



**Colorado Talking
Book Library**

Patron Satisfaction Survey Report, 2008

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Introduction

The Colorado Talking Book Library (CTBL) provides free library services to Coloradans of all ages who are unable to read standard print materials due to physical, visual, or learning disabilities. CTBL provides recorded books and magazines, Braille materials, large print books, and a small collection of descriptive videos. CTBL serves over 13,000 active individual patrons and 744 organizations with patrons.

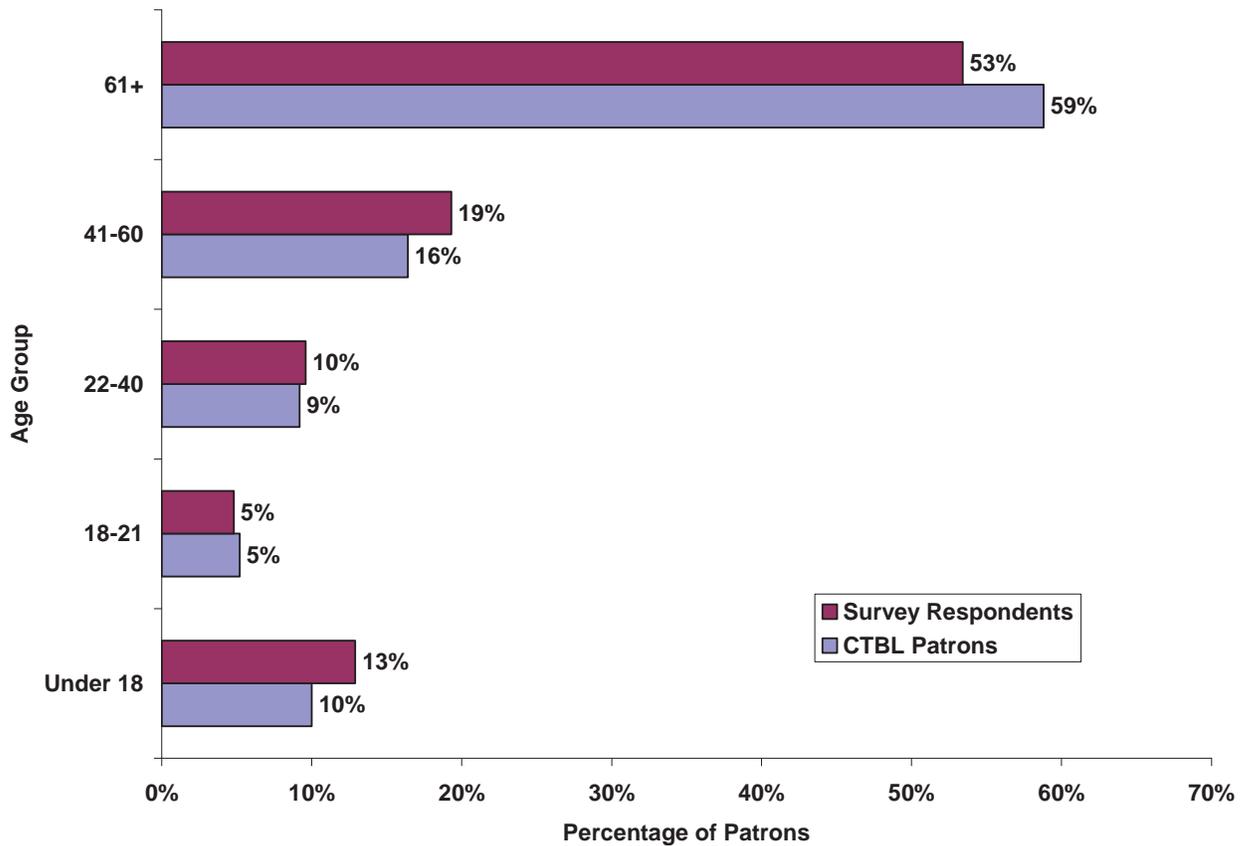
As part of an ongoing effort by CTBL to evaluate its services, the Library Research Service developed a patron survey in March 2008 which was administered in October of the same year. The survey was designed to help CTBL identify possible strengths and weaknesses and to plan for future services. Since 2004, LRS has commissioned a survey for CTBL three times (approximately every 18 months). The survey was a combination of an outcome-based evaluation and a customer satisfaction questionnaire (see Appendix A).

Though similar patron surveys have been used in the past, 2008 marked the first time the survey was distributed to CTBL patrons in Braille and audio formats in addition to the traditional paper-based format. In a further effort to ensure the sample was representative of CTBL's patrons, administrators used a sample stratified by age group. This proved to be effective as the responses received by each age group closely reflected the CTBL patron population (see Chart 1).

Of the 3,790 patrons in the sample, 3,278 received the survey on paper. In addition, 440 received notification of the survey on audio cassette, and 72 received such notification in Braille, asking them to complete the survey online or by phone. Assistance filling out the survey was available at CTBL or by telephone for any patron who requested it.

Surveys were completed by 1,067 patrons, representing a response rate of 28 percent, almost twice the rate of the 2006 survey, which received a response rate of 15 percent.

Chart 1
Age Distribution of Survey Respondents Compared to All CTBL Patrons



Survey Respondent Demographics

Respondents were asked to provide basic information about their gender, age, education level, and, where applicable, student status.

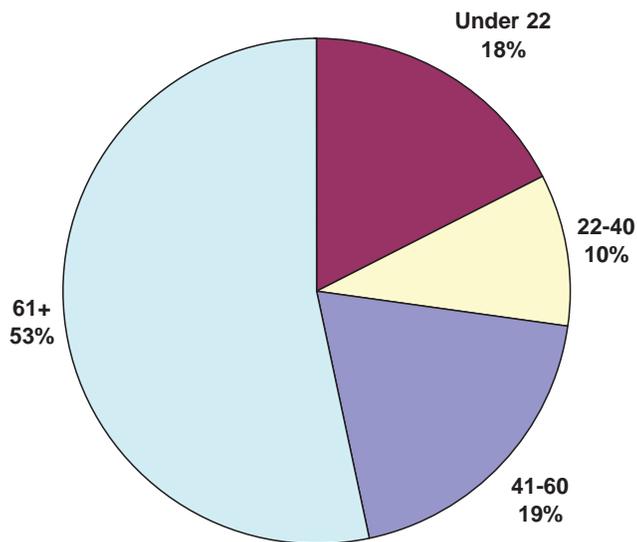
Of the respondents:

- Females represented 61 percent; males, 39 percent, mirroring CTBL patron gender distribution.
- The majority (53%) were ages 61 or older, while nearly one in five were between 41 and 60 (see Chart 2).

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- Nearly 60 percent reported having some college education or having earned a bachelor's degree or higher. One in four (26%) indicated their highest level of education was a high school diploma (see Chart 3).
- Almost one in four (23%) identified themselves as students (an increase from the 2006 survey, where only 8 percent identified as students). Of the students, 29 percent are currently college students, 40 percent are high school students, and 31 percent are elementary or middle school students (see
- Chart 4).

Chart 2
Percentage of Respondents by Age Group



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Chart 3
All Respondents by Highest Education Completed

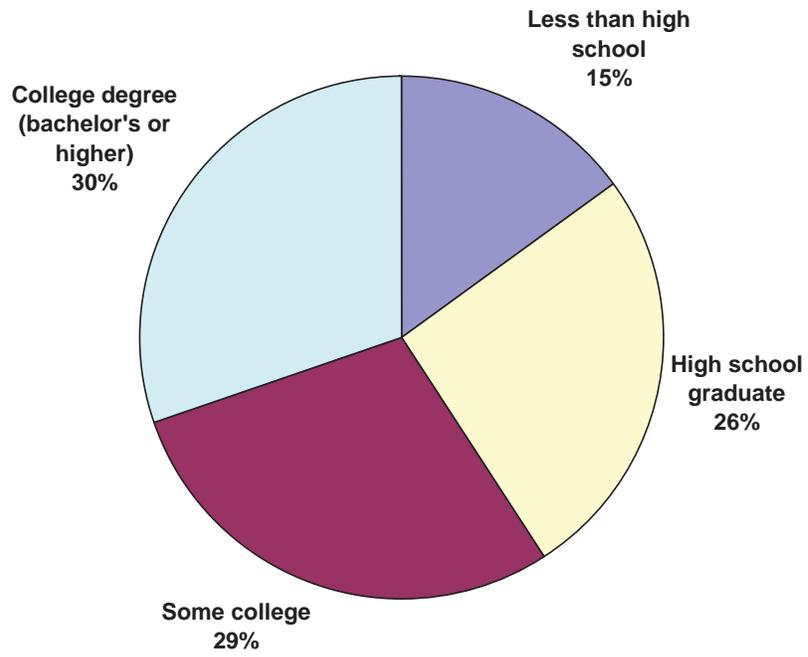
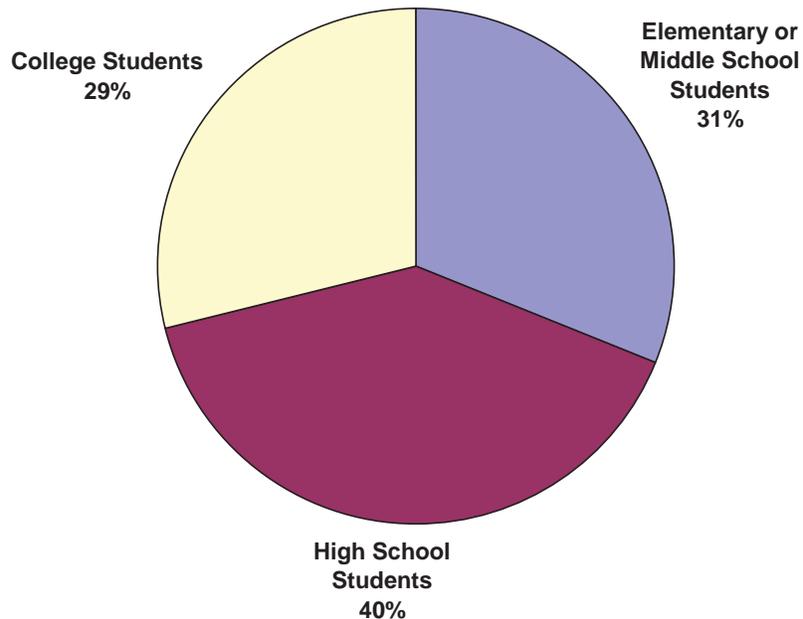


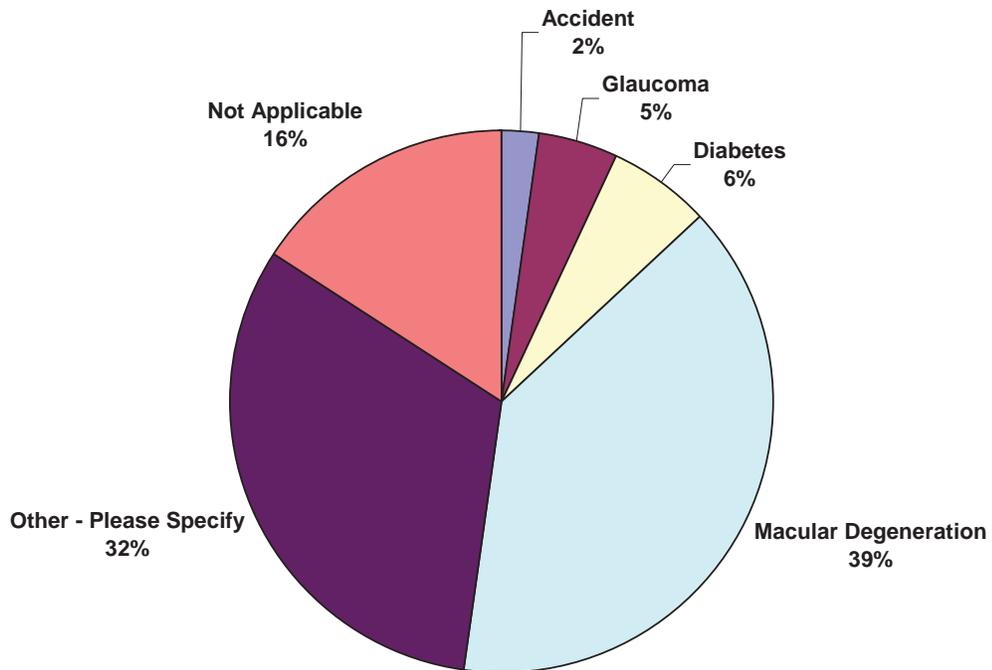
Chart 4
Student Respondents Level of Education



Disabilities & Causes

Respondents were asked about the main cause of their blindness or visual impairment and, where applicable, the age at which they began to lose their sight. While two in five (39% - the largest group) cited macular degeneration, 6 percent cited diabetes, nearly 5 percent cited glaucoma, and almost one in three (32%) respondents chose the "other" category (see Chart 5).

Chart 5
Respondents by Cause of Sight Impairment



Specific responses in the "other" category included albinism, unknown cause, stroke, dyslexia, multiple sclerosis, retinitis pigmentosa, and retinopathy of prematurity (see Table 1). For the complete list of "other" responses see Appendix B.

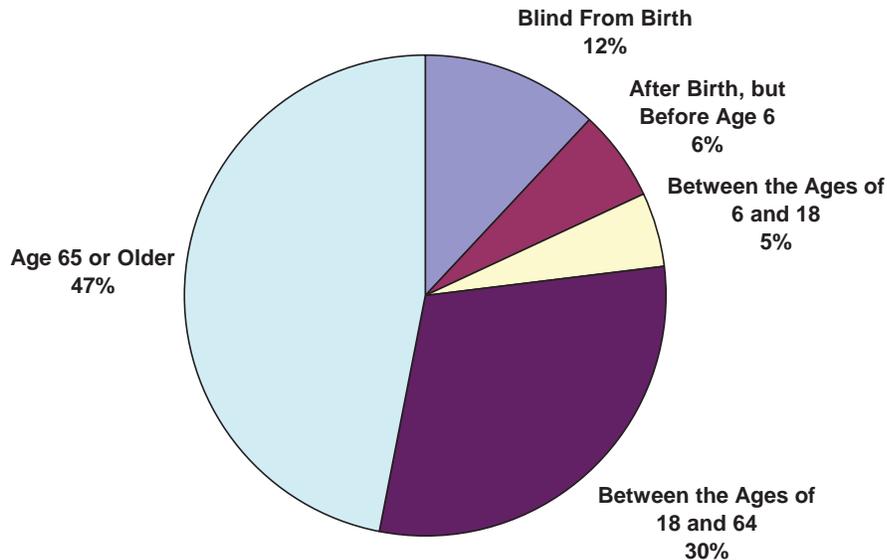
Although the question asks respondents about "the main cause of your blindness or visual impairment" and includes "not applicable" as a choice, several patrons responded with answers that indicate a physical disability other than blindness and/or a learning disability (e.g., dyslexia). In other words, they replied "other" rather than "not applicable." Because of this apparent confusion about what it is asking, the question should be reviewed before being used in future surveys.

Table 1
Most Frequent Responses Written in "Other" for Cause of Blindness or Visual Impairment

Cause of Sight Impairment	Number of Responses (Percentage)
Dyslexia	30 (8%)
Retinitis pigmentosa (including responses "RP")	23 (6%)
Muscular sclerosis (including responses "MS")	19 (5%)
Stroke	18 (5%)
Unknown cause	8 (2%)
Albinism	8 (2%)
Retinopathy of prematurity (including responses "ROP")	7 (2%)

Of the respondents with visual impairment, almost half (46%) were age 65 or older when they began to lose their sight. More than one in ten (12%) indicated that they have been blind from birth, while 30 percent were between the ages of 18 and 64. One in ten (11%) lost their sight after birth but before age 18 (see Chart 6).

Chart 6
Respondents by Age of Sight Impairment



Communicating with CTBL

Respondents were asked how frequently and by what means they communicated with CTBL. Of the respondents:

- More than three in four (76%) indicated they communicate with CTBL most frequently via telephone, followed by mail (12%), email (8%), and walk-in (4%) (See Chart 7).
- Most reported contacting the library either monthly (25%), quarterly (17%), or every six months (24%) (See Chart 8).
- Respondents who chose "other" had the option to write specifically how often they contact CTBL. The two most common responses in this category were "about once a year" and "as needed."

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- More than one in ten (13%) indicated that they never contact CTBL. There appears to be no consistent reason for this, based on cross-tabulations and an analysis of the comments left by these respondents. It is possible that some of the respondents in this category misunderstood the survey question.

Chart 7
Respondents Most Used Method of Communication with CTBL

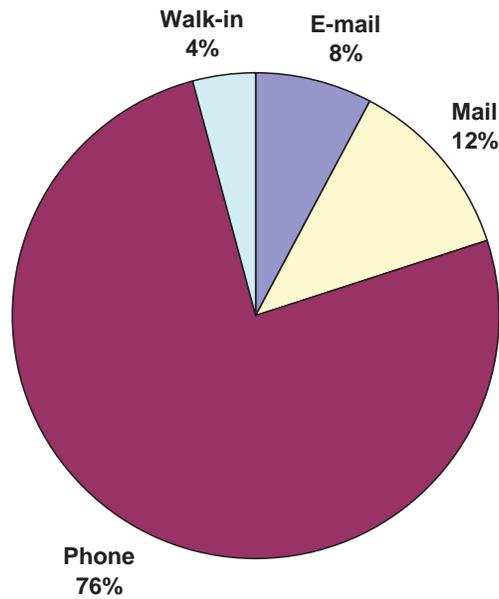
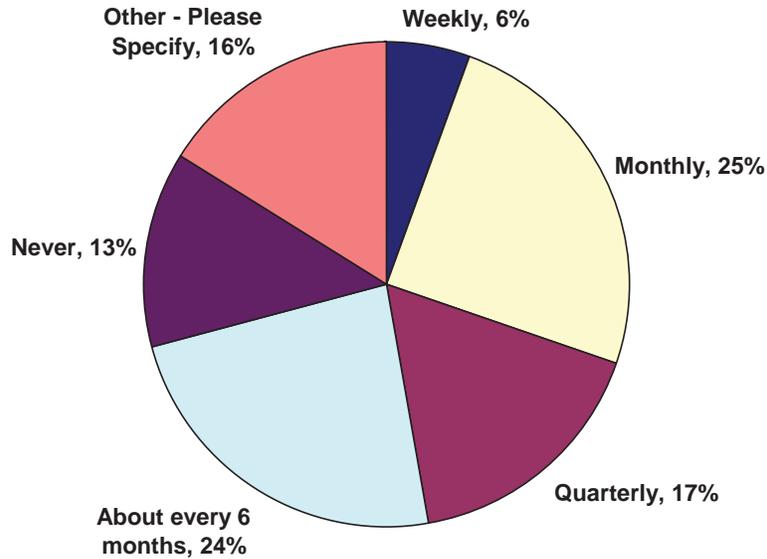


Chart 8
Respondents Frequency of Communication with CTBL



Descriptive Video Materials

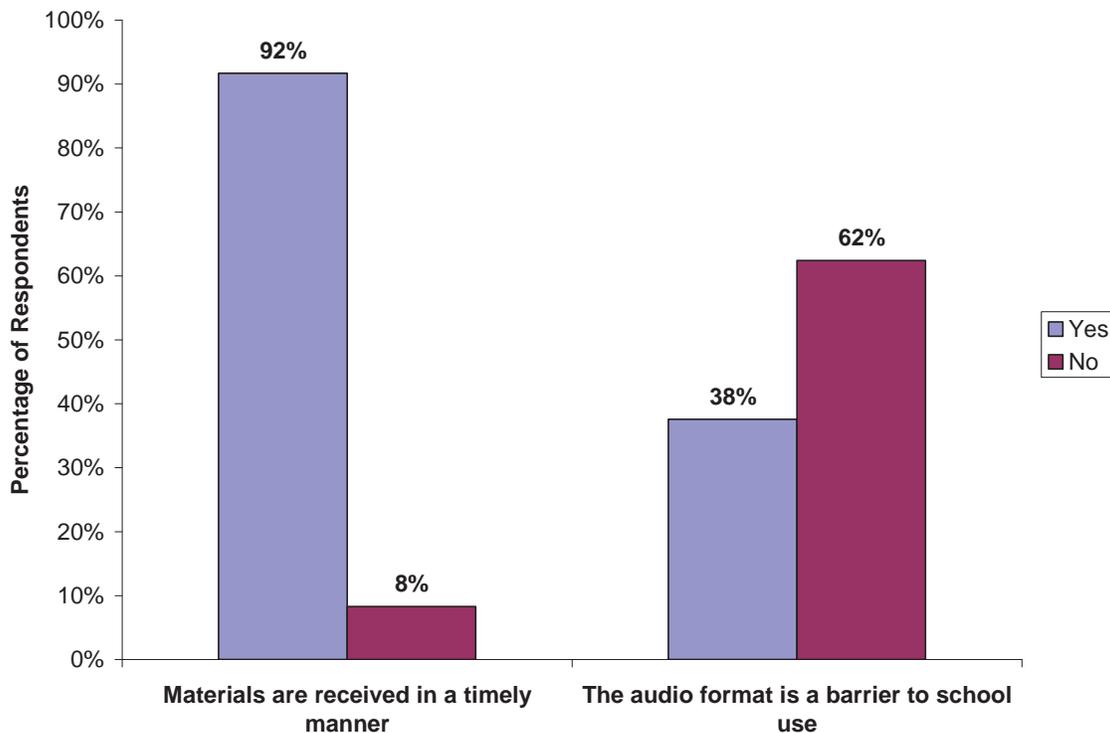
Respondents were asked if they or a family member had ever used the library's descriptive video collection. Fewer than one in ten (9%) had used these CTBL materials. Respondents were also given the option to request more information about the descriptive video collection, and one in four (25%) requested such information. This information was shared with CTBL staff early in January of 2009.

School Use

The next set of questions addressed student use of CTBL materials. Respondents were asked: (1) whether materials used for school were received in a timely manner; and (2) whether the audio format was a barrier to use in the classroom. The majority of respondents indicated these questions were not applicable to them. However, of those for whom the questions were applicable, nearly all (92%) said school materials arrived in a timely manner. Thirty-eight percent said the audio format was a barrier to using CTBL materials in the classroom (See Chart 9). It might be helpful to

further evaluate why more than one in three student users find the audio format to be a barrier to school use. The listening device may be too large and cumbersome for students accustomed to iPod-sized devices. Another possibility is that listening to instruction is difficult in and of itself. This problem may be common to all talking book libraries.

Chart 9
Respondents Satisfaction with Materials Requested for School Use



Use of Digital Devices, Computers, and Video

Four questions dealt with the respondents' awareness of CTBL's digital download service, computer access, and use of digital devices such as iPods and cell phones. Respondents were also asked about their use of television, DVD players, and VHS cassette players.

More than three in four respondents (79%) were not aware that CTBL provided digital downloads of audio books. However, this may not be an issue as more than half (54%) do not have access to a computer with

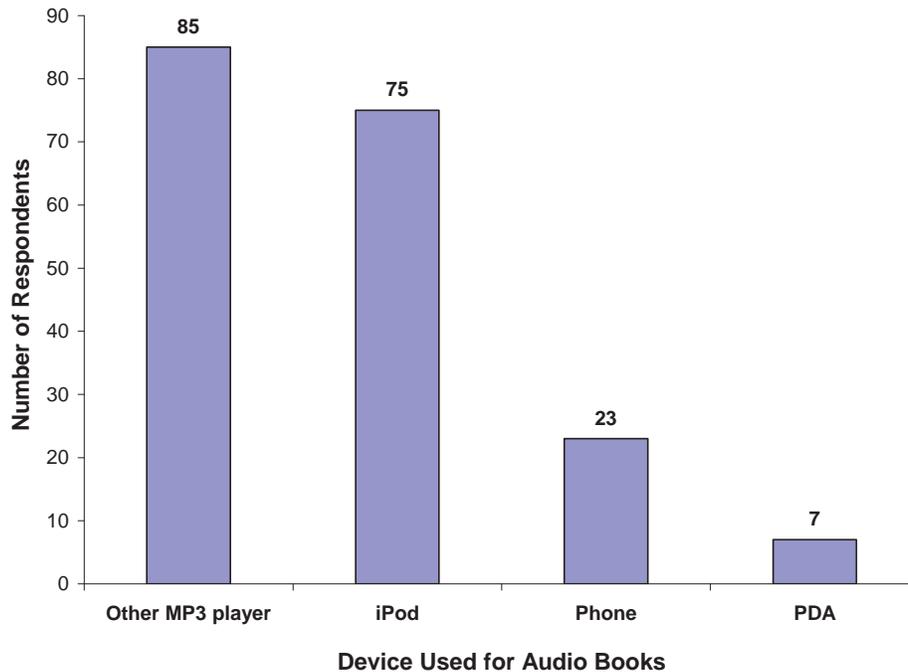
"I am planning to purchase a victor stream and would like to know more about downloading books. Thank you!"

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broadband Internet access. Several respondents indicated in the comments section that they would like more information about the digital download service. This information was also shared with CTBL staff in January of 2009.

Over three out of four respondents (76%) reported they do not use digital devices to listen to digital audio books. Among those who do, however, the most frequently used devices are iPods and other MP3 players (see Chart 10).

Chart 10
Respondents Use of Devices for Audio Books



Benefits of Use

Respondents were asked how CTBL is valuable to them, and were able to select all that applied from a list of values/categories including: "read for pleasure," "learned more about a personal interest," "found information needed for school," and "helped me stay connected to my community," among others. Some values were more prevalent than others.

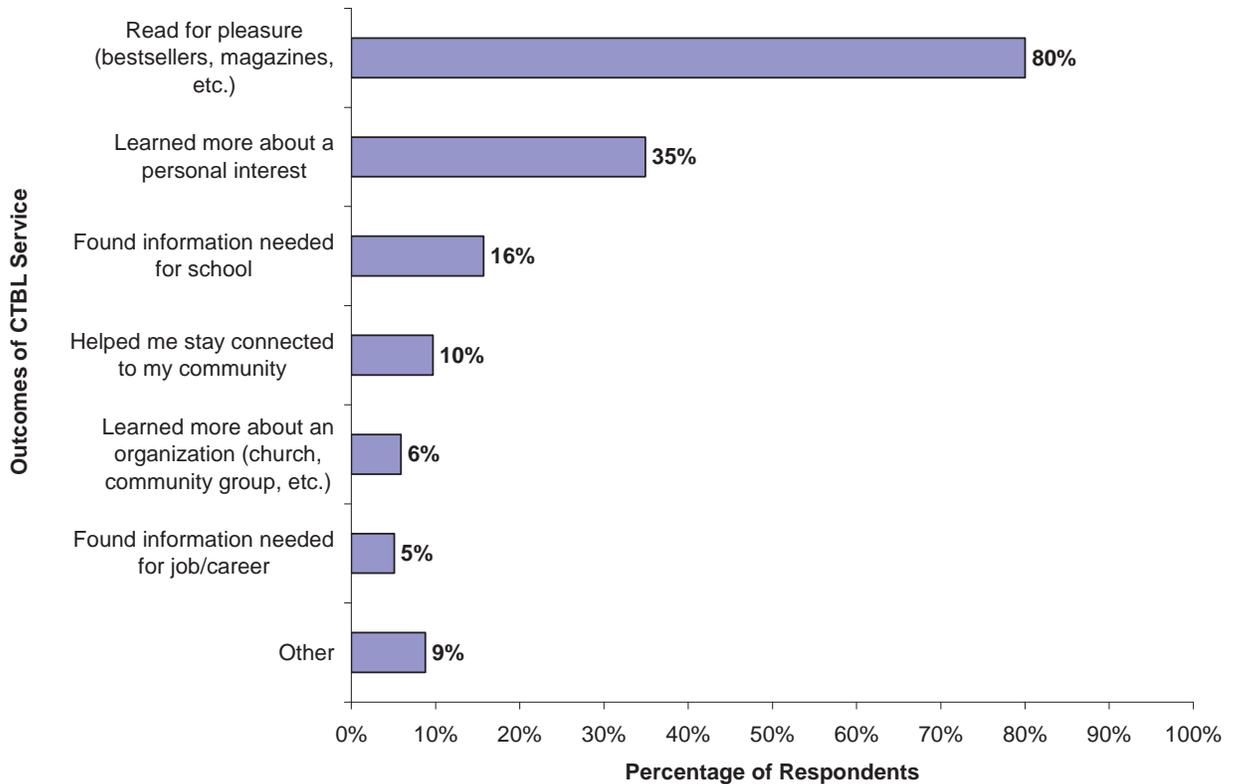
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- By far, "reading for pleasure" is the most frequently valued outcome of CTBL service, with eight out of ten (80%) survey respondents selecting it. Several comments reflected this, as they frequently mentioned how much of a gift it is to just be able to read with the assistance of CTBL services (See Chart 11).

"Mom will soon be 93. These books keep her mind alert, and provide entertainment for some of her long hours. They have been a "godsend" thank you for the independence you have given my mom."
- More than one in three patrons (35%) reported that they learned more about a personal interest using CTBL services.
- Finding information for school was the third most selected value of CTBL (16%), which may reflect the increase in survey responses of school aged patrons in the 2008 survey. In the 2006 survey, only 7% of respondents valued finding information for school.
- For those that selected "Other," comments mentioned that CTBL was valuable in "getting through school," "helping keep their sanity while losing their sight," and "keeping their mind active."

"Continue with the great work you do, this service has really helped me with my school work. Thank you."

Chart 11
Percentage of Respondents Indicating Selected Outcomes of CTBL Services

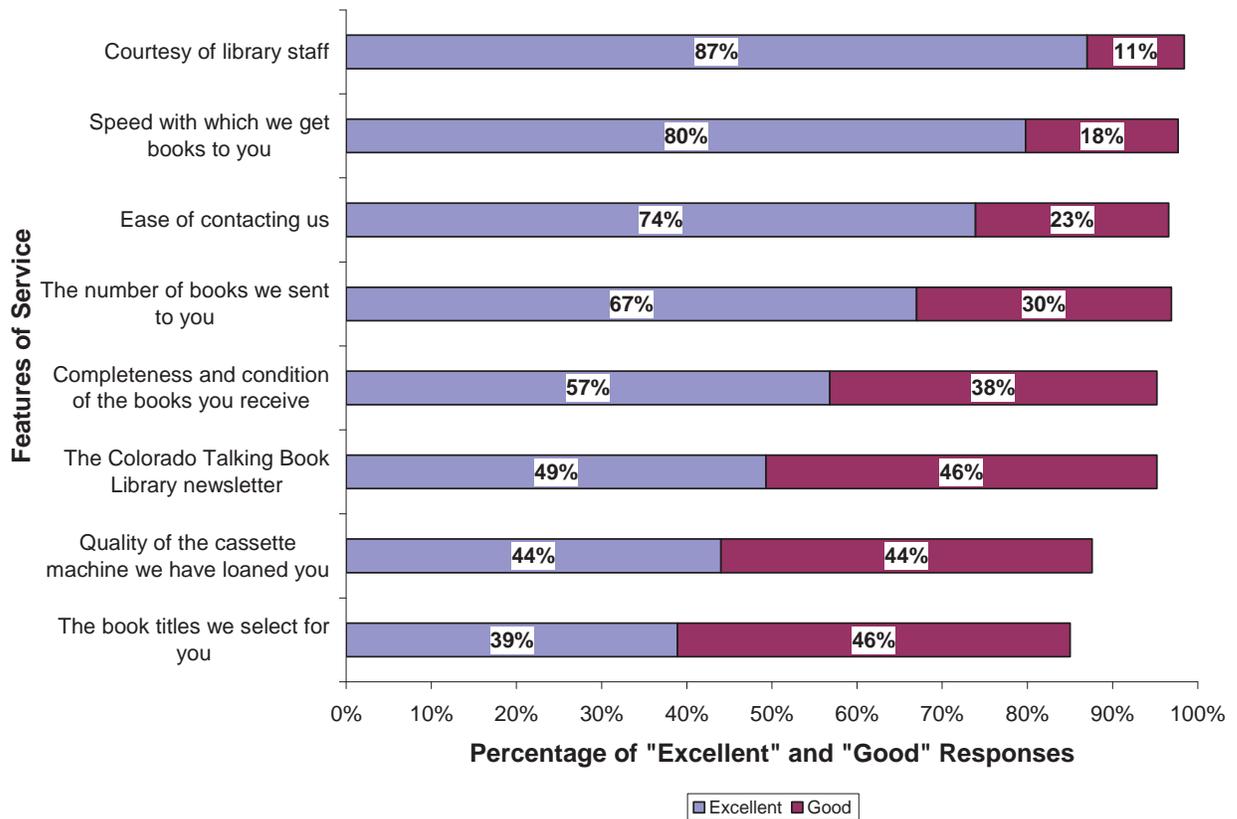


Satisfaction Levels

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with multiple CTBL services. At least 85 percent of respondents rated each category excellent or good (see Chart 12). Respondents had the highest satisfaction with "courtesy of library staff" (87% excellent ratings) and "speed with which we get books to you" (80% excellent ratings). The two categories with the lowest percentage of excellent ratings were "quality of the cassette machine we have loaned you" (44%) and "the book titles we select for you" (39%).

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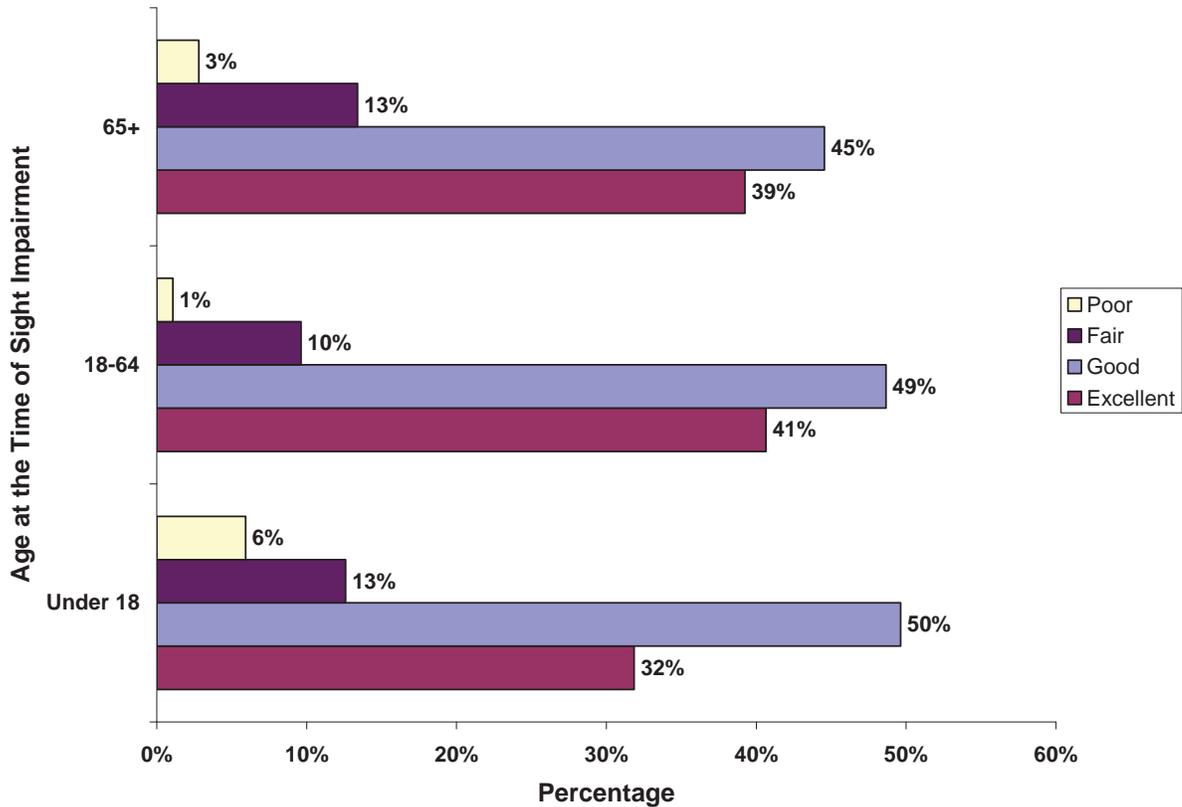
Chart 12
Percentage of Respondents Rating Selected Features of CTBL Service as "Excellent" or "Good"



Cross-tabulations

Multiple cross-tabulations were performed to analyze the survey data. It was found that responses were primarily homogenous among different groups of respondents. However, one cross-tabulation that revealed a slight difference examined how respondents rated their satisfaction with the book titles selected for them based on the respondent's age at the time of sight impairment (not current age) (see Chart 13). The results show that those who lost their sight before the age of eighteen were least satisfied with the book titles selected for them. Having lost their sight at younger ages, it is possible these patrons have higher expectations and/or are more reliant on readers' advisory than patrons who experienced sight loss at a later age. More readers' advisory training may help raise the satisfaction levels for these patrons.

Chart 13
Satisfaction with Book Titles Selected for Patrons by Age at the Time of Sight Impairment



*Note: This is the age of sight impairment, not current age of respondent

The next question asked respondents their overall satisfaction level with CTBL services. More than three quarters (79%) of the respondents found CTBL service to be excellent overall and 20 percent described it as good (see Chart 14). Just over 1 percent of the responses said fair and poor.

"This service is a lifeline to my sanity."

Another cross tabulation was done to examine how the respondents view CTBL overall based on the age their sight impairment began (see Chart 15). Again, those that began to experience their sight impairment before the age of eighteen described CTBL service overall as "excellent" less frequently. The difference between their excellent ratings and the excellent ratings of other age groups shows that they are slightly less enthusiastic about the

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service they are receiving. As stated earlier, these patrons may have higher expectations and/or needs due to sight loss at an earlier age, but further investigation into this group would be needed to gain more insight. To raise satisfaction levels overall for CTBL patrons, it may be helpful to focus on patrons that experienced sight loss before the age of eighteen.

Chart 14
Respondents Overall Satisfaction with CTBL Services

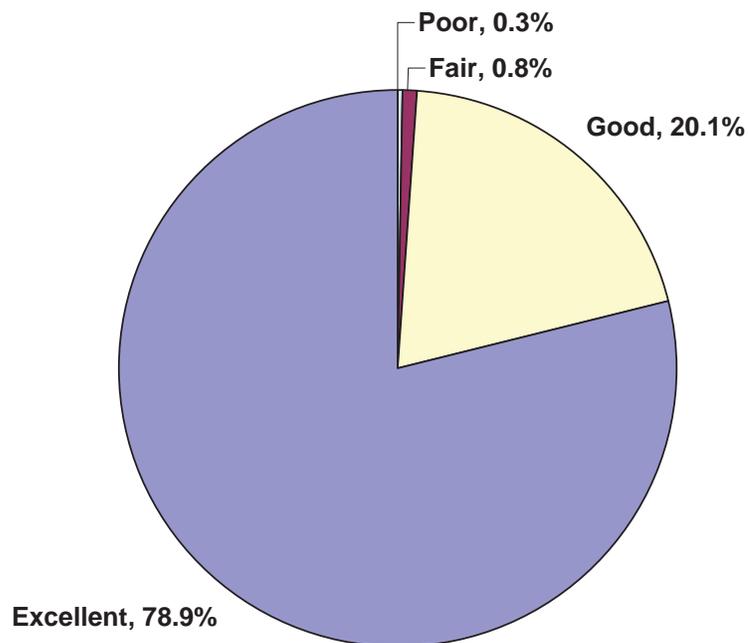
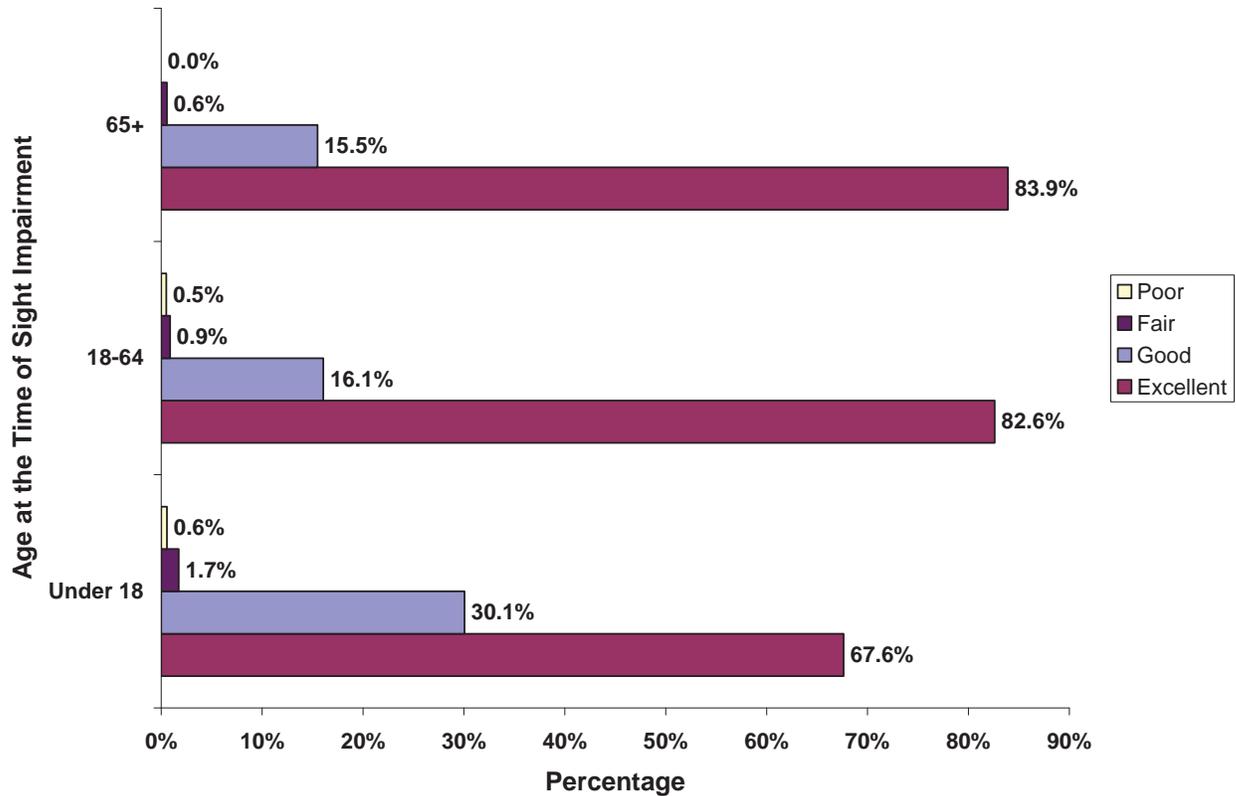


Chart 15
Overall Quality of Service Received from CTBL by Age at the Time of Sight Impairment



*Note: This is the age of sight impairment, not current age of respondent

Newsletter Topics

Two hundred and eighty-four people left a comment for the question, "What new topics would you like to see addressed in the CTBL newsletter?" Some suggestions included requests for research on sight loss and profiles of library staff. Some stated genres they'd be interested in reading more about, such as history, local history, and religion. For the complete list see Appendix C.

Comments

More than 550 people left comments about their experiences with CTBL. Many comments reflect the extremely positive impact CTBL has on its patrons' lives. Patrons frequently mentioned the courtesy and helpfulness of

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CTBL staff and the joy and fulfillment they get from still being able to read, despite their sight impairment. Several comments also requested more information on the digital download service and descriptive video, as mentioned above. For the complete list see Appendix D.

Conclusion

Overall, respondents were very satisfied with CTBL, with 99 percent ranking CTBL service as "excellent" or "good." Satisfaction was consistent among most subgroups. When examining how groups of patrons responded to questions related to satisfaction with specific aspects of the service, one subtlety began to emerge. Patrons who experienced vision loss before the age of 18 were slightly less satisfied with the book titled selected for them and they were slightly less satisfied overall. This subtlety offers insight on which patrons and services to focus attention on to improve patron satisfaction.

The library's value is evident in the comments written by patrons themselves. These comments demonstrate the indelible impact CTBL has on its patrons' lives. According to its own patrons, CTBL is to be commended for providing a much-needed service to a diverse group of users throughout Colorado.

"Your service has been a life saver for me. Thank you."

"Losing my ability to read has been an extremely difficult adjustment for me. The CTBL helps me connect to my world, stay current on new information, and gives me hope to continue learning throughout my life. Thank you for all you do."

"I look forward to Fridays when I usually receive a new selection of books. My life is so much more pleasurable with the books as reading has always been a high priority for me. Special requests are sent to me very promptly, staff have always been helpful and pleasant. I really do not think I could do without you people and the services you provide."

COLORADO TALKING BOOK LIBRARY
2008 ANNUAL EVALUATION SURVEY

Please help us evaluate the services you receive from the Colorado Talking Book Library by filling out this form and returning it to the Library Research Service before October 6, 2008. If you would like to fill out the survey via the Internet, go to <http://www.LRS.org/ctbl>. If you would like assistance filling out the survey, please call the library directly at (303) 727-9277, or long distance (toll free) at 1-800-685-2136.

1. How frequently do you communicate with staff at the library, including by phone, e-mail, mail, or walk-in? Mark one (X).

Daily Weekly Monthly Quarterly

About every 6 months Never

Other - Please specify: _____

2. What is your regular/most used method of communicating with the library? Mark one (X).

Phone E-mail Mail Walk-in

3. Have you or a family member ever used the descriptive video collection?

Yes No

Please send me more information about this service.

4. If library items are requested for school use, are they received in a timely manner?

Yes No Not applicable

5. If the library's materials are used at school, is the audio format a barrier to using them in the classroom?

Yes No Not applicable

6. Did you know CTBL provides digital download of audio books?

Yes No

7. Do you have access to a computer with a broadband Internet connection that you can use to download digital audio books?

Yes No

8. Which of the following devices do you use to listen to digital books away from your computer? Mark all that apply (X):

iPod

Other MP3 player

PDA (Blackberry, Palm, etc.)

Phone (including iPhone)

None of the above

9. Which, if any, of the following video device(s) do you use? Mark all that apply (X):

TV

DVD player

Video (VHS) cassette player

Not applicable

10. How has the library service been valuable to you?

Mark all that apply (X):

Read for pleasure (bestsellers, magazine, etc.)

Learned more about a personal interest

Found information needed for school

Found information needed for job/career

Learned more about an organization (church, community group, etc.)

Helped me stay connected to my community

Other - Please specify _____

11. Please rate your satisfaction with each of the following aspects of our service:

Speed with which we get books to you

Excellent Good Fair Poor

Completeness and condition of the books you receive

Excellent Good Fair Poor

The number of books we send to you

Excellent Good Fair Poor

The book titles we select for you

Excellent Good Fair Poor

Ease of contacting us

Excellent Good Fair Poor

Courtesy of library staff

Excellent Good Fair Poor

The Colorado Talking Book Library newsletter
Excellent Good Fair Poor

Quality of the cassette machine we have loaned you
Excellent Good Fair Poor

12. Overall, how would you describe the quality of service you receive from the Colorado Talking Book Library? Mark one (X).
Excellent Good Fair Poor

13. What new topics would you like to see addressed in the CTBL newsletter? Please share your ideas below.

Demographics

The following information will help us to better understand who uses our library, so that we can improve the quality of our services to everyone.

14. What city do you live in?

15. What is your gender?

Male Female

16. What is your age group?

1-5 6-12 13-17 18-21
22-40 41-60 61+

17. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Less than high school High school graduate
Some college College degree (bachelor's or higher)

18. If you are currently a student, what level are you in?

Preschool Elementary School Middle School
High School College Not applicable
Other - Please specify _____

19. When did you begin to lose your sight?

Blind from birth
After birth, but before age 6
Between the ages of 6 and 18
Between the ages of 18 and 64
When you were 65 or older
Not applicable

20. What is the main cause of your blindness or visual impairment?

Diabetes
Glaucoma
Macular Degeneration
Accident
Not applicable
Other - Please specify _____

Optional Information:

21. Name: _____

22. Phone number: _____

23. May we call you? Yes No

Appendix A
Questionnaire

24. Please feel free to share your comments about the Colorado Talking Book Library and the services we provide.

Please use the enclosed envelope to return via mail to Library Research Service.

Thank you for participating in this survey. We appreciate your comments.