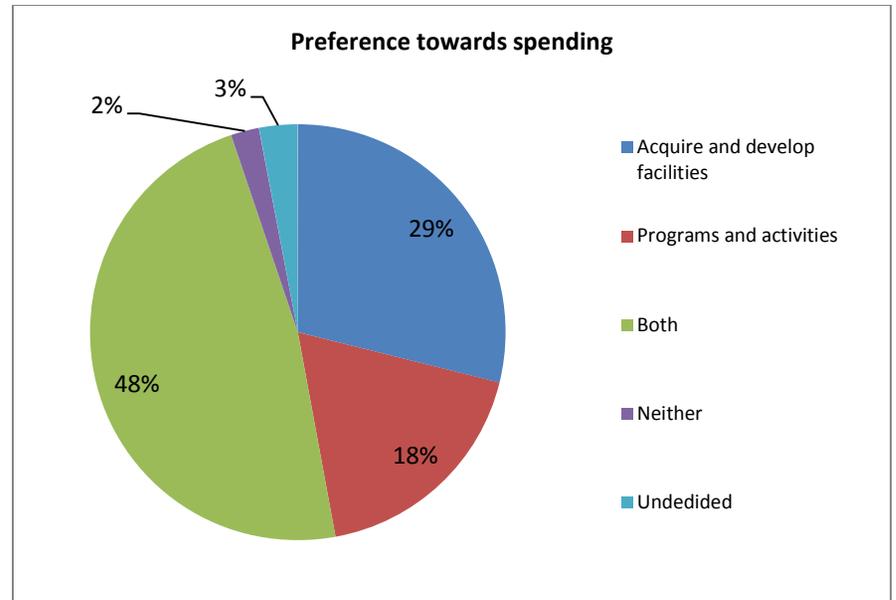
Residents were asked to rate how well the parks facilities and activities meet the needs of their households. This question is very important in that it establishes a base level that can be tracked in subsequent surveys over time. Approximately 43% of the citizens in taking the survey felt that the current parks and activities met their household needs. Approximately 38% of the respondents felt that our facilities and activities DO NOT meet their needs. 19% were undecided.

Question 5 – Which of the following best describes your feeling on the following statement: “Current recreation facilities at schools should be more accessible to the public during non-school use.”



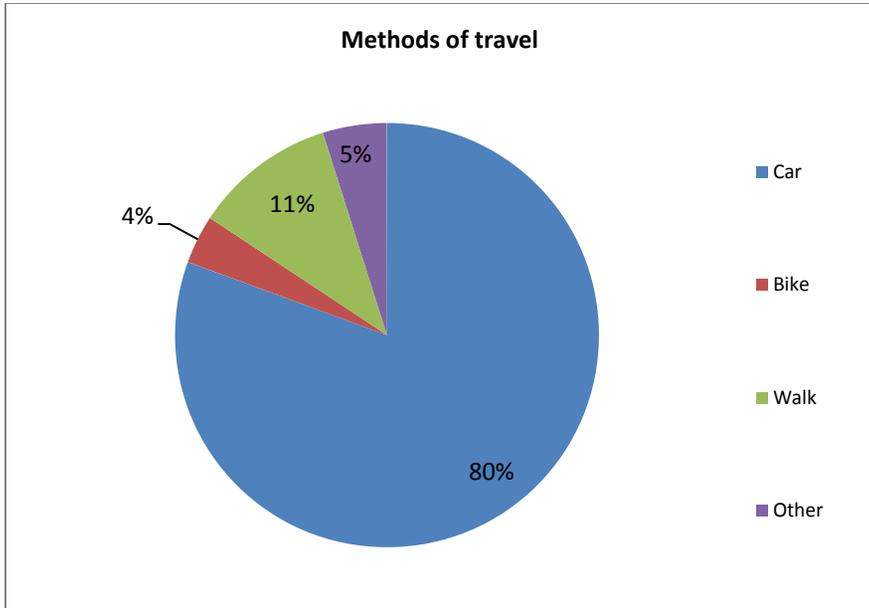
Approximately 70% of survey respondents expressed a desire to have school recreation facilities be made more accessible to the public during non-school use. This area should be addressed as an opportunity for increased partnership and cooperation between the City of Schertz and the Schertz Cibolo Universal City Independent School District (SCUC ISD).

Question 6 – If spending were increased for parks and recreation, would you prefer the money be spent on acquiring and developing new parks and facilities or developing and operating recreational programs and activities?



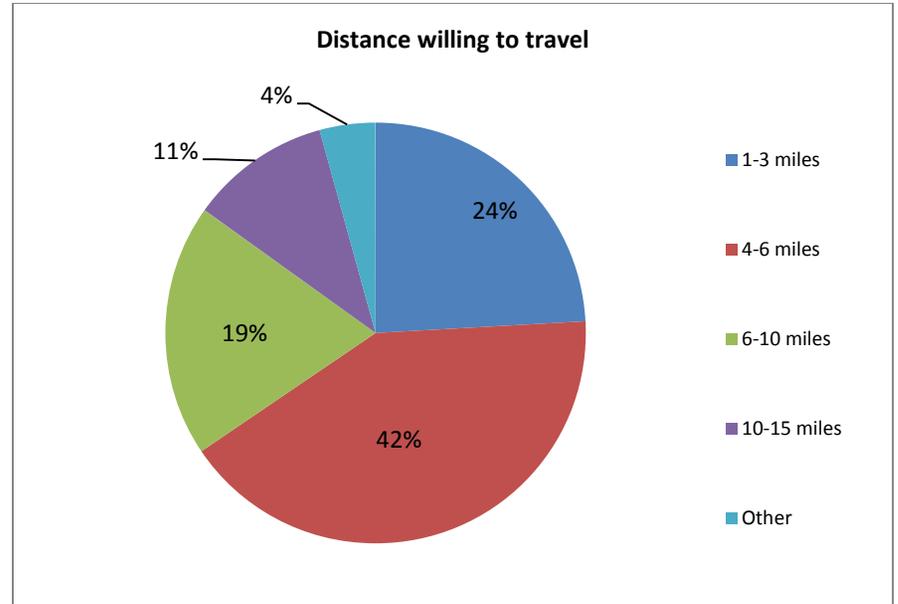
While 29% of the survey respondents preferred to see additional funding go to acquiring additional parkland and 18% preferred to see additional funding be spent on recreational programs & activities, the majority of respondents, 48% preferred a balance approach to address both areas!

Question 7 – What means of transportation do you usually use to get to a park or recreation facility.



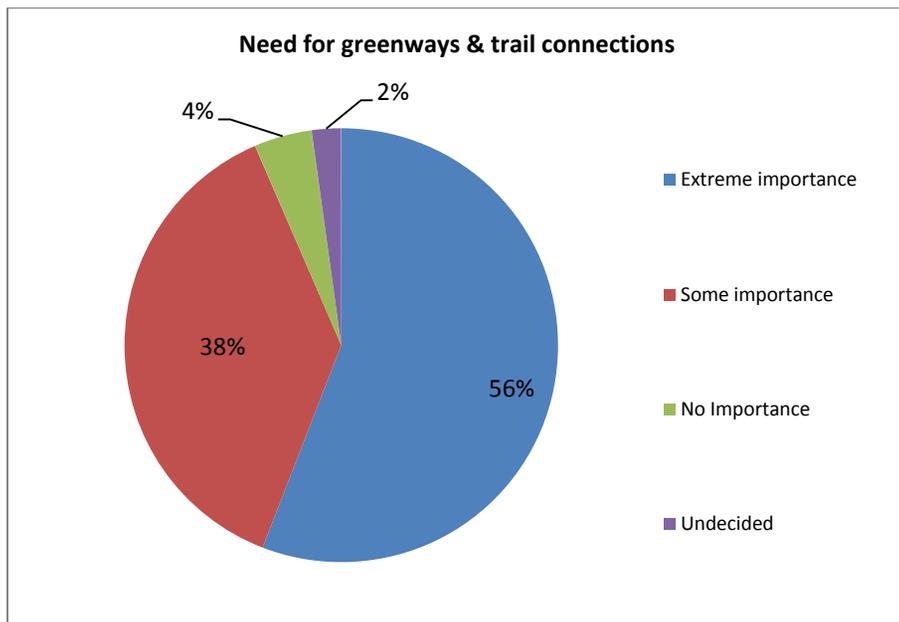
80% of the survey respondents indicated that they drive when going to a park or recreational facility. 11% indicated that they walk and 4% use a bike.

Question 8 – How far would you be willing to travel from your home to use a City of Schertz Parks & Recreation Facility or attend an activity?



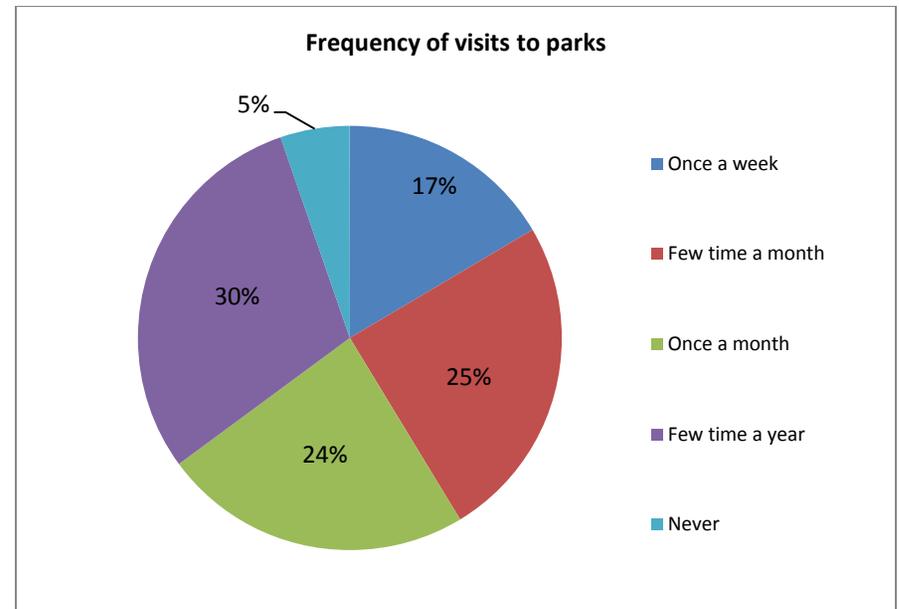
With regards to travel distance, 24% indicated that they would be willing to travel 1-3 miles to get to a park or recreational facility; 42% stated 4-6 miles; 19% stated 6-10 miles.

Question 9 – Which of the following best describe how you perceive the need for greenways, which would include trails for walking, biking, and running, that would interconnect many areas, parks and school facilities within the City of Schertz.



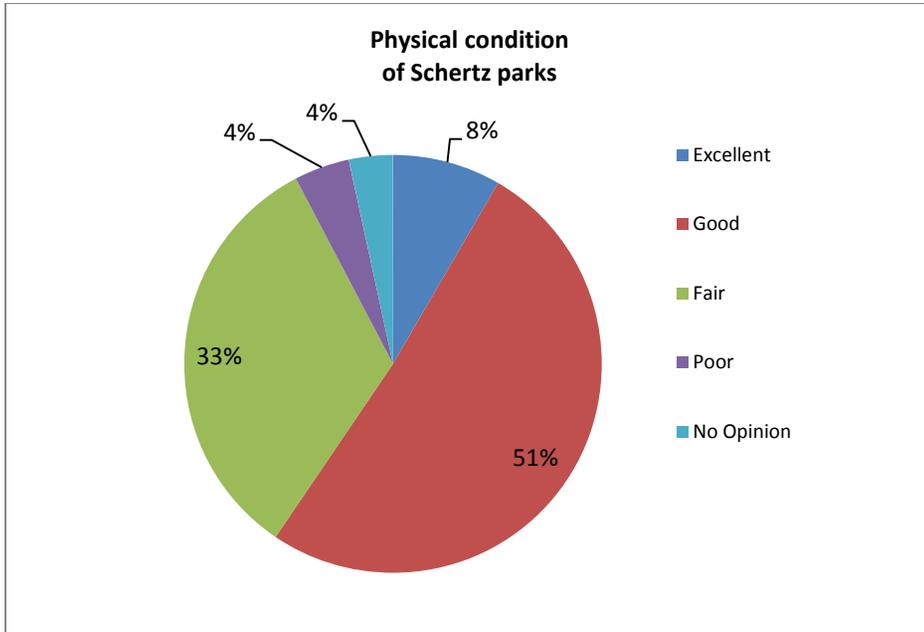
94% of survey respondents placed an important need for established greenway, including bicycle, walking and running trails designed to interconnect various areas and facilities within the city!

Question 10 – How often have you and members of your household visited City of Schertz parks during the past year?



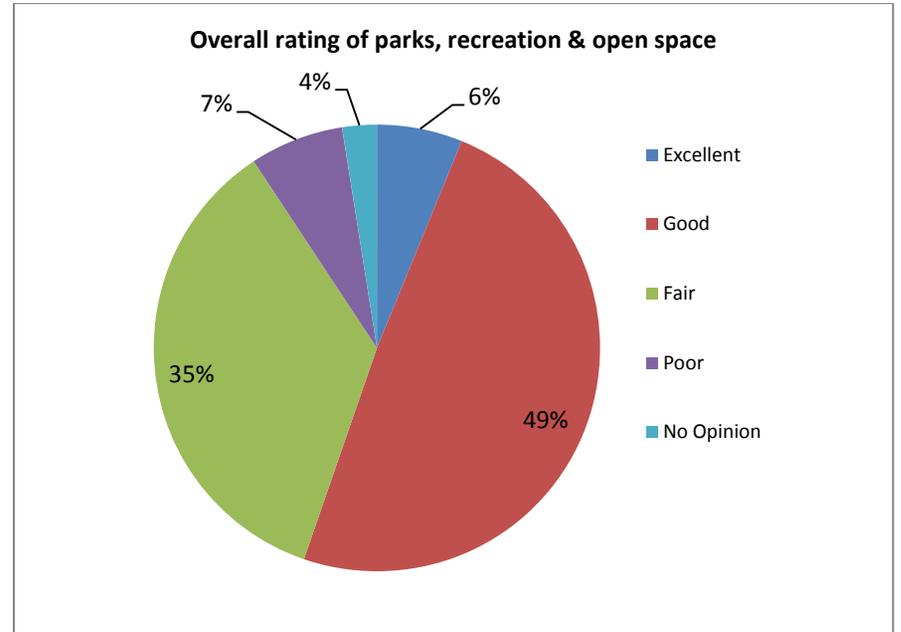
Residents were asked to indicate how often they have visited a Schertz park in the past year. 66% indicated that they visit a park at least once a month or more often.

Question 11 - How would you rate the physical condition of the parks in Schertz?



While 59% of survey respondents rated the physical condition of our existing parks favorably, 41% rated them as fair or poor or had no opinion.

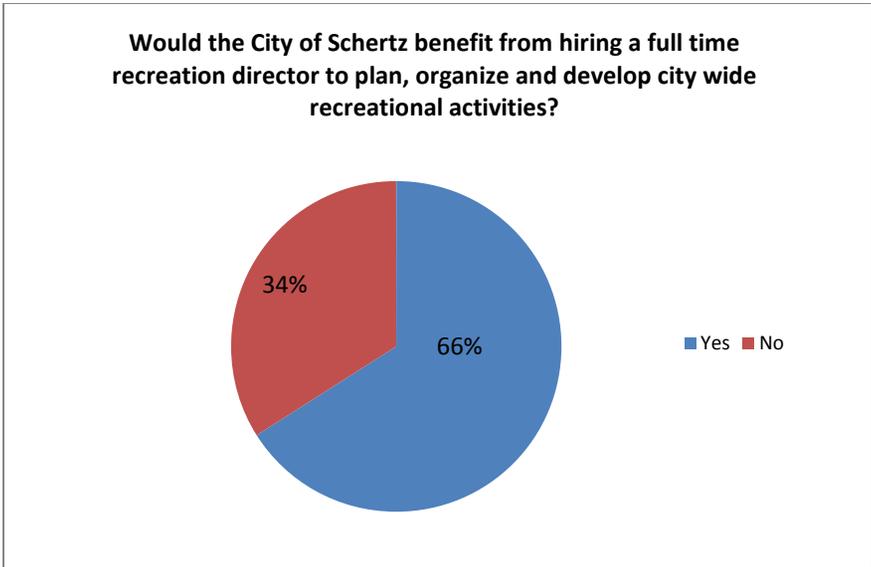
Question 12 – Overall, how would you rate the parks, recreation opportunities and open space in Schertz?



55% of survey respondents gave the overall rating of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space a favorable rating, 35% gave an overall rating of “fair”, 7% rated it “poor” with 4% having “no opinion”.

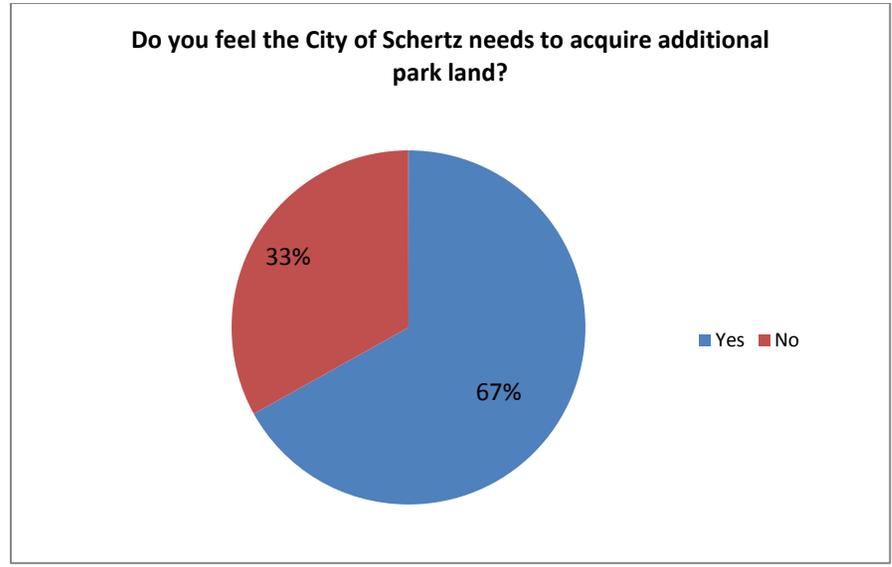
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Question 13 – Do you feel the City of Schertz would benefit from hiring a full time Recreation Director to plan, organize and develop city wide recreational activities?



66% of survey respondents felt that hiring a “full time” Recreation Director to plan, organize and develop recreational activities would benefit the city!

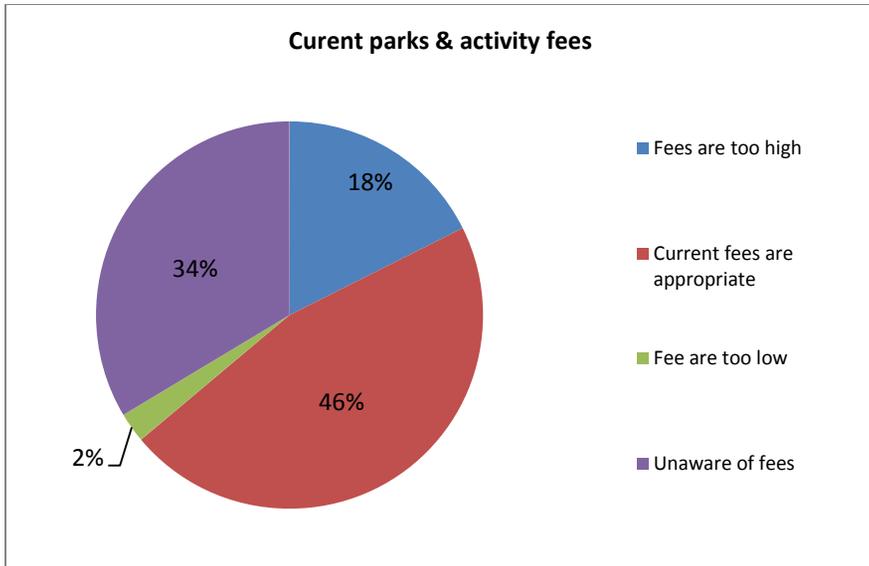
Question 14 – Do you feel the City of Schertz needs to acquire additional parkland?



67% of survey respondents indicated that the City of Schertz needs to acquire additional park land.

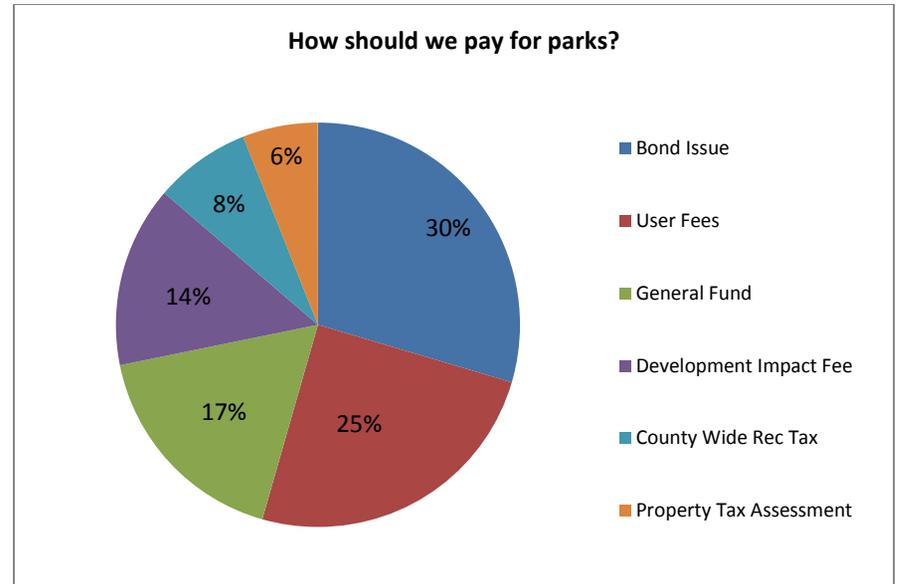
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Question 15 – Which of the following best describes your feelings regarding the fees associated with city parks and activities, such as pool passes, pavilion rentals, community center fees, etc?



18% of survey respondents felt that current fees associated with Parks & Recreation are too high and 46% believe the current fees are appropriate. 34% of respondents were unaware of the current fees

Question 16 - How should the City pay for new and added park facilities and programs?



30% of survey respondents indicated they were in favor of continued Bond Issues as a vehicle to pay for Parks & Recreation. 25% were in favor of users fees.

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Question 17 – In which recreation programs or activities would you or members of your household be most interested in participating?

Activity	Percentage of respondents Interested
Hiking	89.90%
Biking	87.50%
Health / Wellness Programs	86.00%
Fitness Classes	83.40%
Fishing	74.70%
Water Exercise	73.10%
Nature Study	69.80%
Swim Lessons	64.20%
Dance Classes	60.50%
Tennis	55.60%
Soccer	53.90%
Basketball	52.30%
Football	50.00%
Volleyball	49.30%
Sand Volleyball	48.80%
Baseball-T/baseball	46.00%
Racquetball	44.90%
Softball	42.20%
Competition swim team	41.00%
Gymnastics	40.00%
Youth Wrestling	20.10%
In-Line hockey	17.20%

Question 18 – Do you feel that there is a definite need, somewhat or not a need for any of the following ATHLETIC facilities that would be added to existing parks or in future parks in the City of Schertz?

Facility	Ranking
Running Tracks	1.79
Basketball Courts	2.18
Tennis Courts	2.20
Volleyball Courts	2.24
Practice Athletic Fields	2.30
Soccer Fields	2.37
Football Fields	2.47
Baseball Fields	2.55
Softball Fields	2.57

Question 18 lists the respondents' interests from most needed to least needed with regards to athletic facilities for the city.

Question 17 lists the respondents' interests from high to low regarding desired activities.

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Question 19 – Do you feel there is a definite need, somewhat or not a need for any of the following RECREATION facilities that would be added to existing parks or in future parks in the City of Schertz?

Recreation Program	Ranking
Hike / Bike Trails	1.42
Natural / Open Spaces	1.49
Fitness Trail with Exercise Stations	1.68
Indoor Swimming Pool	1.75
Picnic Pavilions	1.81
Fishing Areas	1.87
Playgrounds	1.88
Water Park / Children Water Playground	1.93
Outdoor Swimming Pool	1.97
Botanic / Flower Garden Areas	2.02
Senior Centers	2.03
Skateboard Park	2.22
Amphitheater	2.24
Disc Golf	2.43
Horse Shoe Pits	2.46

Question 20 – Check the appropriate spaces if you would like to see the City of Schertz Parks & Recreation increase its activities for the following groups during the following hours.

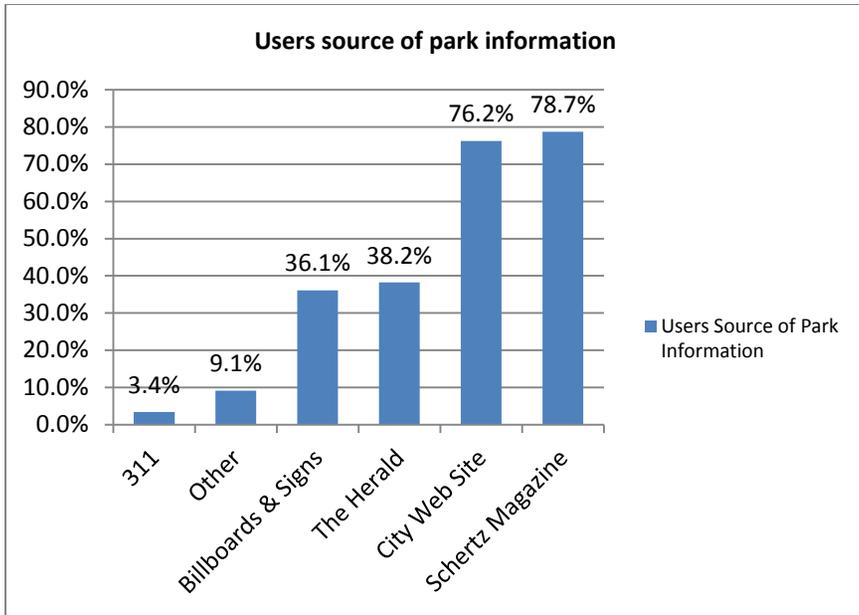
20. Check the appropriate spaces if you would like to see City of Schertz Parks & Recreation increase its activities for the following groups during the following hours					
	Weekdays between 8 am – 3 pm	Weekdays between 3 pm – 6 pm	Weekdays after 6 pm	Weekends	Rating Count
Pre-school or younger (4yrs or under)	59.0% (98)	28.9% (48)	10.8% (18)	55.4% (92)	166
Elementary School (5-11 yrs old)	8.4% (16)	58.9% (112)	26.8% (51)	62.1% (118)	190
Middle School (12-14 yrs old)	4.9% (9)	47.8% (88)	40.2% (74)	62.5% (115)	184
High School (15-18 yrs old)	2.7% (5)	34.9% (65)	54.8% (102)	70.4% (131)	186
Young Adults (18-24)	11.0% (19)	21.5% (37)	61.6% (106)	77.9% (134)	172
Adults (24-65)	21.5% (45)	24.9% (52)	68.4% (143)	80.9% (169)	209
Seniors (Over 65)	61.6% (106)	34.3% (59)	31.4% (54)	57.0% (98)	172
				answered question	251
				skipped question	78

Question 20 provides the respondents' input on when they believe the city needs to expand activities for the residents, based on age groups.

Question 19 lists the respondents' interests from most needed to least needed with regards to recreation facilities for the

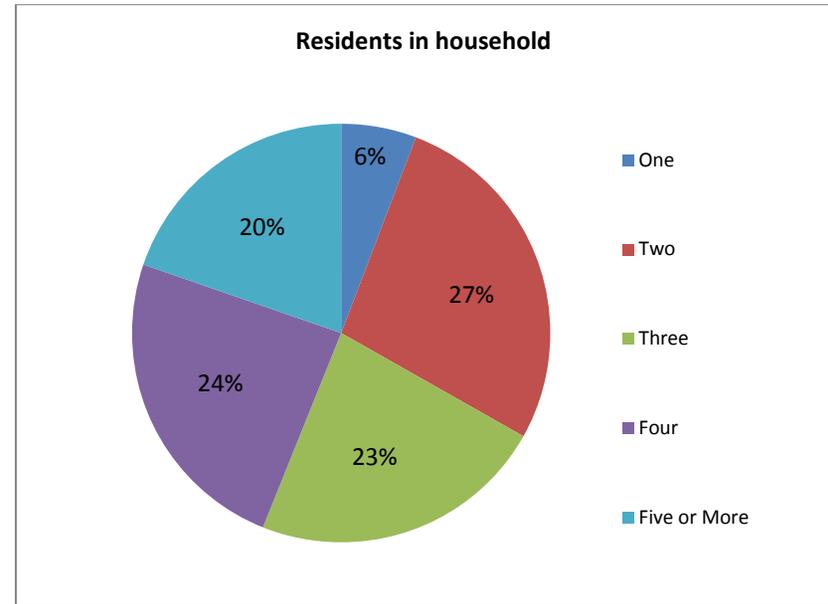
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21. Please identify the methods you use to get information about activities offered by the City of Schertz Parks & Recreations facilities and activities (check all that apply)



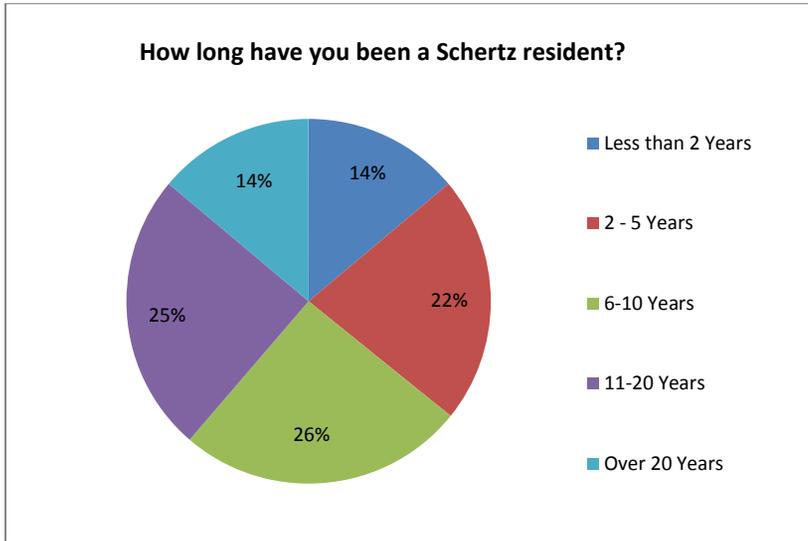
Question 21 indicated that most residents received information regarding parks & recreation facilities and recreational activities from the city web site and the Schertz Magazine!

22. How many persons, including yourself, reside within your household?



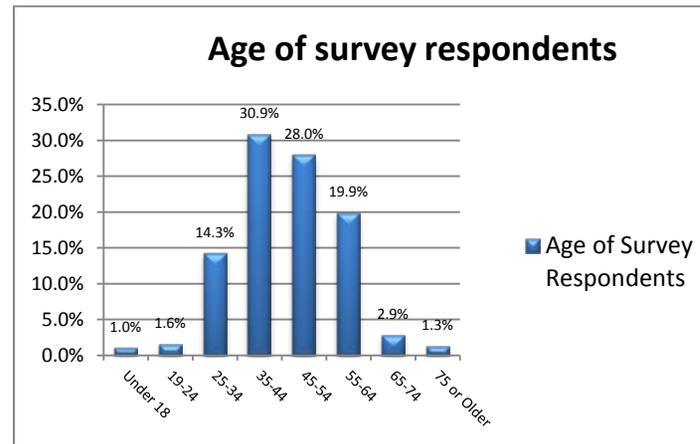
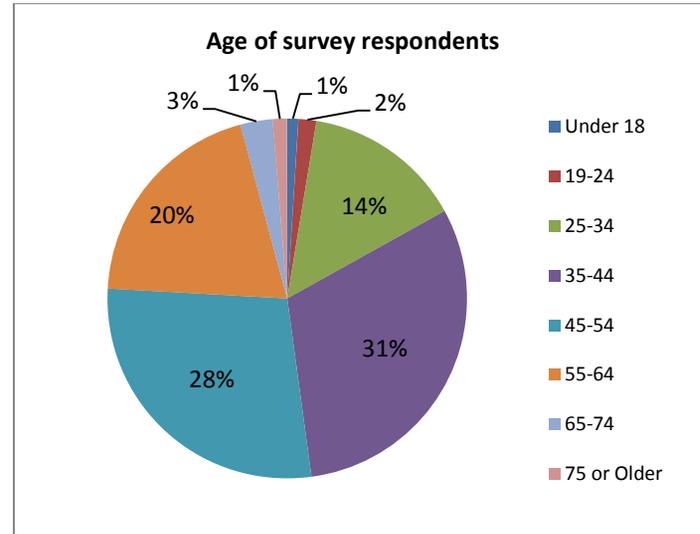
67% of the respondents reported 3 or more persons, living in their household.

23. How long have you been a resident of the City of Schertz?

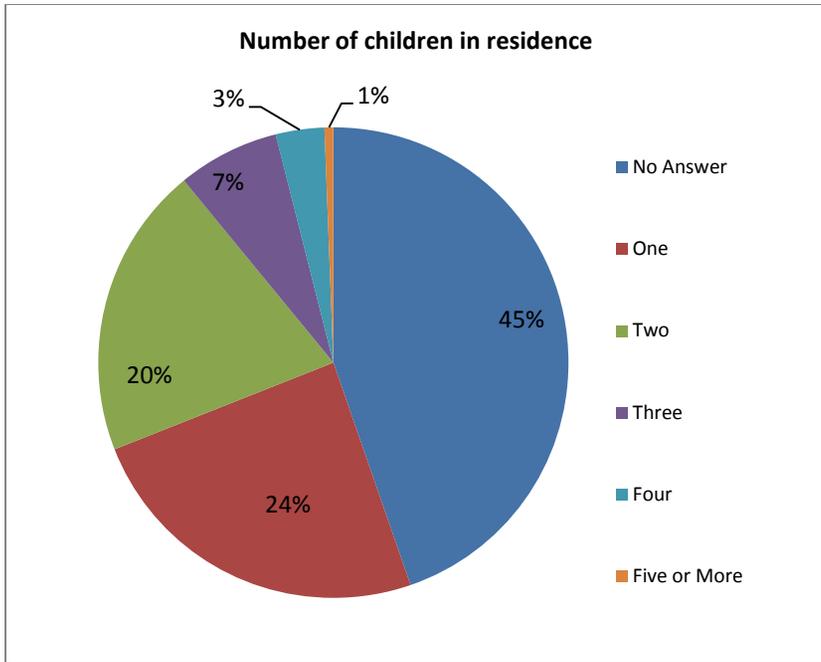


65% of the respondents have been residing in Schertz for 6 or more years.

24. What is your age?

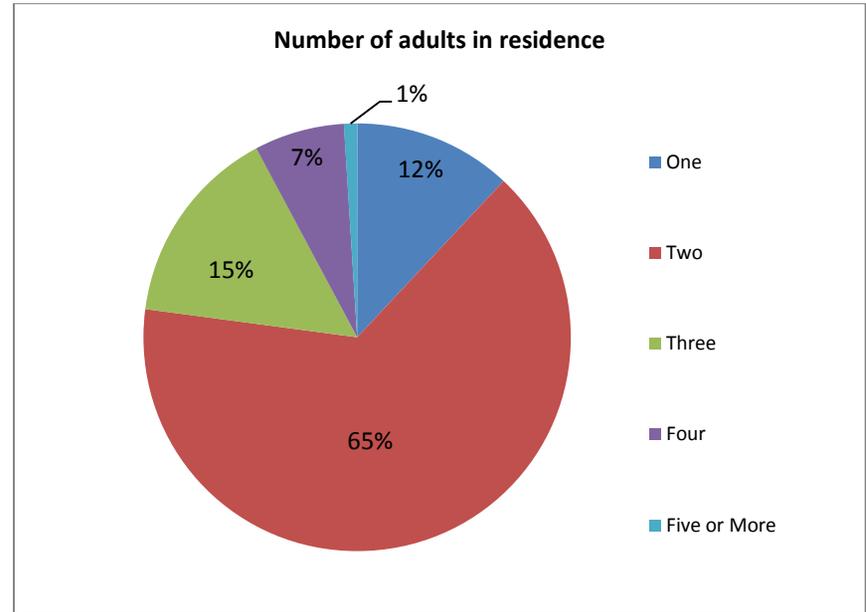


25. How many children (under the age of 18) live at your residence?



55% of the survey respondents reported having children in their household with 31% reported having 2 or more children!

26. How many adults (age 18 or older) live at your residence?



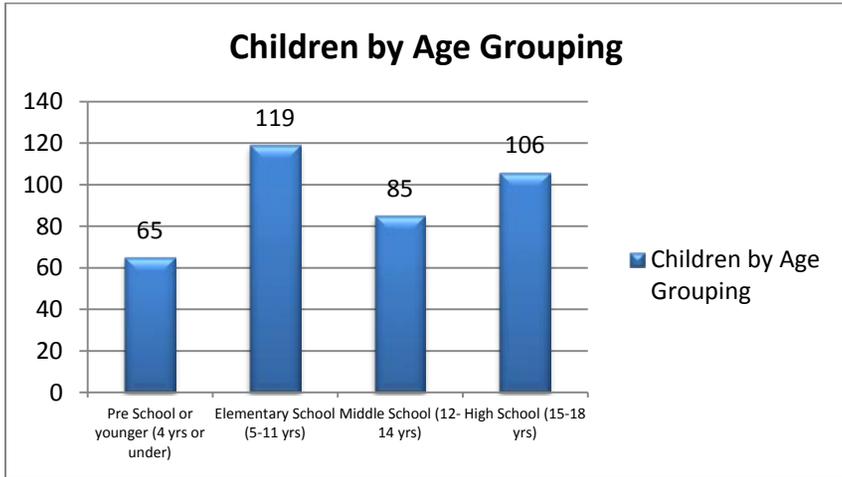
The results from question 26 indicated that 88% of the respondents had more than one adult in the residence over 18 years of age. 65% of the respondents had 2 adults in the residence; an additional 23% had three or more.

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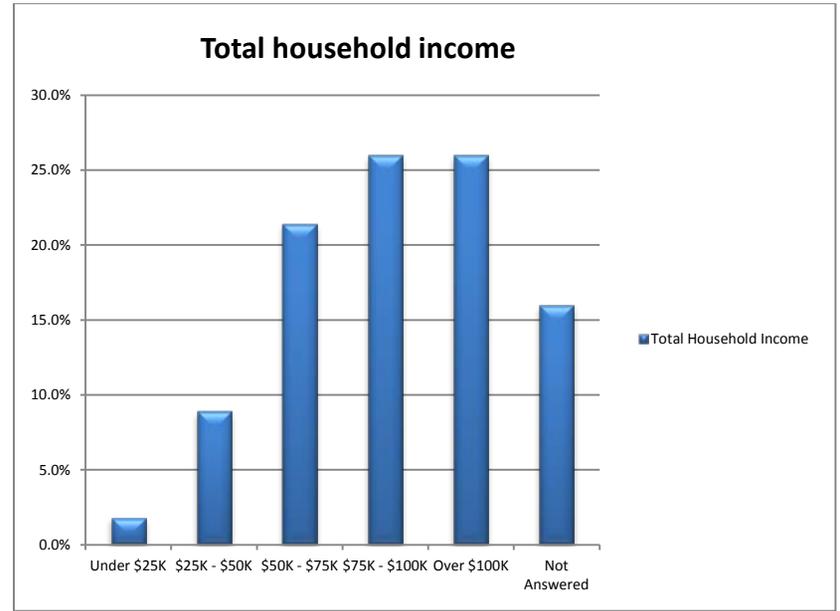
27. How many children in each of the following age groups live in your residence?

	1	2	3	4 or more	Rating Count
Pre-school or younger (4yrs or under)	73.5% (36)	22.4% (11)	2.0% (1)	2.0% (1)	49
Elementary School (5-11 yrs old)	61.0% (50)	34.1% (28)	3.7% (3)	1.2% (1)	82
Middle School (12-14 yrs old)	72.6% (45)	19.4% (12)	6.5% (4)	1.6% (1)	62
High School (15-18 yrs old)	77.2% (61)	15.2% (12)	3.8% (3)	3.8% (3)	79
answered question					182
skipped question					147



From the 182 respondents with children, most have 1-2 children and those children are fairly even distributed between the 4 age brackets

28. What is the total approximate income for your household (from all sources) (OPTIONAL)



50% of survey participants reported an average income of \$75K or more. This was comparable to the range reported by the U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey, median salary of \$71,842

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