

# Colorado Talking Book Library Patron Satisfaction Survey Report, 2012

May 2013

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A CLOSER LOOK



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by

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Survey Designed and Administered by  
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**Colorado Talking  
Book Library**

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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 because of 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 more than 6,000 active individual patrons and 339 organizations.

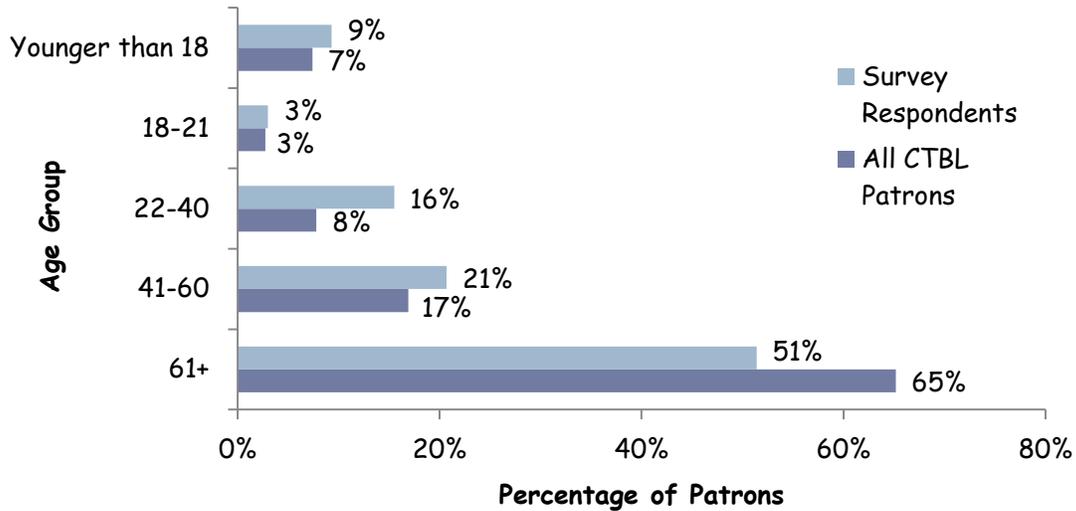
As part of an ongoing effort by CTBL to evaluate its services, the Library Research Service developed and administered a patron survey in the fall of 2012. The survey was designed to help CTBL identify possible strengths and weaknesses and to plan for future services. Since 2004, LRS has commissioned a survey for CTBL 5 times (approximately every 18 months). The survey was a combination of an outcome-based evaluation and a customer satisfaction questionnaire (see Appendix A).

As in 2010, the 2012 survey was distributed to CTBL patrons in Braille and audio formats in addition to the traditional paper-based format. To ensure the sample was representative of CTBL's patrons, administrators again used a sample stratified by age group. This proved to be effective as the responses received by each age group fairly closely reflected the CTBL patron population (see Chart 1).

Of the 2,054 patrons in the sample, 1,290 received the survey on paper. A total of 698 received audio notification of the survey, through the digital playback format, and 66 received survey 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 549 patrons, representing a response rate of 27 percent. This figure was down slightly from the 33 percent response rate of the 2010 survey, and consistent with the 2008 survey's response rate of 28 percent.

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



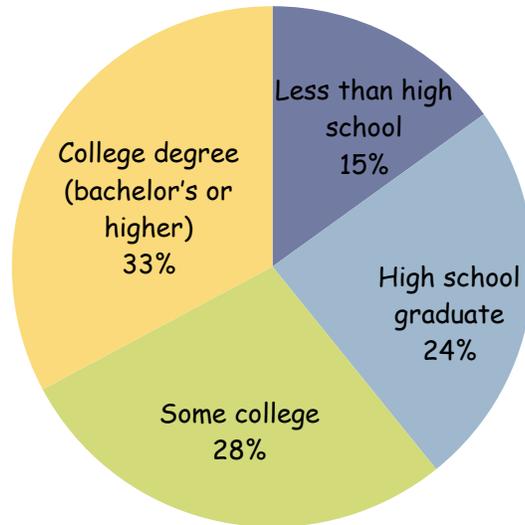
### Survey Respondent Demographics

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

About half of the survey respondents (51%) were 61 years old or older. Twenty-one percent were ages 41 to 60, 16 percent were 22-40, and 12 percent were 21 or younger (see Chart 1). As mentioned in the introduction, the survey was sent to an age-stratified sample of patrons so that the results would be more representative of the CTBL patron population as a whole. The percentage of respondents in each age group is very similar to the response rates from 2010.

One in 3 (33%) respondents had a college degree; slightly fewer (28%) had some college experience, and about 1 in 4 (24%) were high school graduates, while 15 percent had less than a high school education (see Chart 2). These percentages for both age and education are quite similar to 2010's survey results.

**Chart 2**  
**All Respondents by Highest Education Completed**



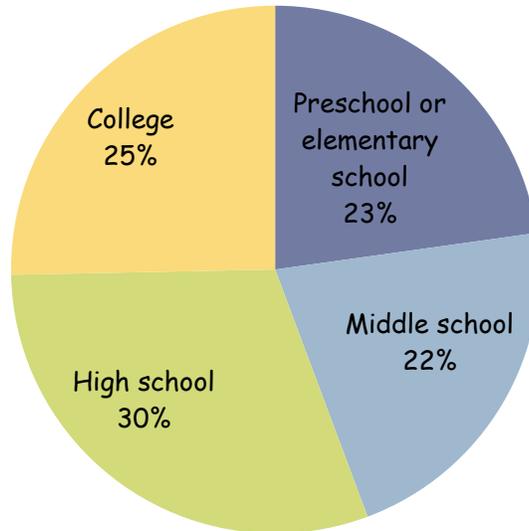
Of the respondents, 22 percent<sup>1</sup> identified themselves as students, a decrease from the 2010 survey (33%). Of the student respondents, 25 percent were currently enrolled in college, which is similar to the 2010 survey (see Chart 3). The number of high school students completing the 2012 survey declined from 34 percent in 2010 to 30 percent in 2012. The number of middle school students increased from 16 percent to 22 percent, and the number of preschool or elementary school students remained the same at 23 percent.

*"Thank you for providing all the books on tape,  
that got me through college!"*

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<sup>1</sup> This percentage was calculated based on those respondents who answered this question.

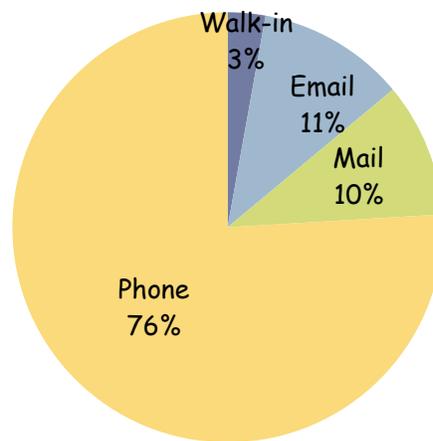
**Chart 3**  
**Student Respondents' Current Level of Education**



**Communicating with CTBL**

Respondents were asked how frequently and by what means they communicated with CTBL (see Chart 4). CTBL patrons overwhelmingly used the telephone to contact library staff (76%), another fact that has remained constant over the past several years of CTBL patron satisfaction surveys. Of the respondents who did not select telephone as their primary

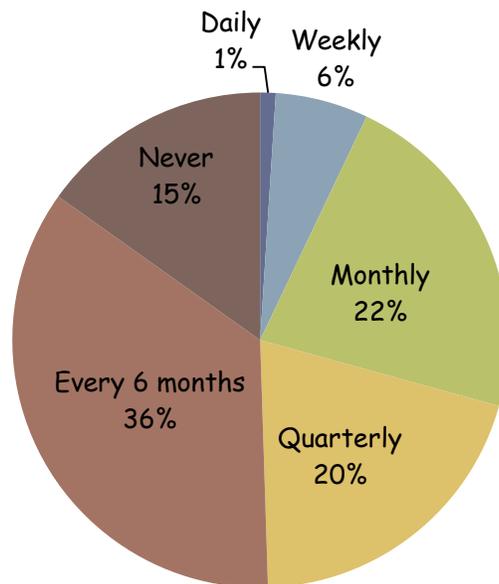
**Chart 4**  
**Most-Used Method of Communication with CTBL**



method of contacting CTBL, 11 percent selected email, 10 percent preferred mail, and 3 percent chose walk-in visits. There has been little change in how patrons prefer to contact CTBL from the 2010 survey with the exception of email contact. The percentage of patrons who primarily use email to contact CTBL increased from 8 percent to 11 percent between 2010 and 2012.

Another factor that has changed only slightly in the 8 years since CTBL began surveying its patrons is how often patrons report contacting the library. About 1 in 5 respondents contact the library either monthly (22%) or quarterly (20%), 36 percent contact the library every 6 months, and 15 percent indicate they never contact the library (see Chart 5). Just 6 percent contact the library on a weekly basis, and 1 percent do so on a daily basis.

**Chart 5**  
**Frequency of Communication with CTBL**

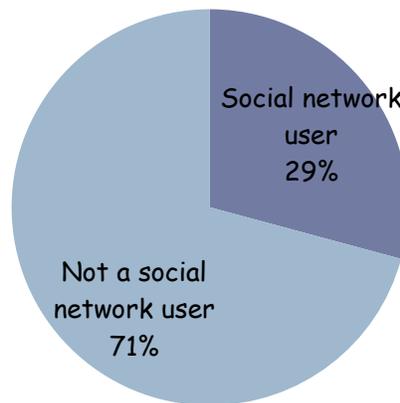


Respondents who chose "other" had the option to write specifically how often they contact CTBL. As with 2010, the two most common responses in this category were about once a year and as needed. Interactions with patrons at CTBL outreach events have revealed that some patrons never contact the library because everything works fine or they "don't want to be a bother."

## Social Media Usage

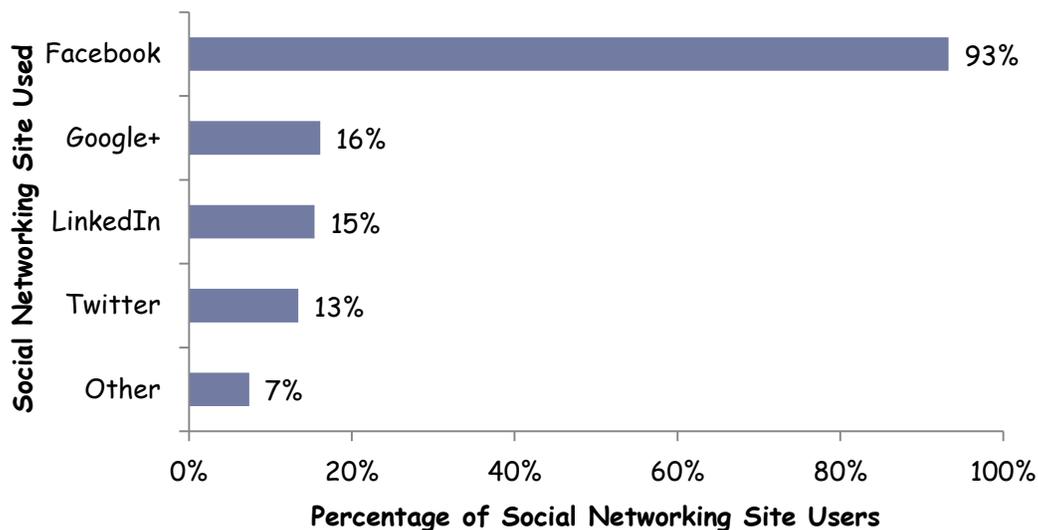
Respondents were asked about their social network use. Close to one-third of respondents (29%) indicated that they use social networking sites, an increase from 23 percent in the 2010 survey, while 71 percent of respondents do not use social networking sites (see Chart 6).

**Chart 6**  
**Overall Social Network Use**



Of the respondents who use social networking sites, the majority (93%) use Facebook, while Google+, LinkedIn, and Twitter nearly tie for the second most-used social media outlets (see Chart 7).

**Chart 7**  
**Social Networking Sites Visited by Respondents Who Use Social Networking Sites**



Nearly a third (30%) of social media users were in the 22-40 age group (see Table 1). A little more than one-fourth (27%) were between ages 41 and 60, and one-fifth (20%) were younger than 18. These numbers are fairly similar to those in 2010, in which the 22-40, younger than 18, and 41-60 age groups dominated the social media user group at CTBL. Interestingly, older social media users have gained a bit of ground since 2010, with the oldest users (61 and older) increasing (11% to 16%), while the youngest age group has dropped (27% to 20%).

**Table 1**  
**Percent of Respondents Who Use Social Media by Age Group, 2010 and 2012**

	Younger than 18	18-21	22-40	41-60	61+
<b>2010</b>	27%	10%	27%	25%	11%
<b>2012</b>	20%	7%	30%	27%	16%

The relationship between social media use and method of communication with CTBL was also examined. Patrons who use social media are more likely to communicate with CTBL by email than the average user—21 percent of social media users choose this method of communication compared to 11 percent of all respondents—however the majority of social media users do still prefer to contact CTBL by phone (66%, compared to 76% of all respondents).

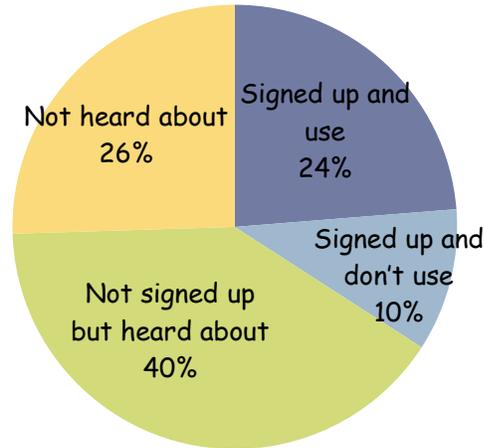
## **BARD**

In a new set of questions for 2012, patrons were asked specifically about whether they use or know about Braille and Audio Reading Downloads (BARD). A service from the National Library Service in Washington, D.C., BARD provides access to more than 27,000 digital books and 50 magazines available for download from its website.<sup>2</sup> About one-fourth of the respondents (24%) use BARD (see Chart 8). A slightly higher percentage of respondents have not heard about BARD (26%). Two-fifths (40%) of respondents have heard about it, but have not signed up for the service. A smaller percentage of respondents (10%) have signed up but are not currently using it.

<sup>2</sup> <https://nlsbard.loc.gov/>

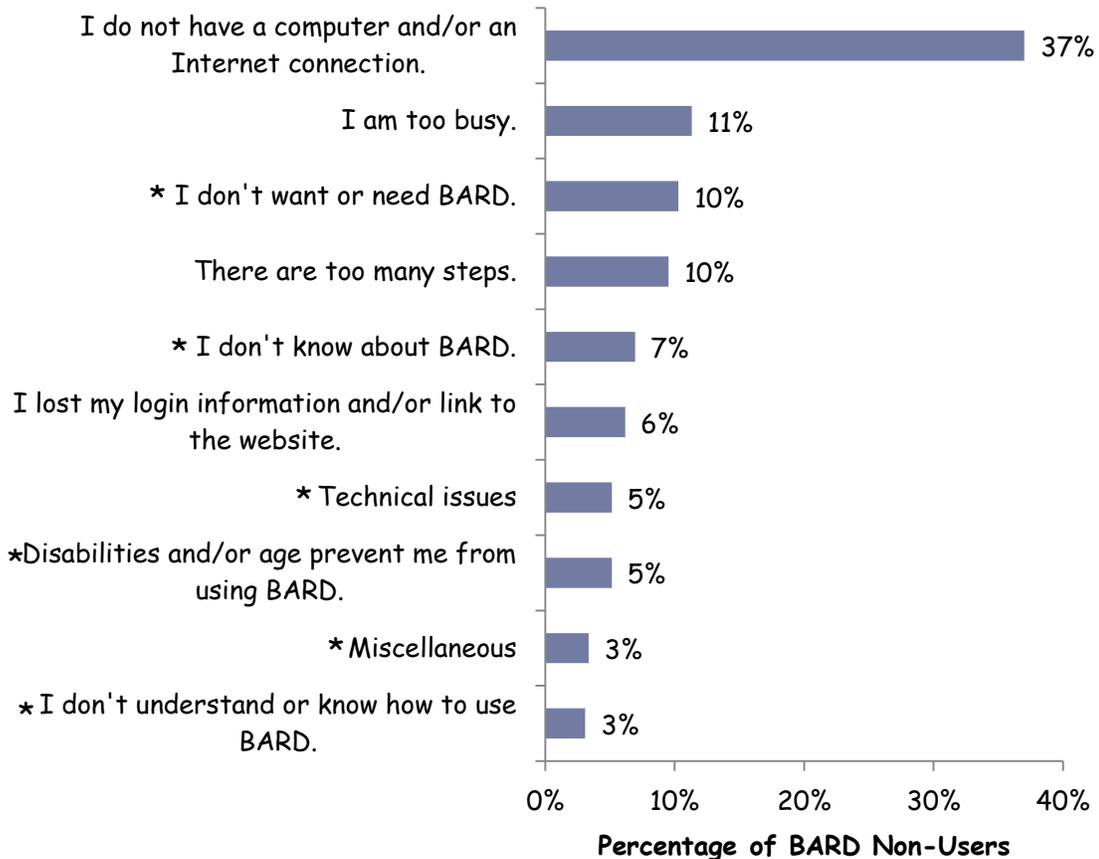
*"BARD is a life-changing positive service  
for me."*

**Chart 8**  
**Respondents' Use, Non-Use, and Knowledge of BARD**



Respondents were then asked to indicate why they do not use BARD (see Chart 9). The most common response to this question was "other (please specify)" (38%). Given this large proportion of "other" responses, respondents' open-ended comments were reviewed and categorized to better determine why patrons are not using BARD. These categories are included in Chart 9 (delineated with asterisks). More than a third of respondents (37%) indicated that they do not have a computer or internet connection at home to download the material. Many indicated they do not need or want BARD, didn't know enough about BARD, or had technical issues that prevented them from using the service.

**Chart 9**  
**Percentage of Respondents Indicating Selected Reasons for Not Using BARD With Expanded "Other" Responses**



\*Categories that were developed based on "other" open-ended comments.

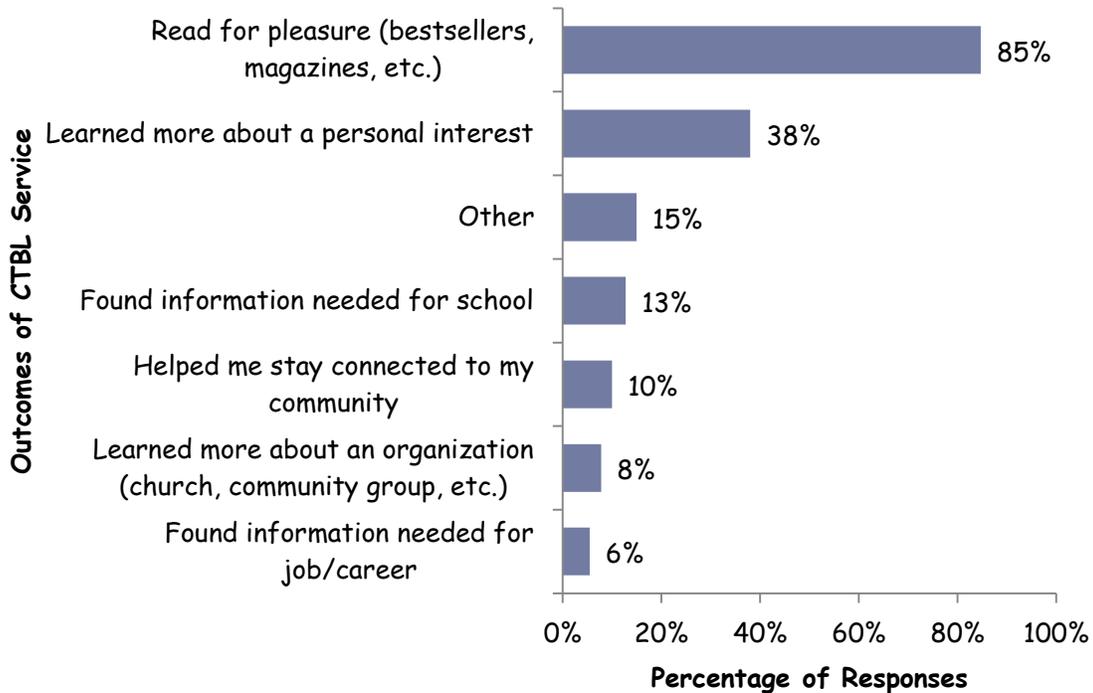
### **Benefits of Using CTBL**

Respondents were asked to indicate how CTBL is valuable to them by selecting all that applied from a list of values/categories including: read for pleasure, learned more about a personal interest, found information needed for school, helped me stay connected to my community, and found information needed for a job or career.

As in past surveys, reading for pleasure was the most frequently valued outcome of CTBL service, with more than 4 out of 5 (85%) survey respondents selecting it (see Chart 10). Several comments reflected this, as patrons frequently mentioned how much of a gift it is just to be able to read

with the assistance of CTBL services. The second-most selected value of CTBL service was to learn more about a personal interest (38%). Both of these top reasons for using CTBL's services were consistent with the figures from 2010 survey respondents.

**Chart 10**  
**Percentage of Responses Indicating Selected Outcomes of CTBL Services**



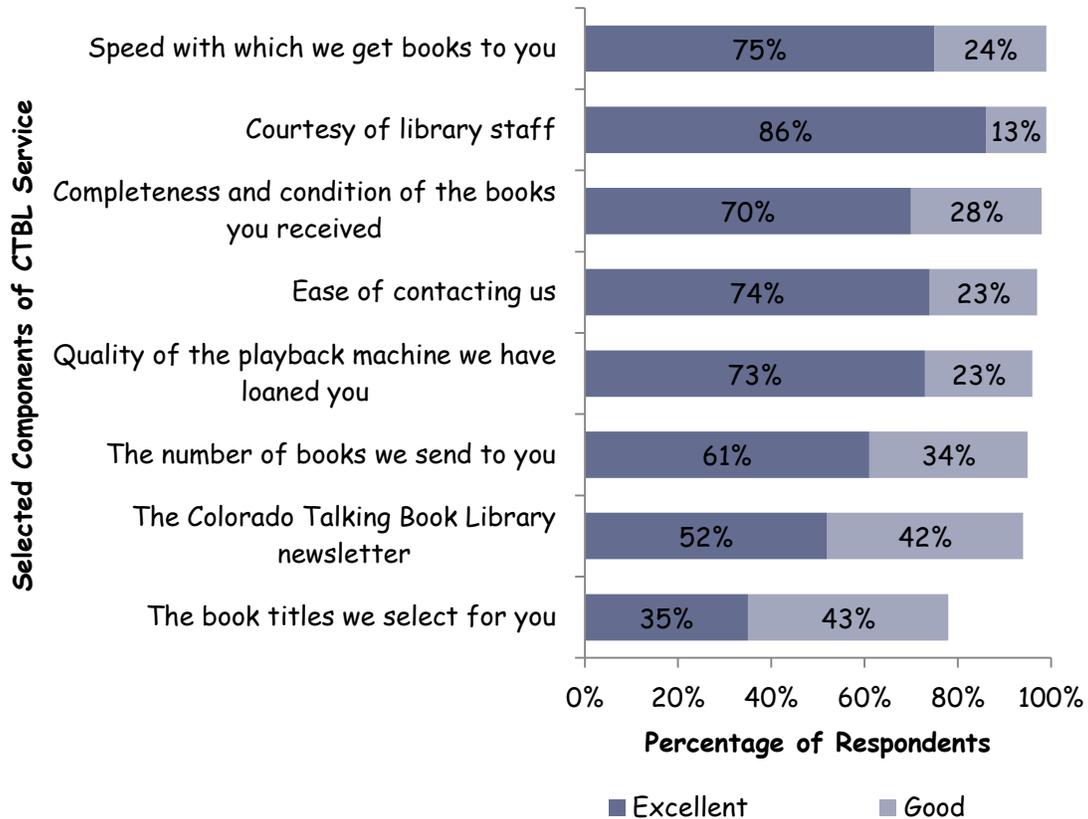
Many patrons responding with "Other" regarding their use of CTBL's services provided a comment to explain. Remarks included appreciation for materials delivery, book club availability, and services to dyslexic and low vision children and students.

*"Giving up reading is very difficult. Your service gives my love of reading a new life!"*

### Satisfaction Levels

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with multiple features of CTBL services (see Chart 11).

**Chart 11**  
**Percentage of Respondents Rating Selected CTBL Service Components as Excellent or Good**



At least 78 percent of respondents rated each category excellent or good. Respondents had the highest satisfaction with courtesy of library staff (86% excellent ratings) and speed with which we get books to you (75% excellent ratings). The two categories with the lowest percentage of excellent ratings were the Colorado Talking Book newsletter (52%) and the book titles we select for you (35%).

Respondents who (a) rated CTBL's book title selection as "fair" or "poor" and (b) indicated they were open to follow-up contact regarding the survey were asked to participate in a phone interview to investigate possible causes for their book title selection ratings as well as potential improvements that could be made. This was an exploratory supplemental component to the study with 6 respondents participating in the phone interviews. Respondents indicated some reasons for lower satisfaction levels with book title selection including: respondent's lack of use of the system, possible account settings

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previously assigned, and also a possible limited account setting in relation to their interests. The majority of the respondents participating in the follow-up questions (4 out of 6) agreed to offers to adjust their account settings with a reader advisor to improve book title selections.

Across all of the service components, ratings of "excellent" and "good" remained largely the same from 2010 to 2012. Some service components rose slightly: CTBL's newsletter service, ease of contacting CTBL, completeness and condition of the books received, and speed with which books are sent all gained about 1 percent in positive ratings. However, "excellent" and "good" ratings for the book title selection and number of books sent to patrons lost about 1 percent from 2010. "Excellent" and "good" ratings for the quality of the playback machine and number of books CTBL sends its patrons maintained 2010 levels, with 96 percent and 95 percent, respectively. Many 2012 respondents commented about the improvement in the digital machines over the older cassette players. Also, in a follow-up with some of the respondents, many commented on their satisfaction with the digital machines and expressed that they felt these machines are an improvement to the older cassette players, and that they continue to enjoy this service.

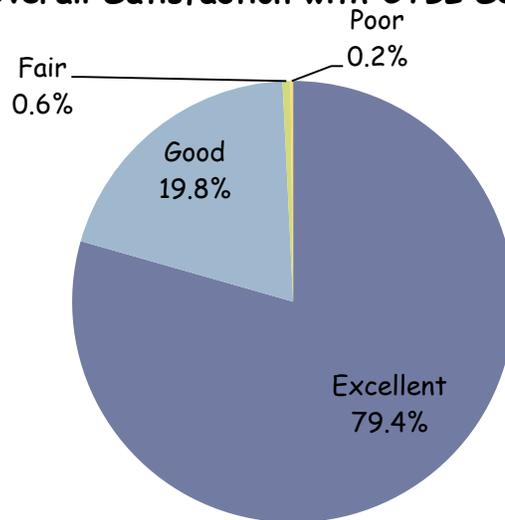
*"The new digital player is excellent...actually remarkable! I have macular degeneration and hearing problems. The new player allows me to fine tune not only the volume, but also the pitch of the narrator's voice, the tone, and speed of the speaker. Thank you!!"*

When comparing satisfaction ratings from 2010 to 2012, it is important to keep in mind that a response option of "Not Applicable" was added to the 2012 survey. However, in order to maintain consistency with the surveys of previous years, the "Not Applicable" responses were excluded from the results. The percentage of "Not Applicable" responses ranged from a high of 16 percent for "book titles we select for you" to a low of 3 percent for "speed with which we get books to you."

## Overall Satisfaction

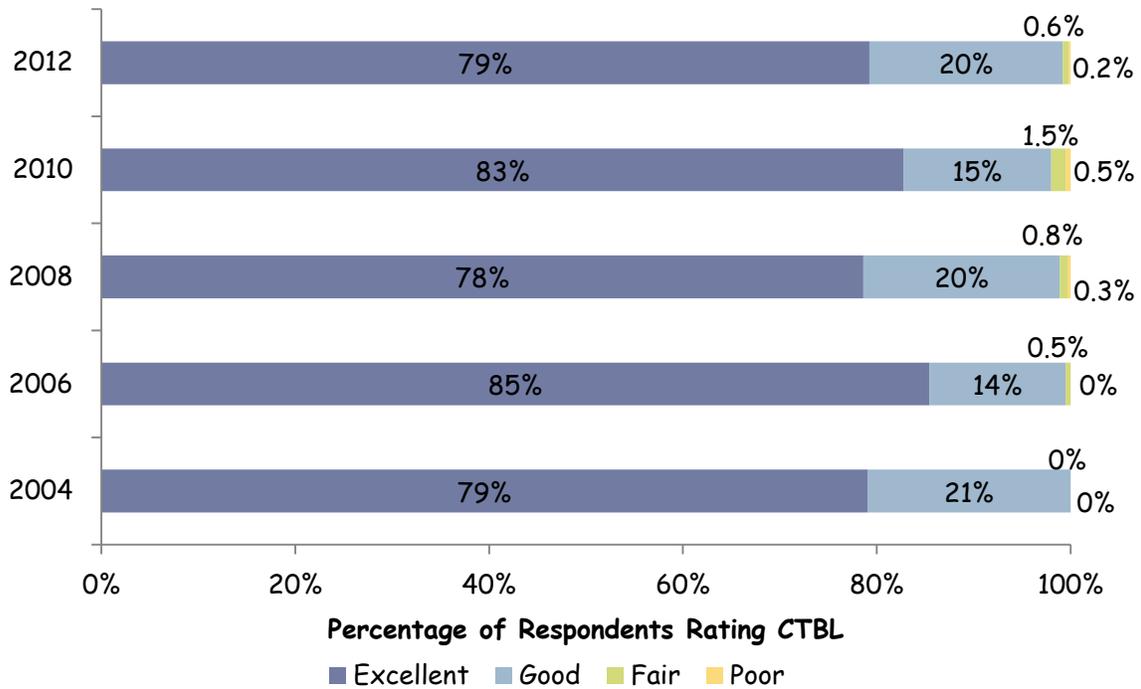
Survey respondents were asked to indicate their overall satisfaction level with CTBL services. Nearly four-fifths of respondents (79%) found CTBL service to be "excellent" overall and one-fifth (20%) described it as "good" (see Chart 12). Less than 1 percent of respondents indicated their satisfaction levels with CTBL services were "fair" or "poor." Comments explaining any unfavorable ratings generally indicated readers' advisory or title selection as their reason for dissatisfaction.

**Chart 12**  
**Overall Satisfaction with CTBL Services**



Overall, the satisfaction level of CTBL patrons has held fairly steady over the years (see Chart 13). The percentage of patrons who have rated CTBL services as "excellent" has fluctuated somewhat between a high of 85 percent in 2006 to just below 80 percent in 2004, 2008, and 2012. There has been a similar fluctuation of about 5 percent in "good" ratings over the five surveys. At no time have more than 2 percent of patrons rated overall satisfaction with CTBL as "fair" or "poor."

**Chart 13**  
**Respondents Overall Satisfaction with**  
**CTBL Services Over Time**



### Comments

Respondents were also invited to share any additional comments about CTBL and the services it provides at the end of the survey. Of the 549 respondents, 308 submitted comments.<sup>3</sup> The major themes running throughout these comments included gratitude for CTBL's services and appreciation for its staff. Several respondents noted that the Colorado Talking Book Library services are superior to those of other states' talking book libraries that they have used, and many emphasized the superiority of CTBL's new digital machines over the old tape machines.

### Conclusion

Overall, CTBL patrons were very satisfied with the services the library provides, with more than 99 percent of patrons rating overall library service

<sup>3</sup> Comments were included in the report to the Director but have been excluded from this Closer Look report to protect patron and staff privacy.

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quality as either "excellent" (79%) or "good" (20%) in 2012. Across the 5 CTBL patron satisfaction surveys that have been administered from 2004 to the present, respondents have been consistent in their satisfaction, indicating a sustained level of excellence in library services.

The demographics of respondents in terms of age, gender, education level, and student status have not changed much over the years, nor have the ways in which patrons communicate with the library; the majority of CTBL patrons are older than 40 and prefer to use the telephone to contact CTBL staff. However, CTBL patrons have increased their social media use since 2010, and CTBL may want to consider the use of these tools to connect with patrons.

Survey respondents did identify a few potential areas for library improvement in their comments, namely increased technology assistance with digital media and more communication regarding how many and what kind of books they are receiving. These topics may provide direction for any follow-up research that CTBL wishes to pursue.

Literature reviews indicate that other libraries that have conducted these more in-depth follow-up studies after initial surveys have found surprising results that go beyond survey comments and suggest new areas of service improvements. CTBL may want to consider such an approach with future studies to push more patron ratings from "good" to "excellent" and identify new ways of reaching out to Coloradans with disabilities.

**Colorado Talking Book Library  
2012 Biennial Evaluation Survey**

Please help us evaluate the services you receive from the Colorado Talking Book Library by filling out this survey and returning it to the Library Research Service before November 30, 2012. 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.

- Phone       E-mail       Mail       Walk-in

3. What is your second most frequently used method of communicating with the library? Mark one.

- Phone       E-mail       Mail       Walk-in  
 Not applicable/none

4. Did you know CTBL has readers' advisors to assist you? Mark one.

- Yes  No

5. Choose the one answer that best describes your use or non-use of BARD (Braille and Audio Reading Download). Mark one.

I have...

- signed-up for BARD and use it.  
 signed-up for BARD, but don't use it.  
 not signed-up, but I've heard about BARD.  
 not heard about BARD.

Appendix A  
Questionnaire

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6. If you do not use BARD, please tell us why. Mark all that apply.

I do not use BARD because...

- I do not have a computer and/or an Internet connection.
- I lost my login information and/or link to the website.
- There are too many steps.
- I am too busy.
- Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Do you use social networking sites on the Internet (for example: Facebook or Twitter)? Mark one.

- Yes → Go to Question #8       No → Go to Question #9

8. If you answered yes to Question 7, which social networking sites do you use? Mark all that apply.

- Facebook     LinkedIn     Google+     Twitter  
 Other-Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

9. How has the library service been valuable to you? Mark all that apply.

- 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 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Appendix A  
Questionnaire

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10. Please rate your satisfaction with each of the following aspects of our service. Mark one per line.

Speed with which we get books to you

Excellent    Good    Fair    Poor    Not Applicable

Completeness and condition of the books you receive

Excellent    Good    Fair    Poor    Not Applicable

The number of books we send to you

Excellent    Good    Fair    Poor    Not Applicable

The book titles we select for you

Excellent    Good    Fair    Poor    Not Applicable

Ease of contacting us

Excellent    Good    Fair    Poor    Not Applicable

Courtesy of library staff

Excellent    Good    Fair    Poor    Not Applicable

The Colorado Talking Book Library newsletter

Excellent    Good    Fair    Poor    Not Applicable

Quality of the playback machine we have loaned you

Excellent    Good    Fair    Poor    Not Applicable

11. Overall, how would you describe the quality of service you receive from the Colorado Talking Book Library? Mark one.

Excellent    Good    Fair    Poor

12. Are there any additional services you think CTBL should offer? Please describe below. All information is confidential.

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Appendix A  
Questionnaire

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**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. All information is confidential.

13. What city do you live in? \_\_\_\_\_

14. What is your gender?

- Female                       Male

15. What is your age group?

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

16. 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)

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

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

**Optional Information:**

18. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

19. Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

20. May we call you?       Yes       No

Appendix A  
Questionnaire

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

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

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