



# Public Libraries— A Place for Everyone!



## Maryland Public Library Survey

*On behalf of Maryland public libraries, the Southern Maryland Regional Library Association (SMRLA) commissioned Potomac Incorporated, Bethesda, MD, to conduct a state-wide survey of attitudes about local public libraries in June 2006. Sample size was 1,700*

*adult residents in all 23 Counties and Baltimore City; sampling method was random digit dial. The Division of Library Development and Services, Maryland State Department of Education provided the LSTA (Library Services and Technology Act) grant to fund this project.*

Here are key findings:

### ▼ Usage is Up!

- Almost half (49%) said that someone in their household visited a local public library in a past week.
- About 78% visited in recent months.
- Some 86% visited a local library in the past year.

### ▼ Internet Access is Growing.

- More than one half (53%) identify "using the Internet" as a key library service.
- An increasing number (45%) are getting library resources online.
- Local library users are more familiar with the live, interactive 24/7 AskUsNow service where librarians provide answers to questions, guide research, and help in navigating the Internet.

### ▼ Libraries Earn an "A."

- Nearly one-half (49%) of Marylanders give libraries a top A grade for performance.
- Another 31% give libraries a B.
- Public libraries take home a 3.4 GPA, tops among other major public services (social services, parks, recreation, police, public safety, local government, roads, mass transit).

### ▼ Your Good Neighbor.

- A park and a public library are the two most valuable public services that those surveyed would choose for their community — ahead of elementary school, police station, and job center.
- Nearly 7 out of 10 also agree: Libraries are an essential public service, like a school.



MARYLAND  
PUBLIC  
LIBRARIES

[www.access-somd.org/mdlibsurvey](http://www.access-somd.org/mdlibsurvey)

### ▼ Opportunities for Lifelong Learning.

- People learn new things no matter what their age (95%).

### ▼ Your Community's Economic Asset.

- Help people learn new skills to get better jobs (85%).
- Attract good business to the area (53%).

### ▼ An Excellent Investment of Tax Dollars.

- We agree, say 88%.
- More than 60% would like to see local and state government invest more in public libraries.

### ▼ Reasons Why We Come.

- Borrow /check out books and materials (54%).
- Use the Internet (53%).
- Research/find reference information.
- Bring a child for homework or a program.
- Get information, read, photocopy, pick up brochures.
- Community activities, classes, meetings.

### ▼ Doing a Fine Job.

- Providing wanted information, materials (70%).
- Being open when you want to visit (66%).
- Having a branch close enough to home or work (75%).
- Knowledgeable, courteous, and efficient staff (80%).

