

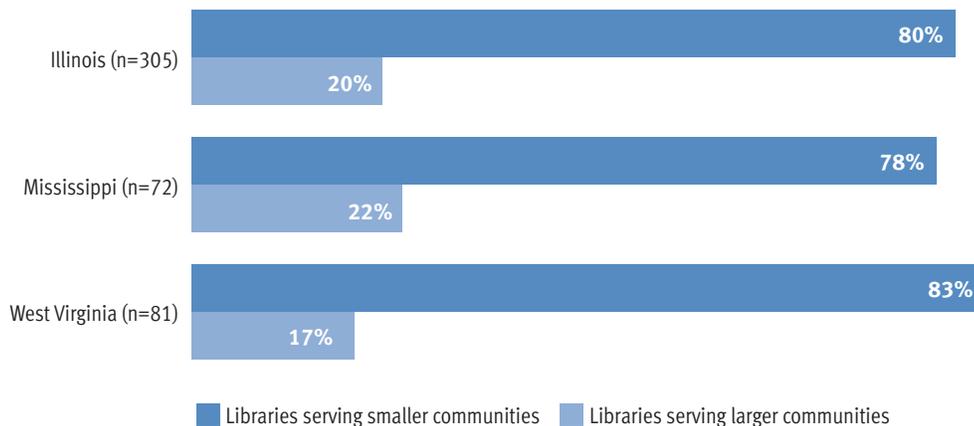
Appendix A: 2012 Digital Literacy Survey Findings

WebJunction partnered with the state library agencies in Illinois, Mississippi and West Virginia to better understand the current context of digital literacy training and assistance provided by local public libraries. Local library perspectives on the challenges they face and opportunities to better serve their communities are critical to informing state-level programs, resources, and partnerships. The *Digital Literacy Survey* was created and distributed in the fall of 2012 to provide more in-depth context and perspectives on digital literacy efforts by local public libraries.

At the time of analysis, 458 unique respondents representing local public libraries in Illinois, Mississippi and West Virginia provided feedback regarding the training and assistance they offer and the types of support they desire to expand those services.¹ 80% of respondents reported working in libraries serving smaller communities up to 25,000 people. 20% of respondents reported working in libraries serving larger communities with 25,000 people or more.

The information that follows summarizes responses to key survey questions aggregated across survey data from the three project partner states, with some response breakdowns to show important variations. Please note that not all survey respondents answered every question and many questions allowed for respondents to select multiple response choices. The findings below have been framed in relation to either the total number of overall survey respondents or the total number of survey respondents to a unique question or response category as consistently as possible.

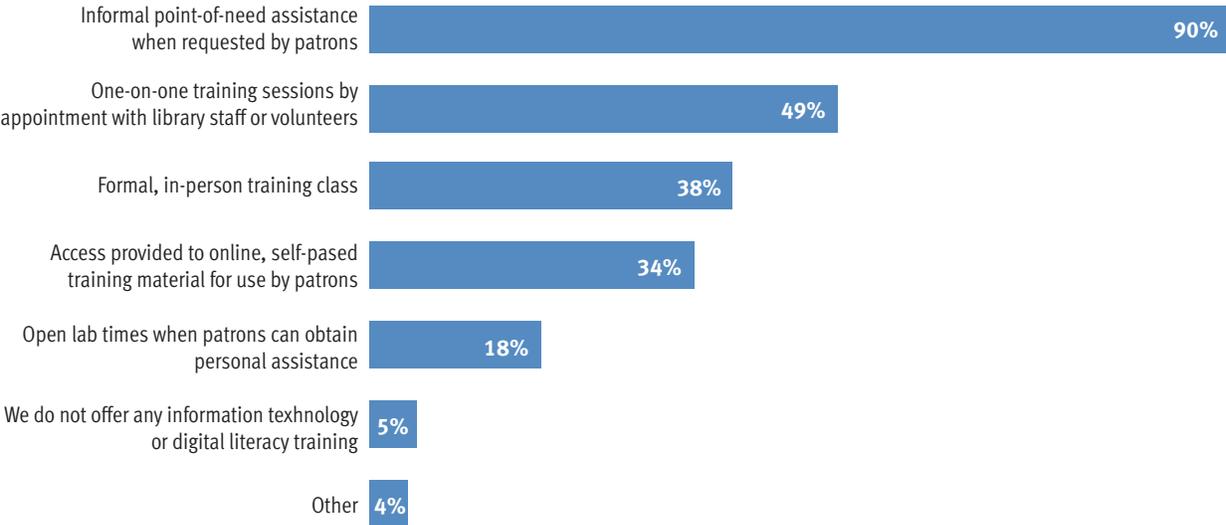
Figure 1: Size of Population Served by Individual States



We asked survey respondents to tell us what types of training and assistance they offer to patrons. Respondents could select multiple types. Figure 2 indicates the percentage of respondents who identified specific types of training and assistance as being offered or sponsored by their library. Respondents across all three partner states overwhelmingly identified *informal point-of-need assistance when requested by patrons* as the primary type of training and assistance offered or sponsored by their library in the last 12 months on information technology and digital literacy.

Figure 2: Selected Types of Training and Assistance Offered

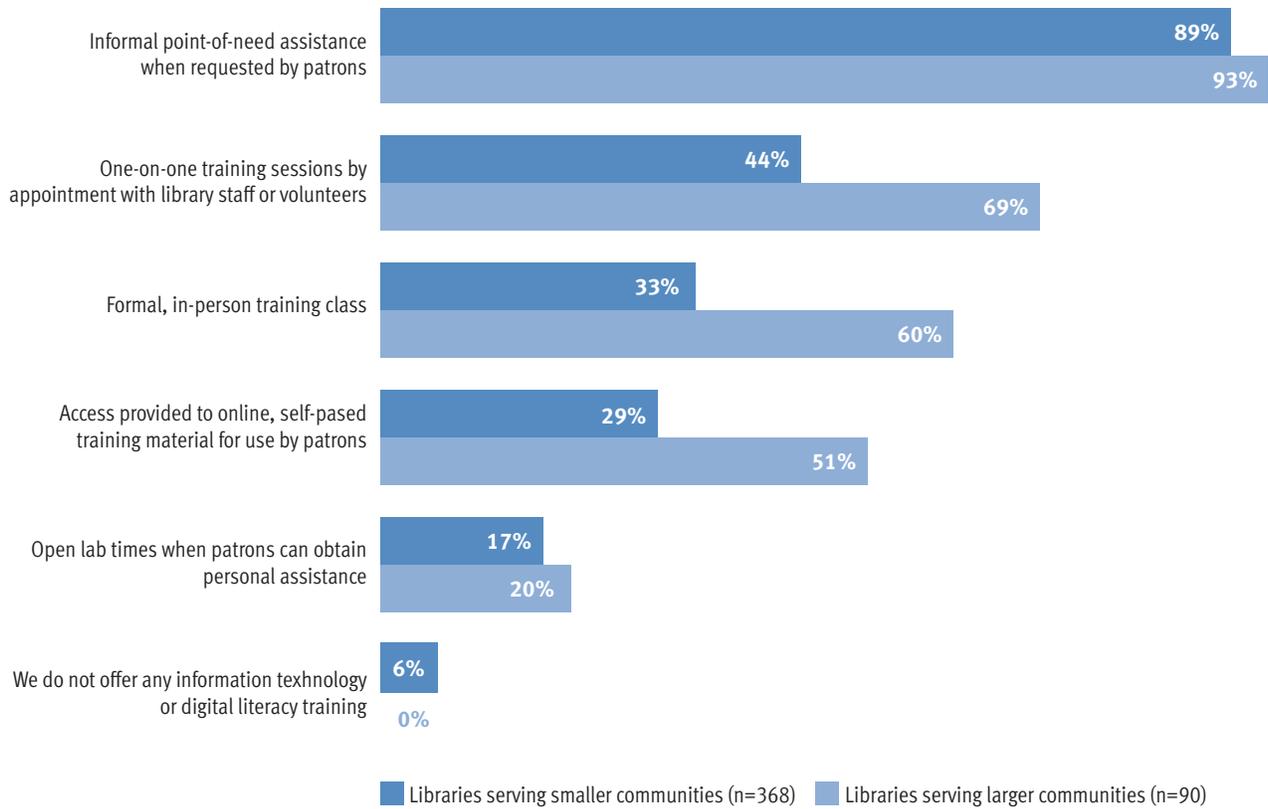
N = 458



It is important to recognize the prevalence of personalized learning to meet individual patron needs either face-to-face or online. In the absence of direct support from library staff or volunteers, patrons rely on access to self-paced training materials such as online tutorials and training videos from Learning Express and ElementK.

When assessed by size of population serviced, it is clear that libraries serving larger communities have generally greater capacity than libraries serving smaller communities when it comes to providing more direct patron training. Also noFigure is that 6% of libraries serving smaller communities do not offer any information technology or digital literacy training, as indicated in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Selected Types of Training and Assistance Offered by Size of Population Served

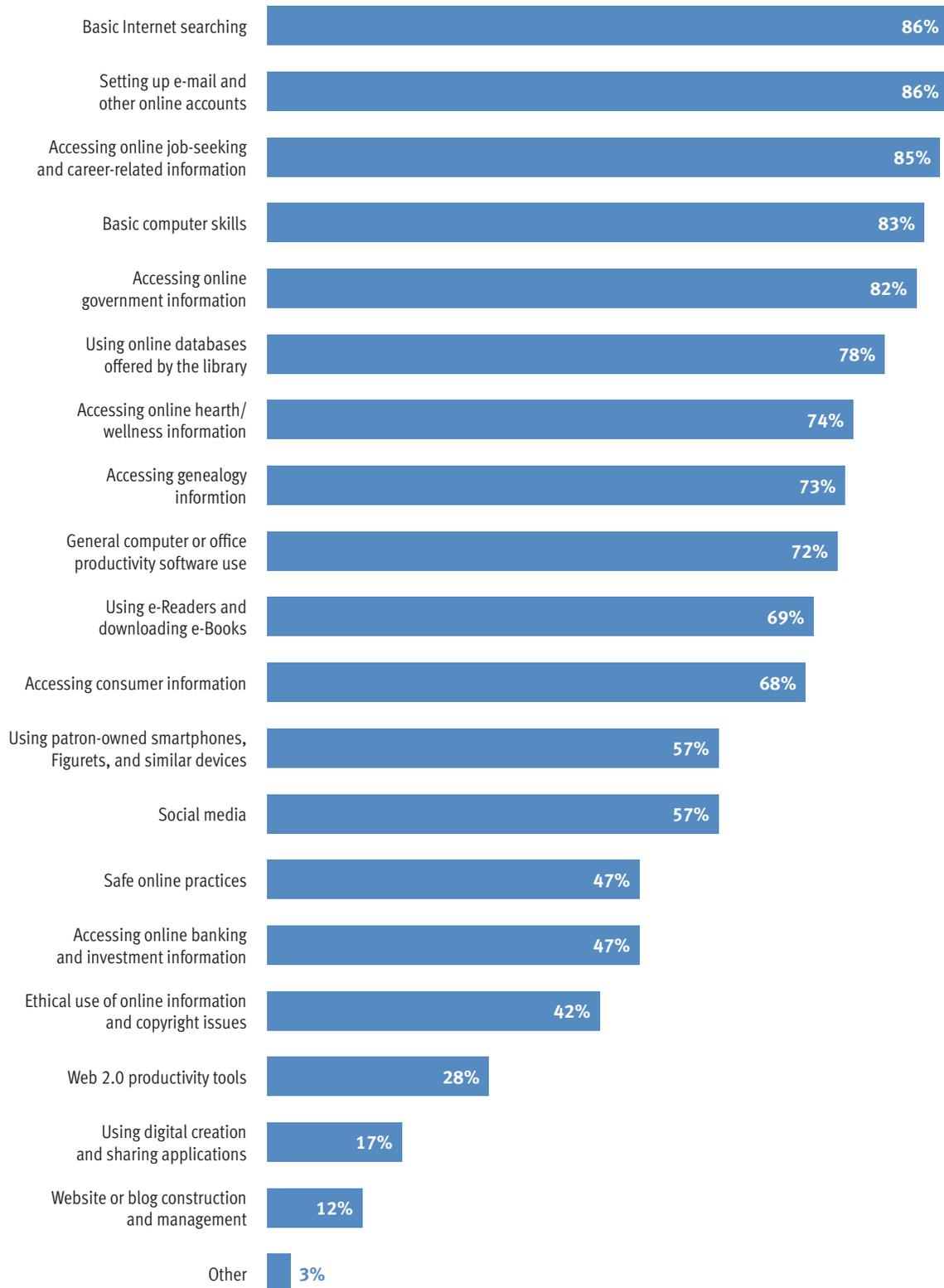


In terms of specific topic areas, a large portion of the technology and digital literacy training being offered in responding public libraries covers what is generally considered fundamental or basic computer and Internet skills. More specifically, survey feedback indicates that libraries still experience high patron demand for Internet searching, setting up email or other online accounts, and accessing online job-seeking and career-related information.

We asked survey respondents to identify training topics on information technology and digital literacy offered to patrons in the last 12 months. Respondents could select multiple training topics and various types of training used. The results captured in Figure 4 are based on combined responses for all training topics provided via informal, point-of-use assistance, given that this is the training type that was reported most consistently across all libraries and library sizes.

Figure 4: Training Topics Provided via Informal, Point-of-Use Assistance

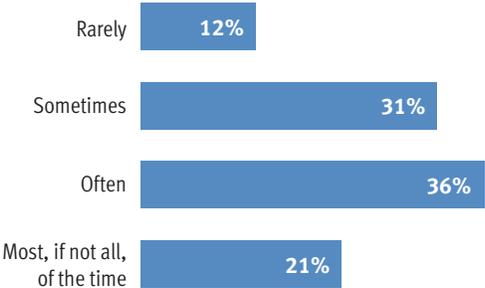
N = 407



The continuum of digital literacy topics and opportunities for online engagement grows larger every day. As trusted community institutions, libraries must continue to provide the basics of digital literacy while extending their capacity to support patrons in using new technologies and applications. Libraries often recognize but struggle to meet community needs for training and assistance on more topics.

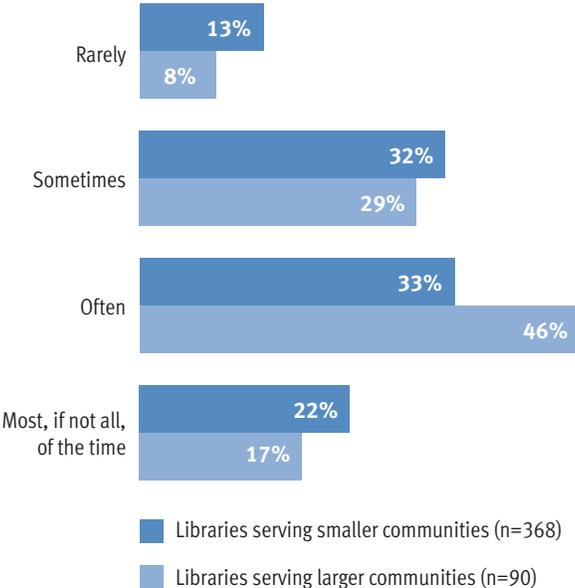
We asked survey respondents how often they are able to provide either in-person training or access to online training for the information technology and digital literacy topics needed or requested by patrons. 21% of survey respondents meet these needs and requests *most, if not all of the time* while 36% responded *often*. That leaves a big service gap for public libraries to try to address.

Figure 5: Library Ability to Provide Training Support Requested by Patrons
N = 412



When assessed by size of population served, it is clear that those libraries able to provide in-person training or access to online training more *often* are from larger communities. Respondents from smaller communities are more likely to respond that they are *rarely* able to provide training to meet patron needs and requests.

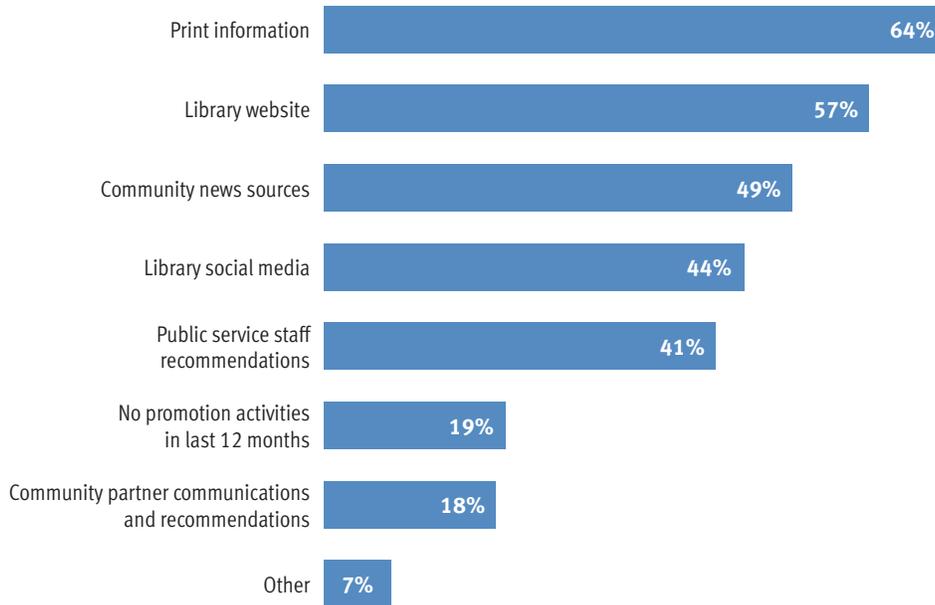
Figure 6: Library Ability to Provide Training Support Requested by Patrons by Size of Population Served



We asked respondents how their library’s information technology and digital literacy training offerings were promoted. Respondents could select multiple options. We found that 81% of libraries actively promoted their digital literacy training offerings in the last 12 months. The most common promotion channels across all three states are: *print information, library website, and community news sources*. It appears there are unused opportunities to promote offerings via *community partner communications and recommendations*. It is unclear why 19% of respondents indicated *no promotion activities in the last 12 months*.

Figure 7: Promotion of Library Training

N = 416

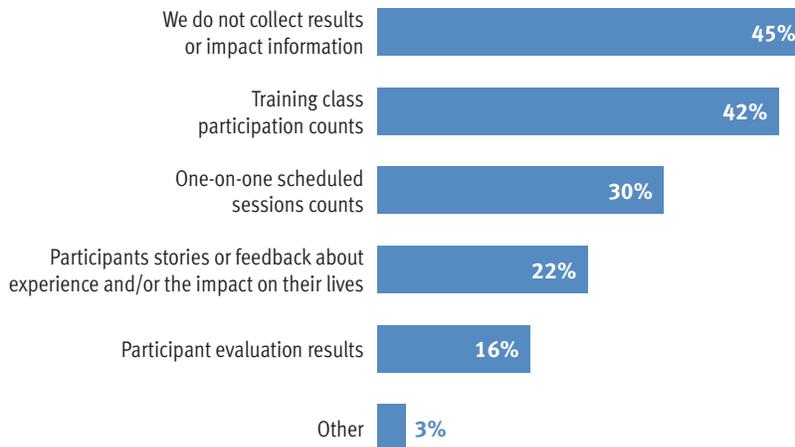


We also found that 91% of the libraries that had *no promotion activities in the last 12 months* serve smaller communities.

One capacity challenge for libraries appears to be tracking information regarding the results or impact of the library training offered to patrons. We asked survey respondents to identify the methods used to capture this type of information. Survey respondents were able to select multiple options. 45% of survey respondents across all partner states indicated that they *do not collect results or impact information*. The most common method is counting outputs such as training class participants (42% of respondents) rather than training outcomes and success stories.

Figure 8: Methods for Capturing Information about Training Results or Impact

N = 410



In terms of who conducts formal training classes and one-on-one training appointments, *library staff* were cited most often across all three partner states, as indicated in Figure 9. Survey respondents were able to select multiple options.

Figure 9: Who Conducts Formal Training Classes and One-on-One Training Appointments

N = 320

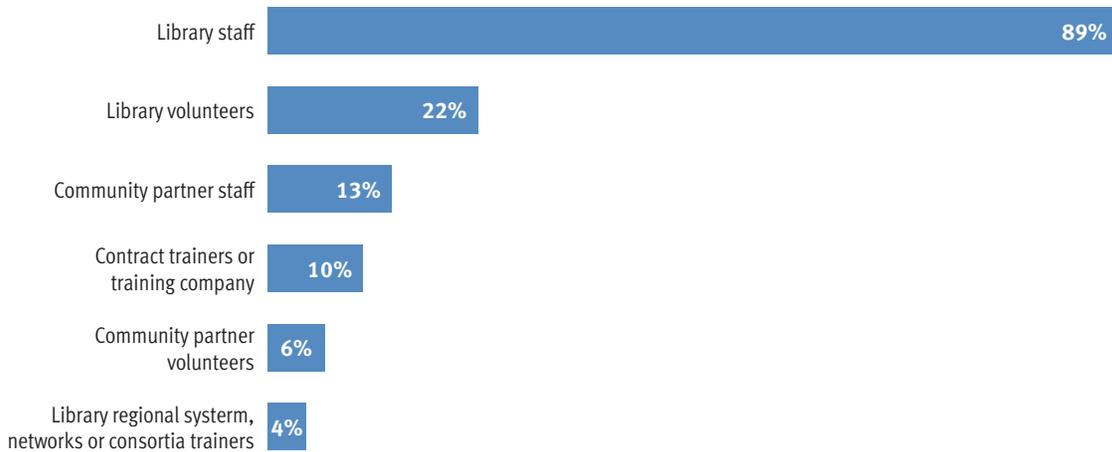
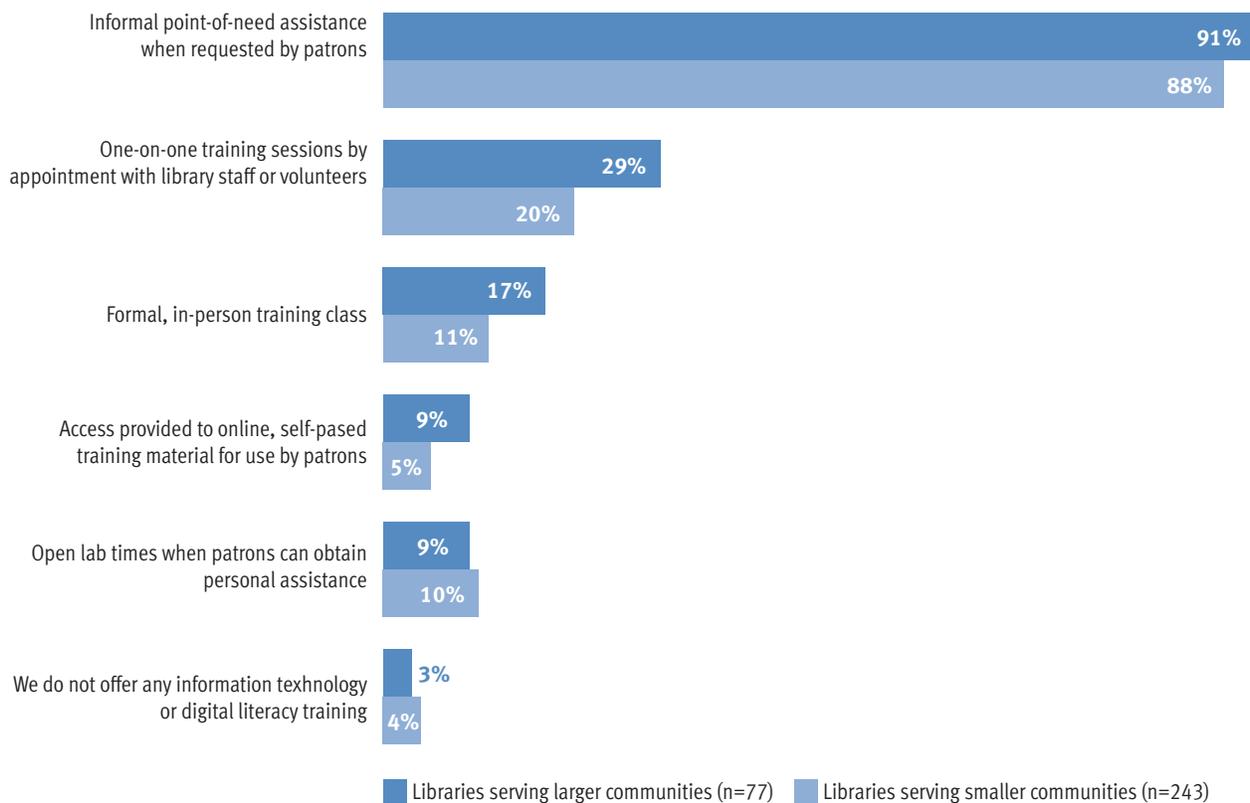


Figure 10 indicates the proportion of responses for each trainer category based on size of population served. It's important to note that libraries serving larger communities are more likely to leverage *library volunteers*, *community partner staff*, and *community partner volunteers*.

Figure 10: Who Conducts Training by Size of Population Served



It is important for library staff to be responsive to patron requests for digital literacy training and assistance, which is a challenge as noted earlier. While a relatively low proportion of total survey respondents identified organizations represented by community partner staff and/or volunteers providing training at the library, the range of identified organizations is noFigure including: workforce offices and job centers, community colleges, K–12 schools, senior centers, after-school clubs, and community

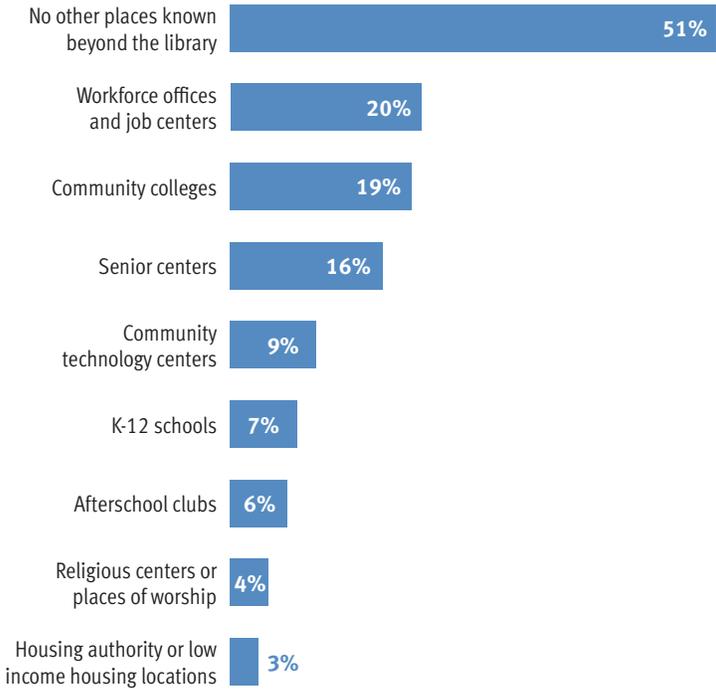
technology centers. Business resources were also mentioned such as local Chambers of Commerce or employee community service.

The majority of survey respondents indicate that libraries are the primary providers of free digital literacy and information technology services for the public in their communities. As noted in the Figure below, a number of other organizations also provide free training which presents opportunities for cross-promotion and coordination to better address community needs.

Furthermore, 9% of total survey respondents indicate that they use off-site locations to offer training and assistance often at the facilities of these same organizations.

Overall, survey responses indicate that currently a relatively small portion of libraries partner with other community agencies in support of digital literacy, especially in smaller communities.

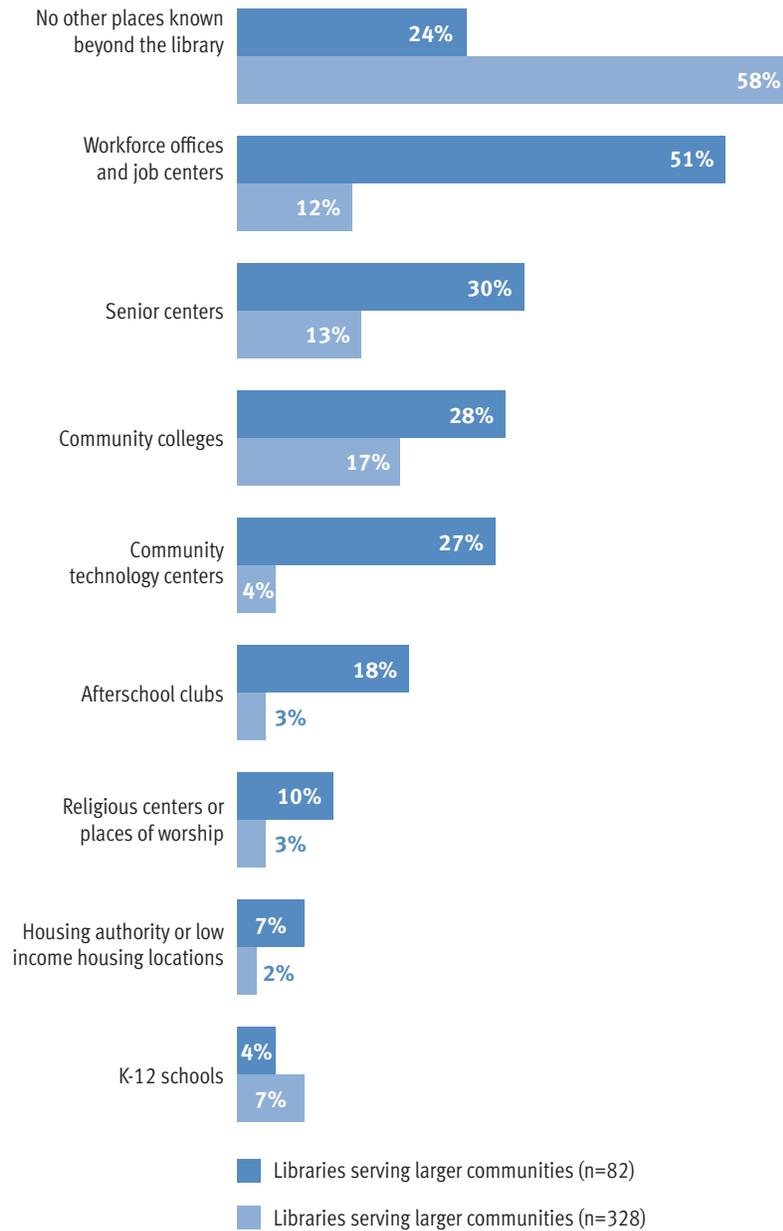
Figure 11: Library Awareness of Other Organizations Providing Free Training
N = 410



When survey responses are viewed in proportion to the size of population served, it becomes very clear that libraries serving smaller communities are far more likely to *not* know of other institutions beyond the library providing training and assistance.

Figure 12: Library Awareness of Other Organizations Providing Free Training by Size of Population Served

N = 320



1. 305 respondents from Illinois, 72 from Mississippi and 81 from West Virginia

This Appendix is part of the [State Library Guidebook: Support for Digital Literacy in Public Libraries](#) which was created under a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The guidebook was created in partnership between WebJunction and the Illinois State Library, the Mississippi Library Commission and the West Virginia Library Commission.



WebJunction's vision is to be the place where the library profession gathers to build the knowledge, skills and support we need to power relevant, vibrant libraries. Our mission is to promote learning for all library staff by providing open, affordable online learning communities.



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The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. Through grant making, policy development and research, IMLS helps communities and individuals thrive through broad public access to knowledge, cultural heritage and lifelong learning.