INTRODUCTION

West Vancouver Memorial Library's 2016-2020 Strategic Plan focuses on four priorities: Support 21st Century Learning; Deepen and Extend Community Collaboration; Sustain and Enhance our Physical Space; and Develop and Integrate our Digital Platform. These priorities are in alignment with the strategies of the Provincial Strategic Plan - *Inspiring Libraries, Connecting Communities* (2016). Our Library is responsive to economic, demographic, and technological changes and is well positioned to foster intellectual, social and cultural capital in our community.

The Library has established partnerships in the community, across the North Shore and the Lower Mainland with 79 active partnerships in 2019, and in particular, forms a valuable adjunct to formal learning programs in K-12 and post-secondary institutions.

West Vancouver Memorial Library received a total of $106,621 from the Province in 2019 - 2.2% of our total operating budget. The percentage of our total operating budget that the provincial funding supports has declined each year since the grant is not indexed for an inflationary increase. Provincial revenue supports public access to the library, an educational facility with over 520,000 in-person visits per year, and over 640,000 virtual visits. Annually, the province provides a little under $3.50 of support for each of the library's 30,791 active cardholders and their learning experiences at the library.

An opportunity exists to further advance the province's learning agenda through public libraries, which offer personalized service, trained staff, and learning spaces and resources in over 300 locations province-wide. Libraries in Toronto, Edmonton, Hamilton, and Surrey have been selected as pilot locations for a training partnership with Google – a recognition from the corporate sector of the resources libraries can bring to bear in innovative collaborations.

However, as provincial funding declines, so too does its ability to galvanize the sector and strengthen the cohesion of this critical network of learning institutions, which serve over two million active users in British Columbia each year.

West Vancouver Memorial Library is a member of the Association of British Columbia Public Library Directors (ABCPLD), the British Columbia Library Association (BCLA), the British Columbia Library Trustees Association (BCLTA), and participates in shared services delivered through the British Columbia Libraries Cooperative (BCLC). We fully support the recommendations that these partners make to the Ministry of Education.

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

1. IMPROVING ACCESS

Library Goal that supports the priority:

The West Vancouver Memorial Library's 2016-2020 Strategic Plan supports efforts to enhance equitable public access to all types of information and tools, both physical and digital, through our Strategic Priorities of Deepen and Extend Community Collaboration, Sustain and Enhance our Physical Space, Develop and Integrate our Digital Platform and our Value of Inclusiveness.

Goals supporting this priority that the West Vancouver Memorial Library focused on in 2019 include:

Deepen and Extend Community Collaboration

- Supported the implementation of the action plan for the North Shore Settlement and Integration Strategic Plan.
- Supported adults in making meaningful connections and developing a greater sense of belonging through intercultural programming.

Develop and Integrate our Digital Platform

- Completed architectural, navigation and design planning in preparation for website migration, including consideration of improved accessibility.
- Increased selection and availability of e-audiobooks.

Programs and/or Services that align with the priority:

The Library supports more than 30,000 registered active cardholders per year, and countless more casual users. In all, annual in-person visits total 524,000, and online visits total 645,000.

Formal and informal meeting spaces, seating areas, and study carrels are continuously filled with community members, visitors, and people who commute to West Vancouver for work, with a large number of tutors and students also present outside of school hours. In 2019, the Library reconfigured space to offer 10% more seating. However, much like increasing flow from a tap, the new seating was instantly incorporated into users' habits and we continue to operate at capacity at peak times.

In last year's report, we focussed on Accessible Services, which continue to be a meaningful and well-loved service area**.**

In this year's report, we will provide a snapshot of another important area of service: support for Newcomers, Immigrants, and English Language Learners.

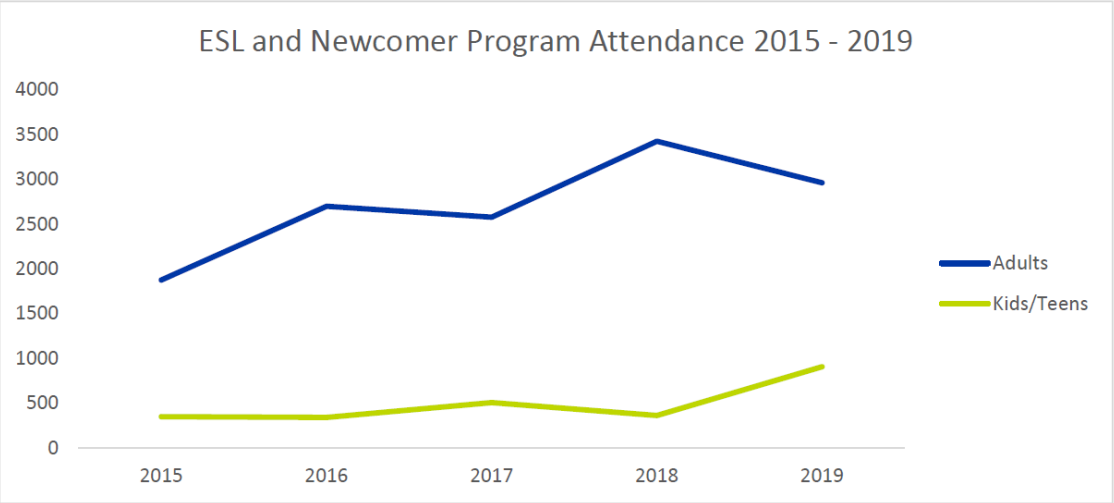
Inclusiveness is one of the Library's core values. Additionally, the West Vancouver District Council lists social well-being as one of their priorities for 2019–2020. In doing so, they recognize the importance of social inclusion, noting that West Vancouver is becoming less age diverse and more culturally diverse.

In West Vancouver:

- 61% speak English at home (compared to 90% in 1979)
- 36% of residents are visible minorities
- For the current school year, West Van Schools report a 10% increase in the number of English Language Learners over the prior year
- The population of English Language Learners in the primary grades has risen between 16 and 25% since 2012 (percentages vary by grade) and approximately 28% of students in all West Vancouver elementary schools receive English Language Learning (ELL) support

"I am a new immigrant from China. When I go to the library to check out books, I always feel nervous because I don't speak the language and do not have anyone to help me. However, I was lucky to meet a staff member who speaks Chinese. Every time she helped me, she not only solved my issues, but also let me feel the warmness of Canadian libraries. I want to write this letter to thank her for her help, and in the meanwhile, I want to thank all the staff members of the West Vancouver Memorial Library, you've all been very helpful."

In response to these trends, WVML has placed a special emphasis on Newcomer and ELL programs and services, resulting in us being the top library in the province for Newcomer/ELL program attendance per capita, with people attending at roughly 15 times the provincial average. Collections in non-official languages constitute roughly 6.5% of total holdings.



Libraries are one of the first points of contact for newcomers, providing a safe, welcoming, diverse and supportive space where families can find resources, assistance and multilingual materials. The challenge is two-fold as libraries must support English language learning and integration into Canadian culture while *also* supporting home language and culture preservation.

Many programs, such as Small Group Conversations (ELL conversation groups led by qualified volunteers) are frequently full, and waiting lists are often full as well. Examples of our programs and services include:

- *Shared Journeys,* a series of programs aimed at cross-cultural sharing and increasing awareness of the immigrant experience, including the goal of bringing together long time residents and newcomers to the community to share experiences and stories.
- *Own language programming*, such as *Fun in Farsi* and *Fun in Mandarin*, which assist families who want their young children to retain language knowledge; and adult book clubs
- *ELL programming*, including book buddies, various conversation groups and adult ELL book clubs
- *NewToBC* and partnerships with local newcomer/immigrant support groups
- Customized library tours for international students and immigrant families
- Cultural celebrations of key events or cultural practices, such as Norooz, Lantern Festivals, Bollywood dancing, or K-pop (Korean music)
- Technology programs, device help, reference help, and assistance with government forms from staff who speak Mandarin, Persian, and select other languages
- Print and online collections of books, movies, newspapers and more in multiple languages

What Our Community Says

Several West Vancouver service providers surveyed as part of our strategic planning results indicated that there is both a demand and a need for more free ELL support and programs for both kids and parents in our community. They indicated that:

- Many parents don't have the resources to support their child's advancement in the school ELL program
- Apart from the ELL conversation classes offered at the Library, there are no free ELL classes for adults in West Vancouver (West Vancouver's 2019 Vital Signs Report echoed this need)
- High school ELL students are especially vulnerable as few programs and resources are available for teens
- There is a need for more opportunities for social interactions across cultures

These needs highlight the critical role of free, accessible services provided by the public library.

2. DEVELOPING SKILLS

Library Goal that supports the priority:

The West Vancouver Memorial Library's 2016-2020 Strategic Plan supports this priority through our Strategic Priorities of Support 21st Century Learning, Sustain and Enhance our Physical Space, Develop and Integrate our Digital Platform, and our Values of Excellence and Innovation.

Goals supporting this priority that the West Vancouver Memorial Library focused on in 2019 include:

Support 21st Century Learning

- Launched the North Shore Authors Collection and program in collaboration with the North Vancouver City Library and North Vancouver District Public Library.
- Expanded programming in The Lab to support active, hands-on technology learning experiences for adults and youth.
- Launched a Tell Your Story program for youth to create their own e-books, available for circulation in the library catalogue.
- Developed and delivered adult learning programs on conducting consumer health research.

Deepen and Extend Community Collaboration

- Launched the North Shore Authors Collection and program in collaboration with the North Vancouver City Library and North Vancouver District Public Library.

Develop and Integrate our Digital Platform

- Explored the feasibility of expanding website functionality to support a local publishing platform.

Programs and/or Services connected with the priority:

Exciting initiatives in 2019 relating to personal creativity included the North Shore Authors Collection launch, a collaborative effort by the North Vancouver City Library, the North Vancouver District Library, and the WVML. This initiative had the goal of inspiring, supporting, and celebrating the literary talent of North Shore authors by showcasing locally created content.

Another exciting program was *Tell Your Story*, a program that teaches teens to design and publish an ebook, which is then hosted by the Library and available to borrow throughout the community.

Spotlight on: 21st Century Learning Outcomes

In last year's report, we provided an overview of the kinds of training provided through our Digital Life Skills service area, and demand for this type of training remains high. We also saw an uptick in the number of device related questions and requests for support on our community computing floor. In general, the Library has been diverting resources into this growing area for several years, creating efficiencies in other areas in order to meet demand.

For 2019, we would like to focus on some outcomes research we conducted. This type of research involves smaller sample sizes, but more in depth assessment.

Background

In March 2018, The Lab, our digital learning classroom, opened with an accompanying increase of public programming of 112%. This space change required a new staffing model for the department. To assess how well we are now achieving outcomes for patrons who engage with our public technology infrastructure, services and programs, we developed and administered two questionnaires: one to public technology program participants, and one to library patrons using the Community Computing Centre (CCC) and compared the results with an assessment we conducted in 2017.

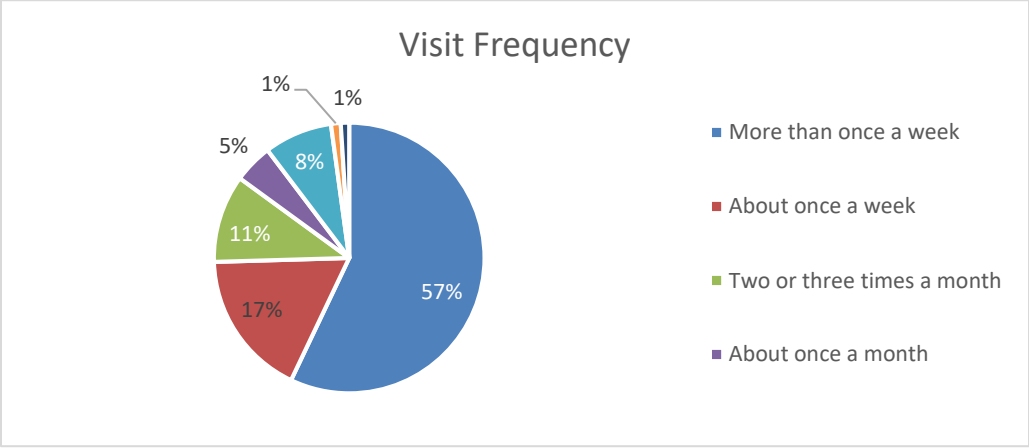
Questionnaires were distributed to patrons participating in a broad selection of library technology programs between June 5 and July 5, 2019. The service/infrastructure questionnaire was distributed to patrons who asked substantive technology questions at the CCC information desk, and periodically to all patrons in the CCC area over the period of one week at the end of June 2019. In total, 118 people participated in the evaluation, a participation rate similar to 2017.

Demographics

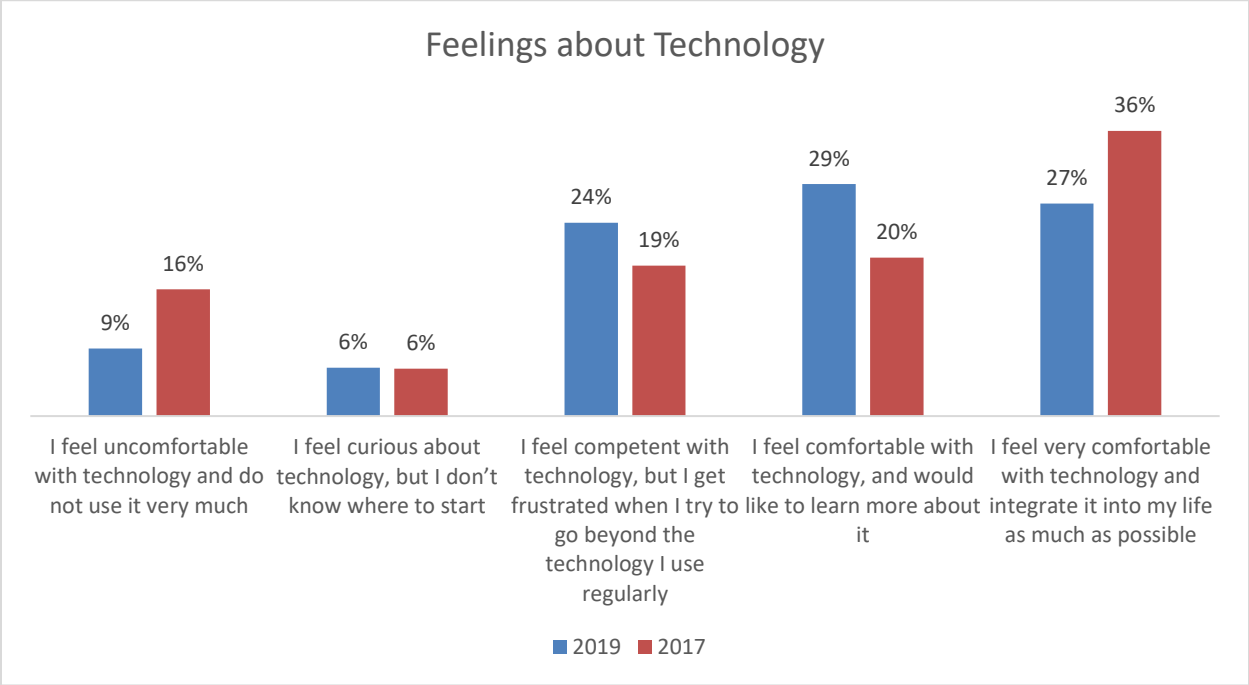
Services and Infrastructure

86 responses were collected in total, although not all respondents answered all questions. 38% of respondents reported being under the age of 40, with 27% between 40 and 49, 18% between 50 and 69, and 18% 70 or older. By comparison, respondents in a more generalized 2019 survey of WVML use had an older demographic, with 47% under 55, and 27% 70 or older.

Over three-quarters of respondents indicated that they live in West Vancouver, with 16% reporting that they live in North Vancouver and the other 8% coming from Vancouver, Burnaby and other locations. This is consistent with other measures of library use showing that we are a destination library. Well over half of respondents visit the Library more than once a week. This is an 8% increase over the 2017 assessment, and an increase of 29% compared to the 2019 WVML In-Person and Online User Survey.

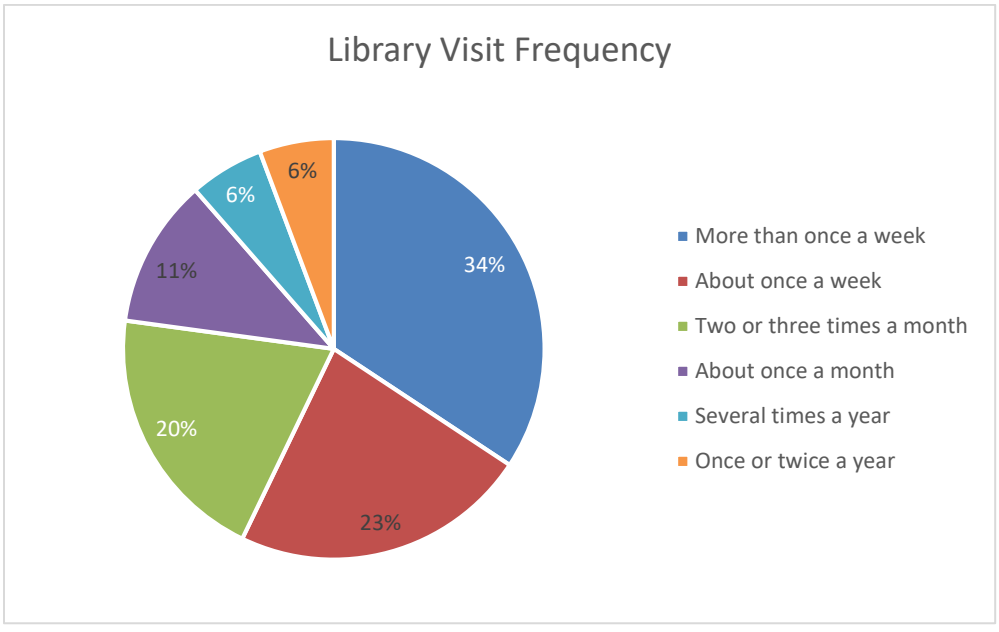


The feelings about technology reported in the 2019 assessment are generally quite different than the 2017 assessment, with fewer respondents at either end of the spectrum and more in the "I feel competent" and "I feel comfortable" categories.

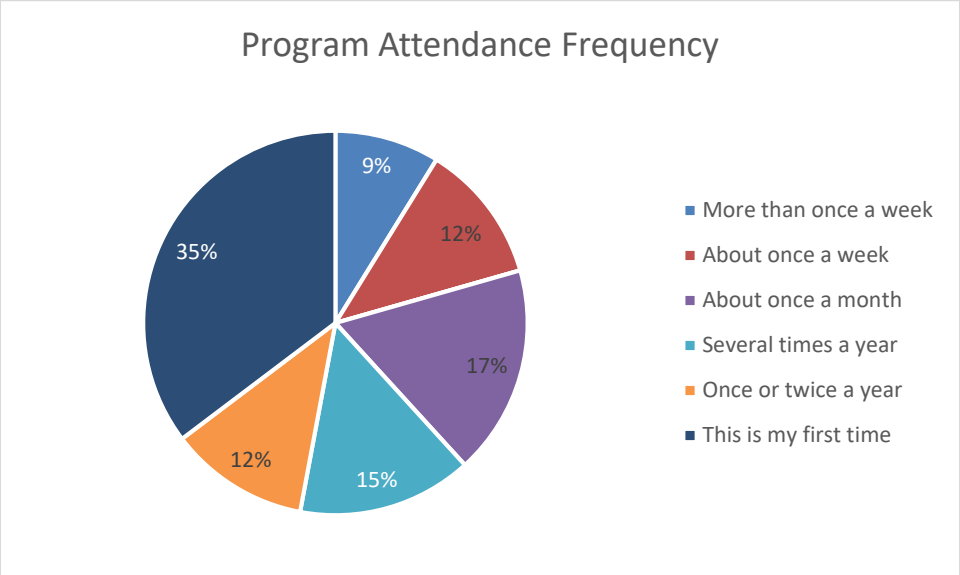


Programs

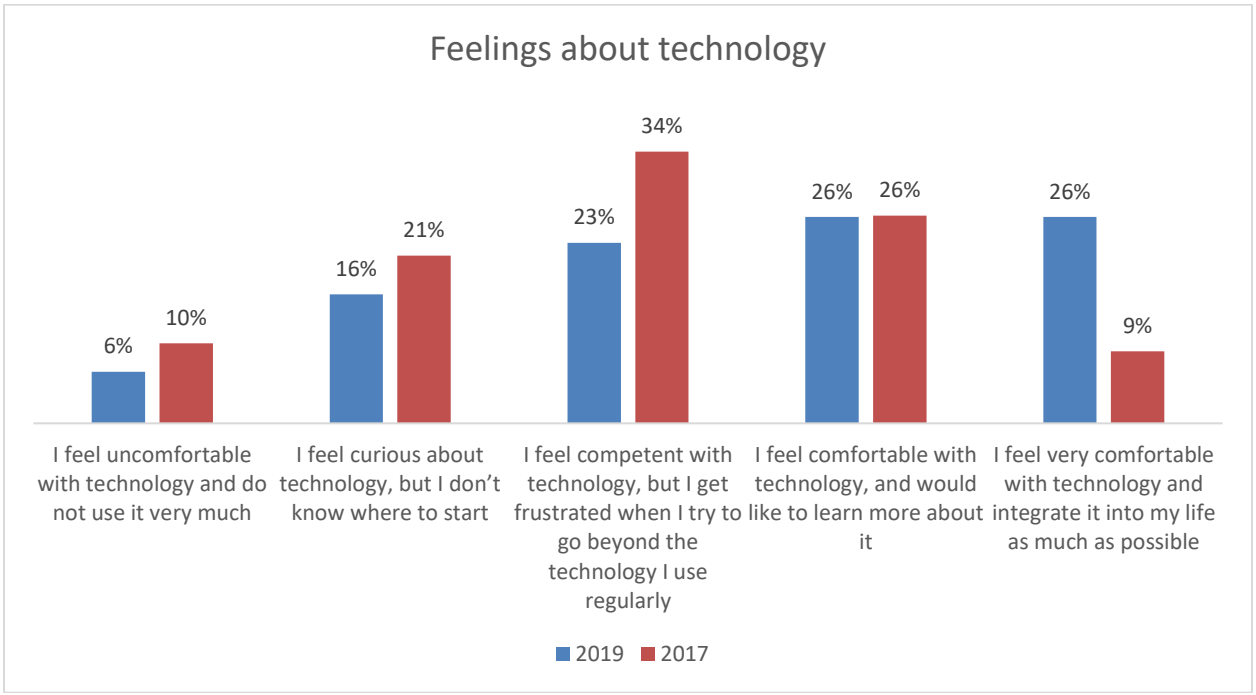
We received 35 responses from the 49 participants in eight programs (a 71% response rate). We learned that program participants use the Library less frequently than the services/infrastructure respondents. This may indicate that our programs are attracting people who may not otherwise come to the Library.



35% of respondents indicated that the program they were attending was their first technology program at the Library. 39% of respondents attend at least one technology program a month.

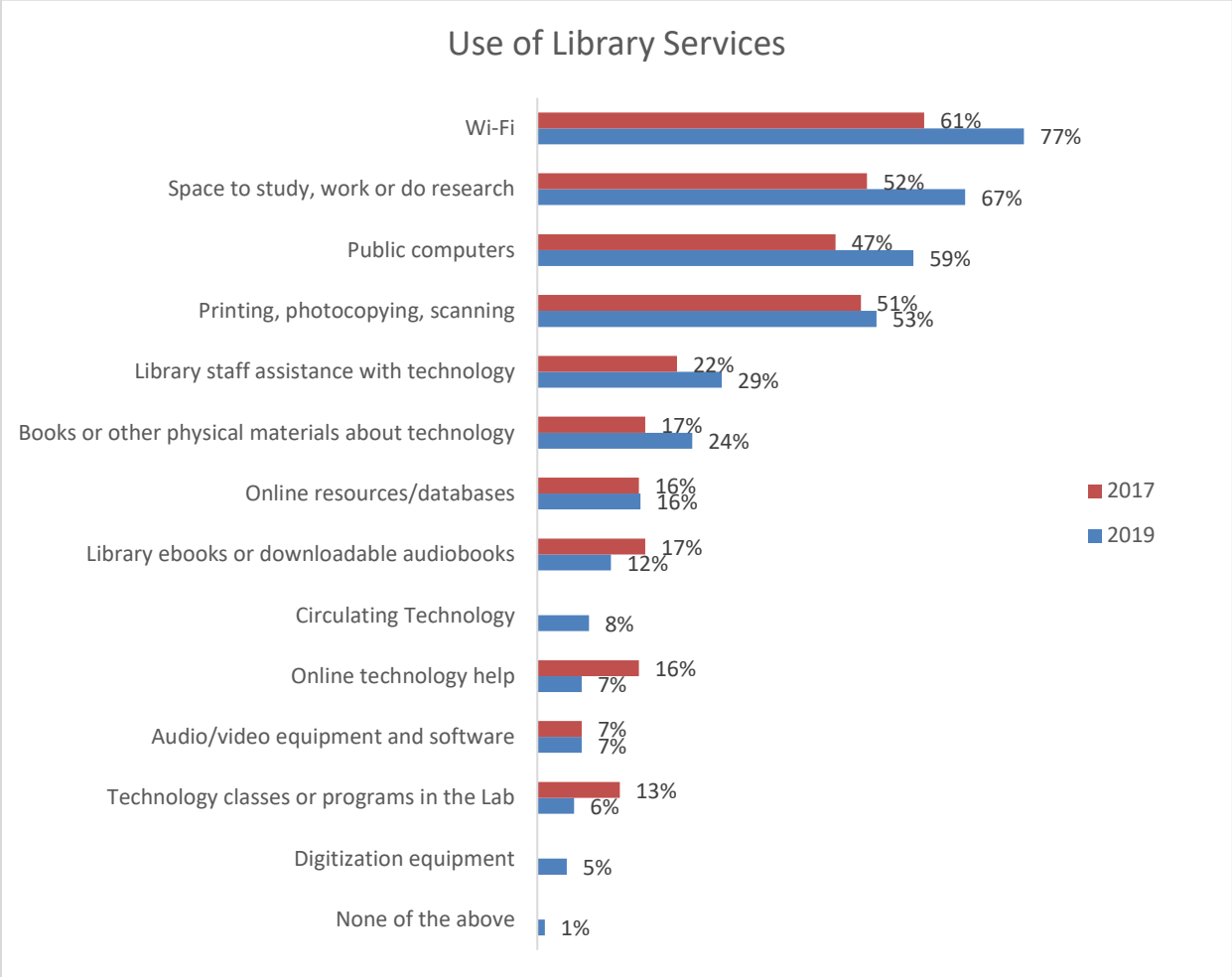


There was a significant increase in respondents who are very comfortable with technology over the previous assessment, which could be attributed to the increase in more advanced technology programs that the Library offers, as well as the increase in frequency of program offerings since early 2017. There is a variation in feelings about technology in program participants which highlights the challenges for public libraries that provide technology programming.



Library Service Usage

Services/Infrastructure



# of services used	% of respondents	
	2019	**2017**
1	9%	12%
2	27%	28%
3	17%	23%
4	20%	(or more) 35%
5 or more	27%	--

We can see that over the past two years that people are using more aspects of the service model. This is a great sign of growth and engagement. When service use by visit frequency was looked at, we found that the more often a respondent visited the Library the more parts of the service model they used.

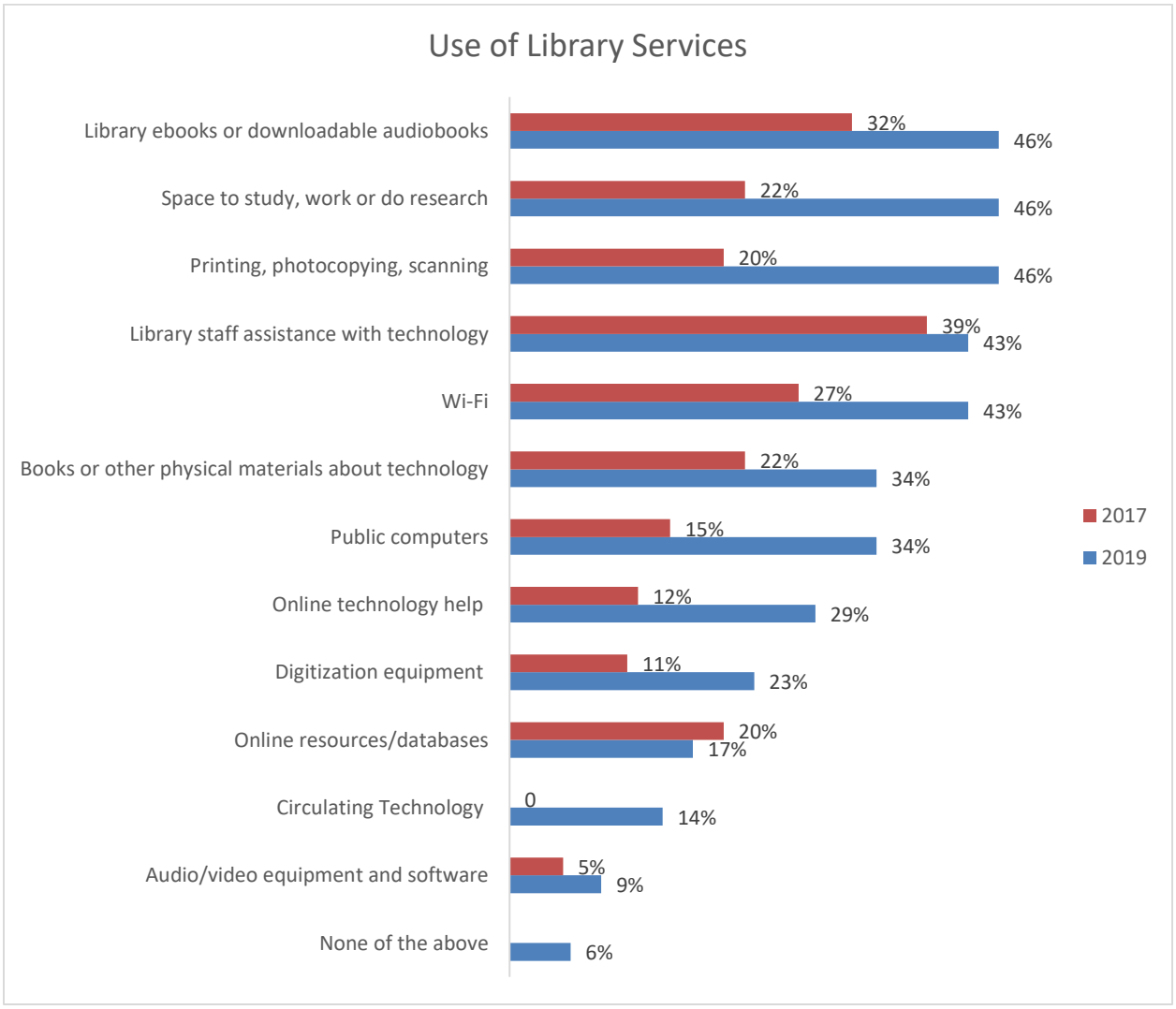
In the 2017 assessment, it was noted that a large proportion of respondents only used Wi-Fi and space; in 2019, we found that to be still true, as about 27% of respondents only use space and Wi-Fi.

We also looked at use of library serves by feelings about technology and noted some patterns:

- As comfort with technology increases public computer use decreases
- As comfort increases, Wi-Fi use increases
- Printing and copying services are used fairly equally across comfort levels
- Those who feel competent/comfortable with technology are most likely to visit once a week or more

Programs

Most often (46%) program attendees use library spaces, ebooks and/or audiobooks, and printing/copying/scanning, directly followed by staff assistance (43%). All aspects of the service model are in much higher use than in 2017. Program participants were much more likely to use library collections than those who completed the services and infrastructure survey. This highlights the role of technology programs in building awareness of library services.



# of services used	% of respondents	
	2019	**2017**
0 (other than Technology program attendance)	6%	24%
1	26%	21%
2	14%	20%
3	3%	16%
4	11%	(or more) 19%
5 or more	40%	

We see that 40% of respondents use five or more aspects of the service model, a significant increase since 2017 and a sign of increased engagement with the Library.

Other data collected in technology programs

Evaluation of technology programs is a process that occurs on a continuous basis. We analyzed a sample of program evaluations from January to June 2019 with 380 responses collected, representing about 33% of participants. From these evaluations it was found that the average effectiveness rating of programs is 4.56 / 5 and that participants appreciate the opportunities to have hands-on practice and small class sizes. People also responded that they feel comfortable asking questions, learning new things and having step-by-step instructions, worksheets and discussions with other participants. 70% of respondents reported living in West Vancouver, with 11% reporting living in North Vancouver (15% did not respond).

From a Coding in Python class participant: "*Thank you so much for your classes. You are so awesome and I've never seen any teacher who can teach complicated coding this easy like you. You are the best! For sure!*"

Outcomes Assessment

Both questionnaires included a series of statements associated with each of the service model outcomes and asked respondents to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement with each. We assessed the combined score for "strongly agree" and "agree" to determine whether we were exceeding, meeting or underperforming expectations for each outcome.

Rating	Avg %	Outcomes
Exceeding expectations	≥80%	Outcome 2: Community members develop fundamental technology skills integral to operating standard hardware and software and connecting to the Internet.
Meeting expectations	65-79%	Outcome 1: Community members have open, equitable, reliable access to the Internet, digital resources, hardware and software. Outcome 3: Community members feel able to apply their technology skills to navigate digital information and services. Outcome 4: Community members are inspired to use technology to pursue their interests and express their perspectives, and feel an increased sense of connectedness and inclusion in the digital age.
Needs work	<65%	Outcome 5: Community members are more likely to engage digitally with the Library, such as through use of self-service Library technology and digital collections.

There is strong evidence that the service model is delivering on the outcomes. There are opportunities to further develop services, programs and infrastructure within each outcome, and particularly in the area of digital engagement with the Library.

Outcomes Assessment

Outcome 1: Community members have open, equitable, reliable access to the Internet, digital resources, hardware and software.

- 78% feel that the Library has knowledgeable staff to assist with library technology
- 77% of respondents feel that the current library Wi-Fi is fast and reliable
- 72% feel that they have access to the technology they need to pursue personal goals
- 71% feel that the Library has the hardware they need
- 66% feel that Library computers are fast, up-to-date and well-maintained
- 63% feel that the Library has knowledgeable staff to assist with personal technology
- 60% feel that the Library computers have the programs (software) they need
- 56% feel that the Library has the digital materials they expect
- 46% feel that there are enough Library computers to go around

Outcome 2: Community members develop fundamental technology skills integral to operating standard hardware and software and connecting to the Internet.

- 92% feel that they understand more about the topic as a result of participating in a Library technology program

- 85% feel that they developed new skills through a Library technology program
- 62% feel that they have expanded or improved their comfort and skill with technology as a result of using the Library's technology services and infrastructure

Outcome 3: Community members feel able to apply their technology skills to navigate digital information and services.

- 82% feel confident that they would be able to use what they learned in a library program on their own
- 56% feel that they see more opportunities to use technology in their life, work or interests as a result of their interaction with the Library

Outcome 4: Community members are inspired to use technology to pursue their interests and express their perspectives, and feel an increased sense of connectedness and inclusion in the digital age.

- 92% feel that they would participate in another program at the Library
- 92% of program participants and 61% of CCC users feel inspired to learn more about technology
- 79% of program participants and 60% of CCC users feel more connected to the Library, to others or to their community

Outcome 5: Community members are more likely to engage digitally with the Library, such as through use of self-service Library technology and digital collections.

- 55% of program participants feel that they are more likely to engage digitally with the Library
- 58% of CCC users feel that they are more likely to use the Library's online catalogue or website to access Library resources, get library information or manage their account.
- 44% of CCC users feel that they are more likely to use digital content like ebooks, e-audiobooks, online music or online video through the Library.

Going Forward

We are examining the results of the outcomes assessment with a view to identifying opportunities to improve. We also plan to investigate other benchmarking opportunities to see where the Library fits within the greater library technology and digital literacy landscape through the use of tools like Project Outcome or the EDGE Benchmarks.

Areas of focus for improvement will include:

- Maintaining and improving library technology infrastructure.
- Continuing to strive towards the strategic priority of increasing the depth and breadth of our digital collections.
- Continuing to support and develop the digital literacy curriculum to meet community needs.
- Considering ways we can foster a sense of community in our programs.

3. COLLABORATING ON SHARED GOALS

Library Goal that supports the priority:

The West Vancouver Memorial Library's 2016-2020 Strategic Plan supports this priority through our Strategic Priorities of Support 21st Century Learning, Deepen and Extend Community Collaboration, Sustain and Enhance our Physical Space and our Value of Sustainability.

Goals supporting this priority that the West Vancouver Memorial Library focused on in 2019 include:

Support 21st Century Learning

- Hosted Honouring Reconciliation activities to increase knowledge and understanding of Indigenous culture. In partnership with Reconciliation Canada and members of the local Squamish Nation, WVML was recognized by the BC Library Association for work on reconciliation with a provincial 'Building Better Communities' award.

Deepen and Extend Community Collaboration

- Hosted school capstone events in partnership with West Van Schools, such as Game of Apps, Future Cities Showcase, Reading Link Challenge, Coding Quest Arcade and more.
- Partnered with the West Vancouver Historical Society to deliver culture and learning programs for and by local community members.

Sustain and Enhance our Physical Space

- Renewal of emergency generator and emergency lighting as part of our role as a Disaster Support Hub for the North Shore Emergency Management plan.

Programs and/or Services connected to the priority:

As noted above, the West Vancouver Memorial Library had 79 active partnerships in 2019. These ranged from our ongoing work on Reconciliation (highlighted in last year's report, and recognized by the BCLA in 2019 for the Building Better Communities Award) to a commitment to act as a Disaster Support Hub in the event of a regional emergency.

One of our strongest partnerships is between our Youth Department and West Vancouver Schools. Staff from the library participate in planning with the schools and support professional development for educators, conduct classroom visits, and provide extended learning opportunities for students, with the goal of achieving a seamless transition from one environment to the other. West Vancouver Schools also sees the library the library as a meaningful space to showcase student learning to the community through capstone events such as the Future Cities showcase, Coding Quest Arcade and the recent Grade 6 Girls' Hackathon.

To get a sense of the depth and breadth of activities, the following list of ongoing partnership activities was compiled:

Existing/Active Partnerships and Shared Initiatives between WVML and West Vancouver Schools

Early Years

Initiative	Established	Timing
Ready, Set Learn: participates + facilitates storytime	2012	April
Welcome to Kindergarten: participates in all school events	-	May-June
Welcome to Kindergarten: speakers at parent evening	2018	June
Successful Early Years to Kindergarten Transitions (SEY2K) Ministry Initiatives: Community Partner	2019	January - June
Immigrant Parents as Literacy Supporters: host session at the Library	2017ish	Varies
StrongStarts: facilitate storytimes 1-2 times/year	-	Varies

Elementary

Initiative	Established	Timing	# of students
IB Inquiry Research Support: West Bay Grade 7s	2014ish	April	50
Booktopia Literary Arts Festival: Grade 2 + 5	2005	May	1200+
Coding Quest Arcade: Grades 5-7	2016ish	May	120+
Summer Reading Club: visits to *all* elementary classrooms	-	June	3000+
International Student Tours	-	August	50+
School Library Card Project: grades vary	2015	Sept-Dec	350+
Embedded Classroom Experience: Eagle Harbour Grades 4+5	2017	October	15-20
Reading Link Challenge: 10 schools	-	November - April	300+
Tell Your Story Pilot E-book Publishing : Westcot Grades 4/6	2019	November - June	60
Lab Visits: Grades 2/3	2018	Varies	Varies

Secondary

Initiative	Established	Timing	# of students
International Student Orientation	2017ish	August	100+
School Library Card Project: grades vary	2017	Sept-Dec	400+
Grade 8 Booktalks: Sentinel	2017	Oct/Nov	60+
Research to Remember	2015	Varies	Varies

Notable One-Time Initiatives

Initiative	Year
Future Cities Showcase	2019
Environmental Science Academy Research Orientation + Final Project Showcase	2019

As you can see, the partnership between the Library and local schools is robust, active, and targeted at improving student outcomes across a multitude of grades and skillsets.

4. ENHANCING GOVERNANCE

Library Goal that supports the priority:

The West Vancouver Memorial Library's 2016-2020 Strategic Plan supports this priority through our Values of Sustainability and Trust.

Deepen and Extend Community Collaboration

- Conduct community engagement and in-depth research for the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan.

Programs and/or Services connected with the priority:

The major activity in this area for 2019, and into 2020, is the renewal of our five year strategic plan. Community consultations and research have been ongoing, and will be summarized upon the publication of the new plan. Findings to date indicate that, while the library is a well-loved and heavily used institution, capacity challenges are creating issues as user behaviours change.

Research completed for the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan encompassed:

- In-library and online survey (2200 respondents)
- Digital Life Skills outcomes (see above) and Youth engagement surveys
- Research briefs on key topics: environmental scan, service model resource allocations, ELL, play-based learning, inclusion and belonging, and comparative library analysis
- Shared meetings with key stakeholders: West Van Schools, District of West Vancouver Council, West Vancouver Memorial Library Friends and Foundation, West Vancouver service providers

We anticipate that our new plan will be published in the third quarter of 2020.

SUMMARY

In the fourth year of our five year Strategic Plan, West Vancouver Memorial Library forged ahead with programs and services that support our strategic directions and service model outcomes.

Digital skills are essential for using, understanding and creating the technology of today and tomorrow. These skills support success in school and at work and are also critical for people to feel included in today's world. Our continuing assessment shows that library services in this area are effective and make a significant difference to people's lives.

Our Library advanced knowledge and dialogue about Reconciliation by bringing people together in a safe and trusted place that supports learning about culture and history. The Honouring Reconciliation activities honoured the experiences of Indigenous Peoples in Canada, facilitated shared community learning and celebrated local Indigenous culture and traditions. Through these meaningful activities, we have deepened our relationship with the Squamish First Nation and established a mutual commitment to ongoing practice.

We supported newcomers, immigrants, and English language learners with a wide array of programs and services. We also partnered meaningfully with West Van Schools, helping to improve student outcomes.

In general, we support the provincial government's key commitments of making life more affordable and delivering services people can count on daily. Through our expert staff, technological infrastructure and welcoming public space, we provide equitable access and connect people to educational opportunities, the job market, online government services and community-based social services.

Our most significant limitation is operational funding, which has been impacted by the lack of any increase from the Province for more than a decade. The Library has demands that exceed capacity in many areas including:

- Digital life skills training for all ages
- Personalized assistance with technological equipment and applications
- Youth after school programming
- Programs for English Language Learners
- Staff information assistance for older adults and lifelong learning

We also continue to be interested in bold new ideas and investments at the provincial level that will leverage our significant contributions to public education and skills development.