

# Reading for Accessibility and Inclusion

LAURA BUSH 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY LIBRARIAN PROGRAM

---



# PRESENTED BY:

Peyton Stafford  
Project Steering Committee Member



LEADING THE WAY  
SINCE 1875

OLA Annual Meeting April 2023



# LAURA BUSH 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY LIBRARIAN PROGRAM

- The Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program supports developing a diverse workforce of librarians to better meet the changing learning and information needs of the American public by enhancing the training and professional development of library and archives professionals.
- The Ferguson Library was one of 39 libraries to be awarded a grant in August 2021.

## PURPOSE OF THIS GRANT:

- Support the improvement of library services for people with disabilities and barriers that impact their ability to read traditional printed materials.
- Develop educational resources for library staff to better serve this multi-faceted constituency.

## BARRIERS TO READING TRADITIONAL PRINT:

- Visual impairments—total vision loss, color blindness
- Cognitive disorders, including dyslexia, dysgraphia, autism
- Mobility and physical limitations as a result of stroke, cerebral palsy, arthritis
- These conditions affect more than 25% of the population

## THE CURRENT LANDSCAPE:

- A great deal of technology and equipment exists for meeting the needs of these users, ranging from a simple magnifying glass to optical character recognition and voice-to-text systems.
- There has been revolutionary change in digital publishing and reading applications over the last five years, due in part to the commercial success of e-books. This success has encouraged publishers to consider new features and improvements to the reading experience.

## PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Develop and administer a **survey** to the library community to assess both needs and knowledge gaps
- Over the next 12 months, craft and pilot the first in a series of scaffolded **training modules** for librarians to increase their comfort level with and knowledge of accessible ebook formats and reading tools.
- Develop a **preliminary roadmap** for how the library community could further improved library services for people with reading barriers.

## OUR PARTNERS:

- Benetech, a California-based nonprofit and creator of *Bookshare*, an accessible e-book library, and a leader in accessibility standards and innovation
- A Steering Committee of nine members, who have experience with the aspects of accessibility and inclusion addressed by this project



# Survey

---

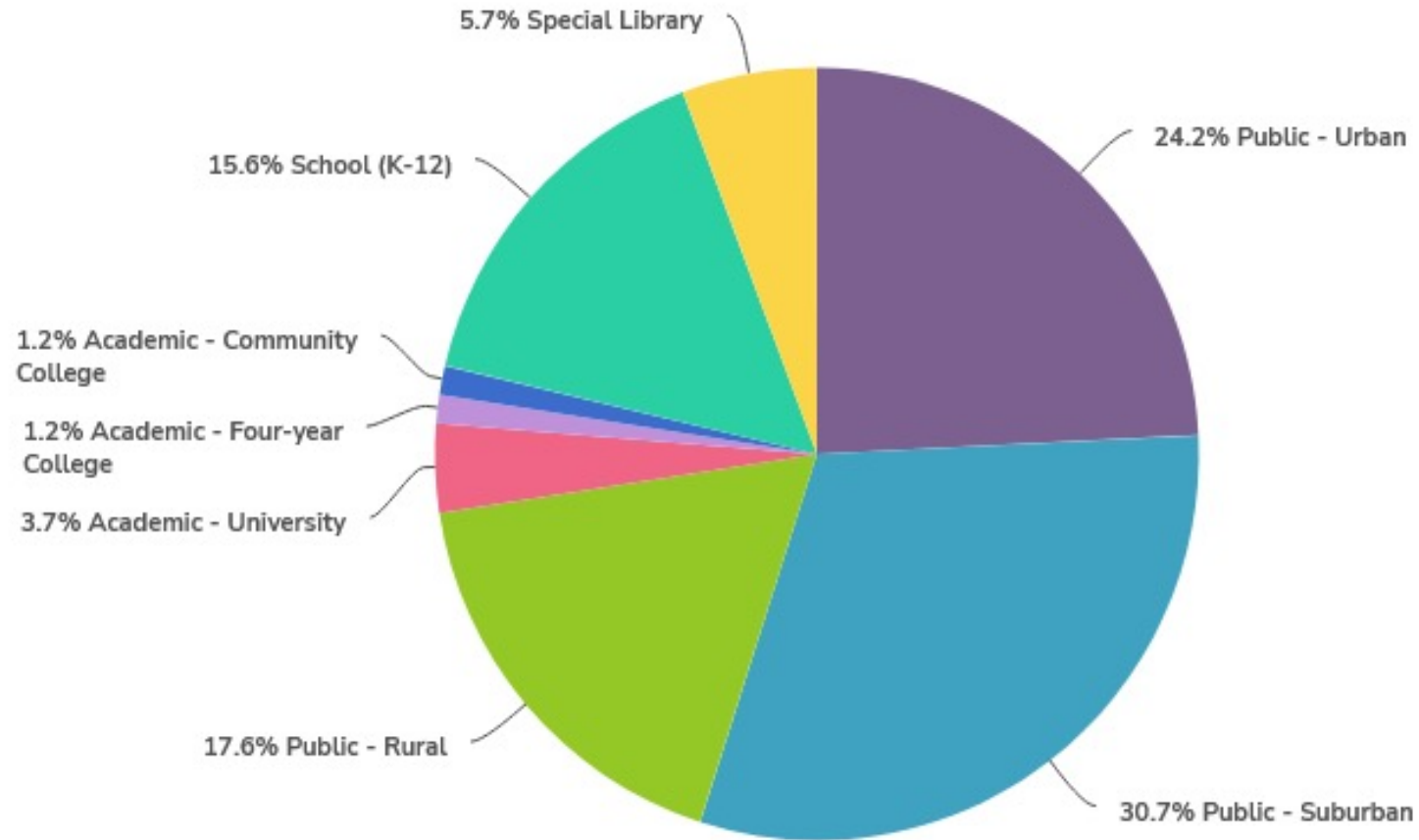
WHAT WE LEARNED

# Our respondents

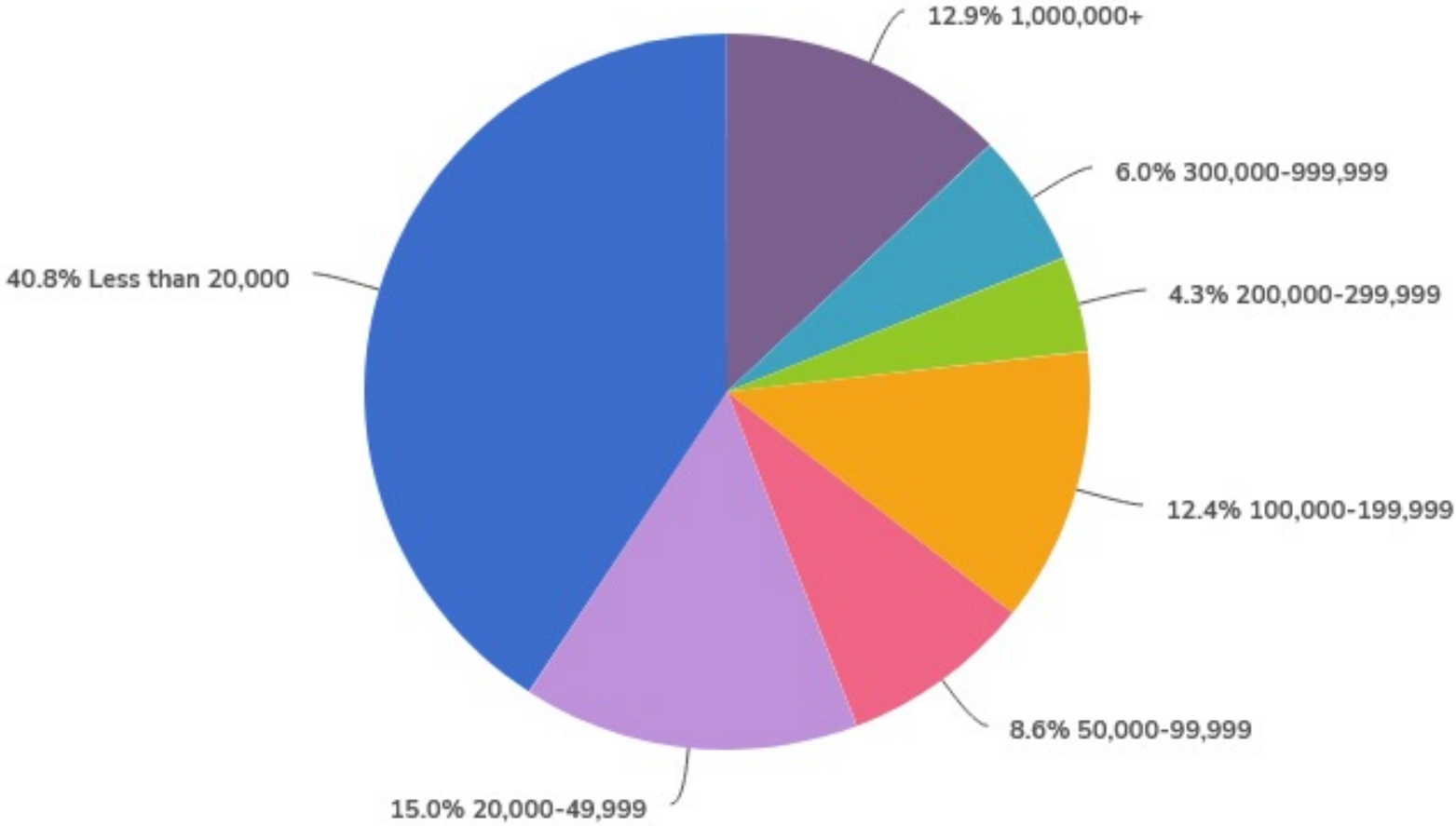
---

- 250 SURVEY RESPONDENTS
- 30% PUBLIC – SUBURBAN
- 40 % LESS THAN 20,000 POPULATION

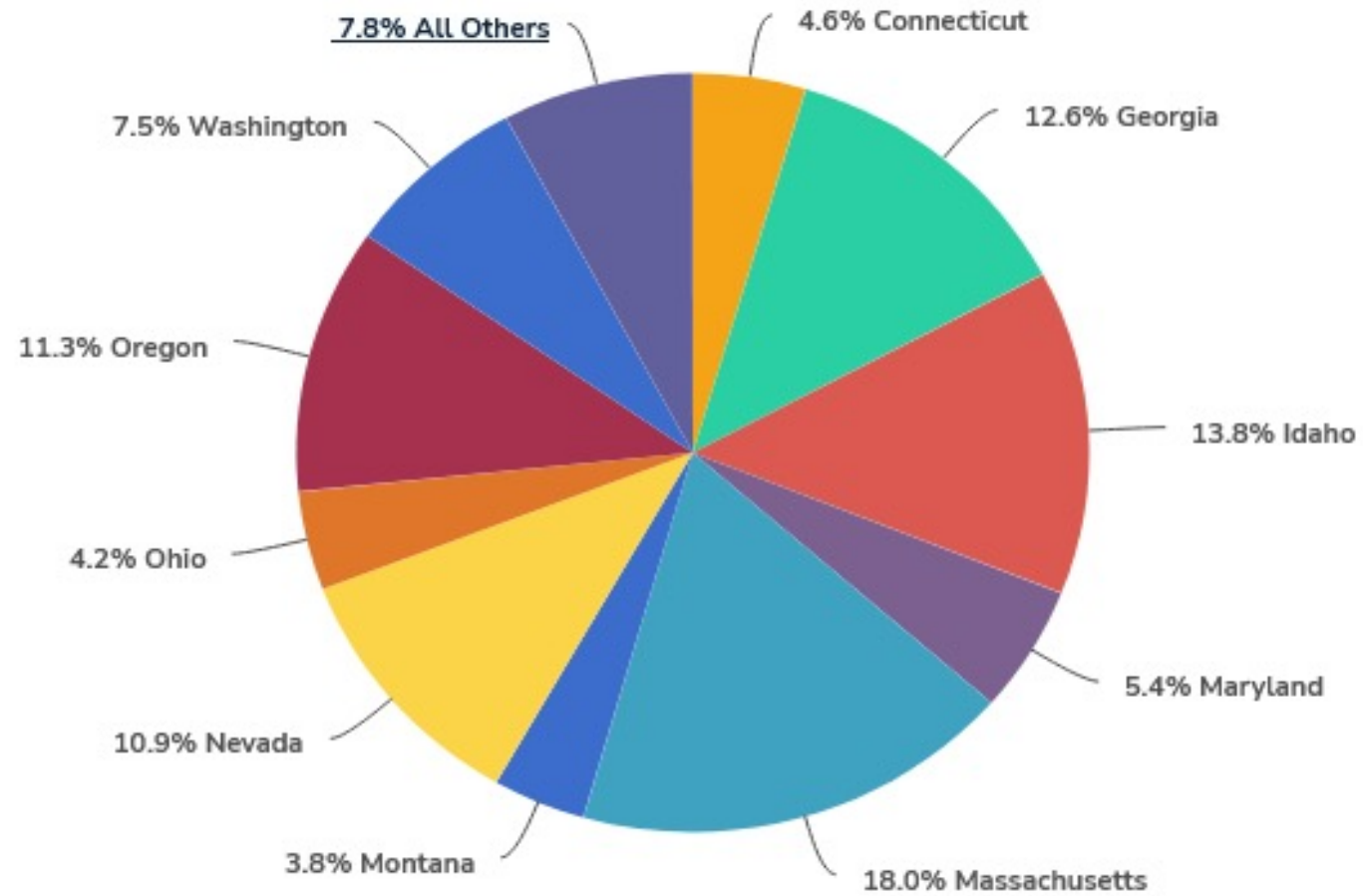
# WHAT TYPE OF LIBRARY DO YOU WORK IN?



# POPULATION SERVED



# LOCATION OF OUR RESPONDENTS

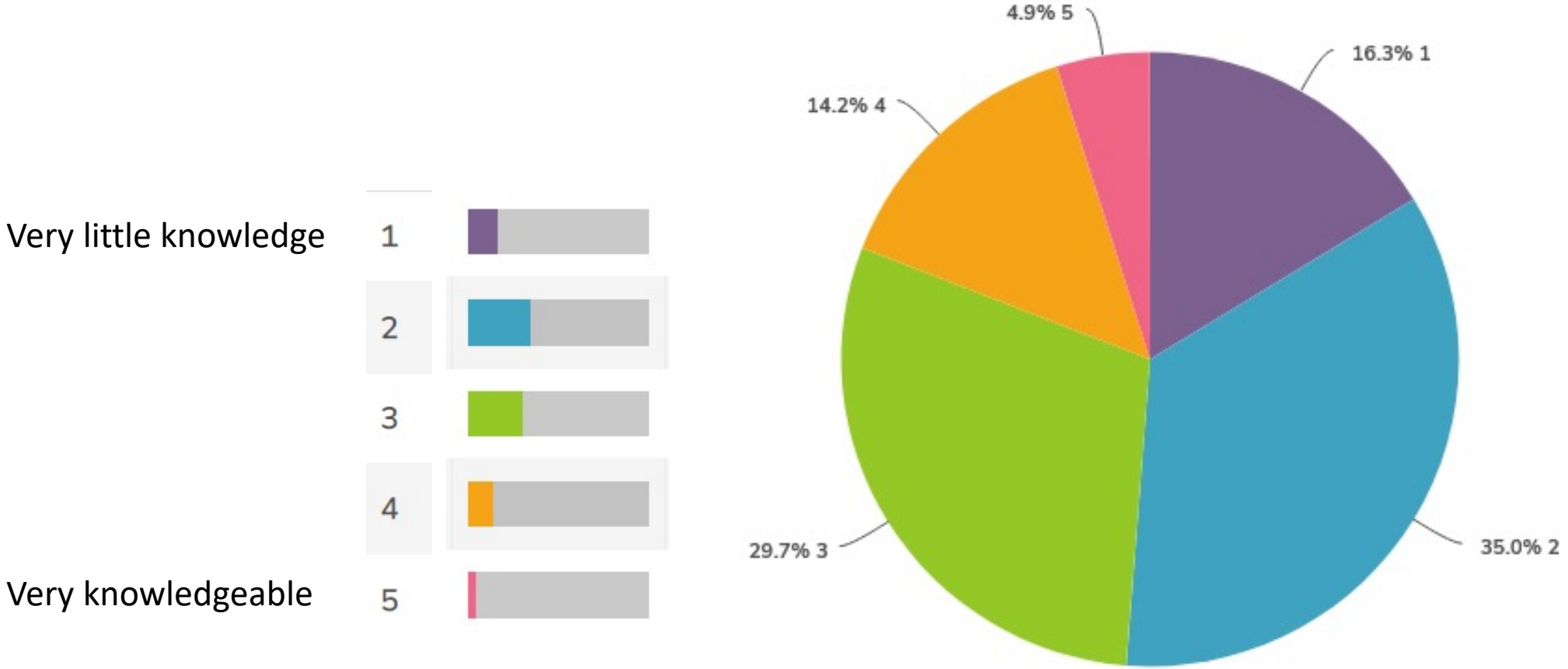


# WE NEED THIS TRAINING

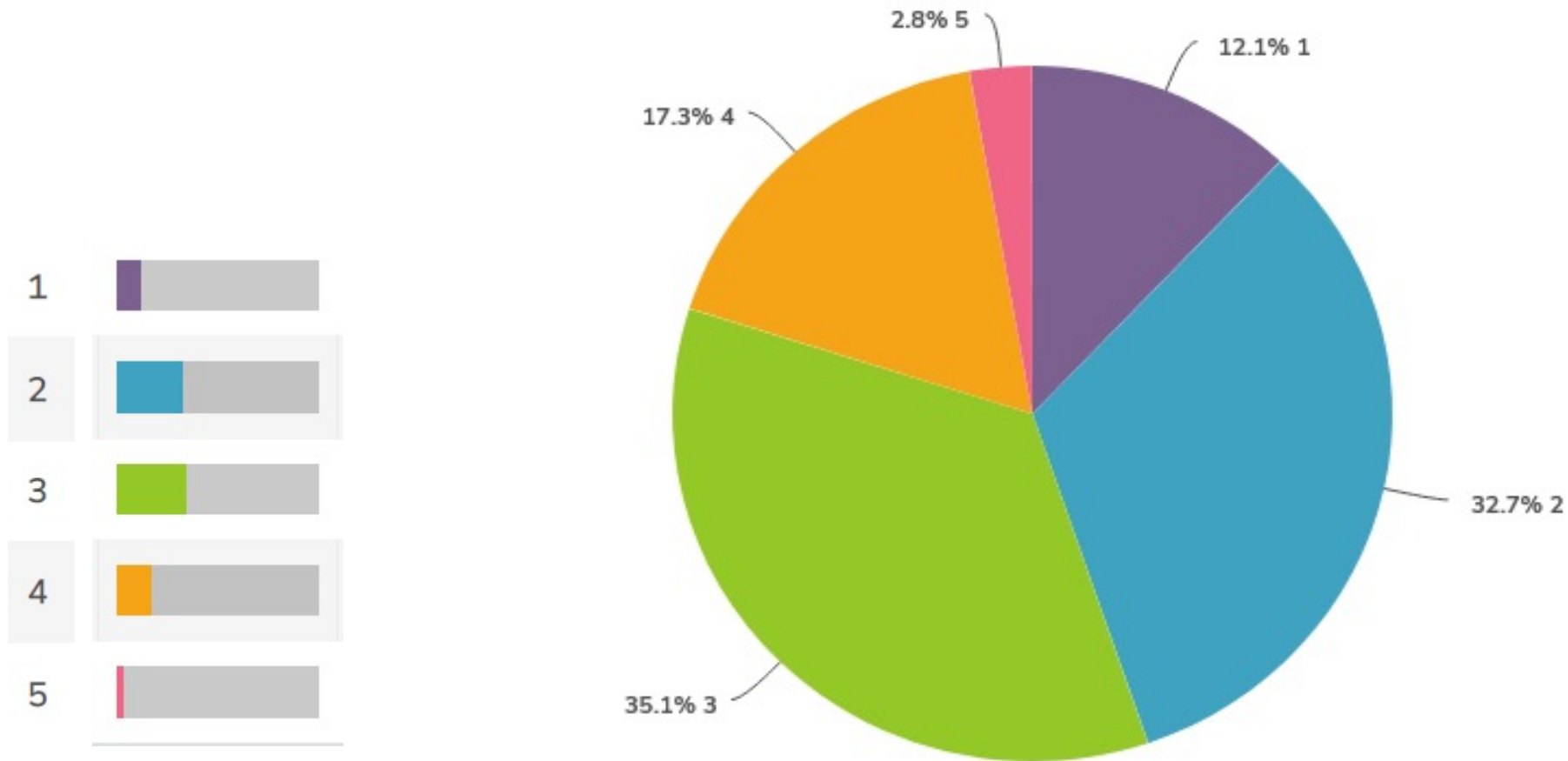
---



Knowledge and understanding of visual disabilities (vision loss, cataracts, corneal clouding, macular degeneration, color blindness, etc.) related to reading traditional print materials.

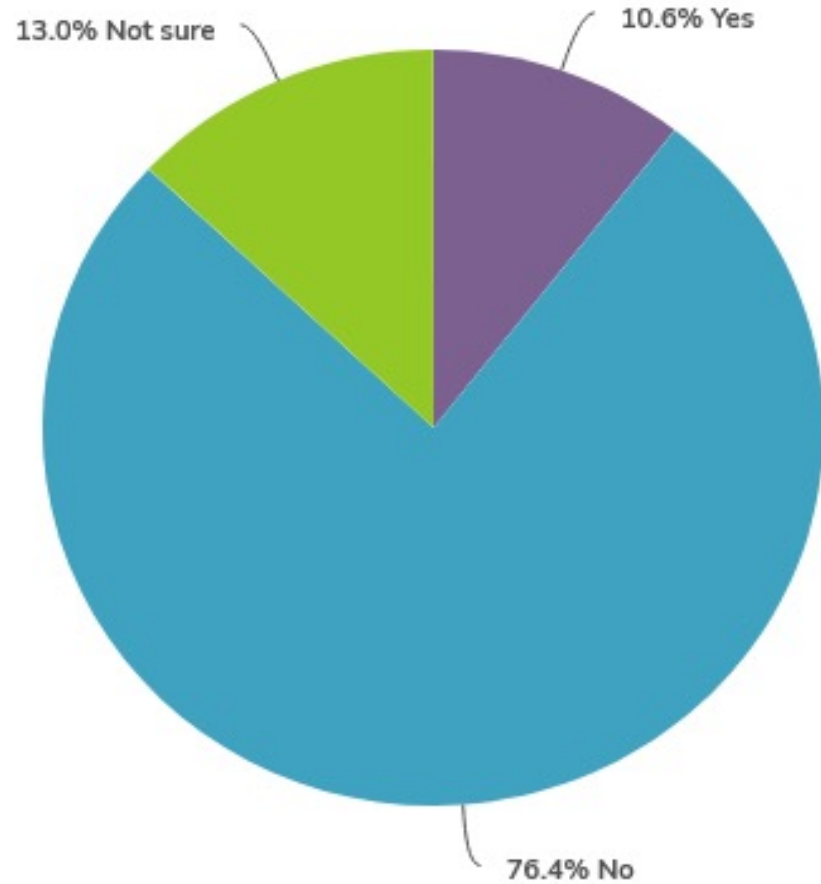


Your knowledge and understanding of cognitive disabilities (e.g. dyslexia, dysgraphia, autism, etc.) related to reading traditional print materials.

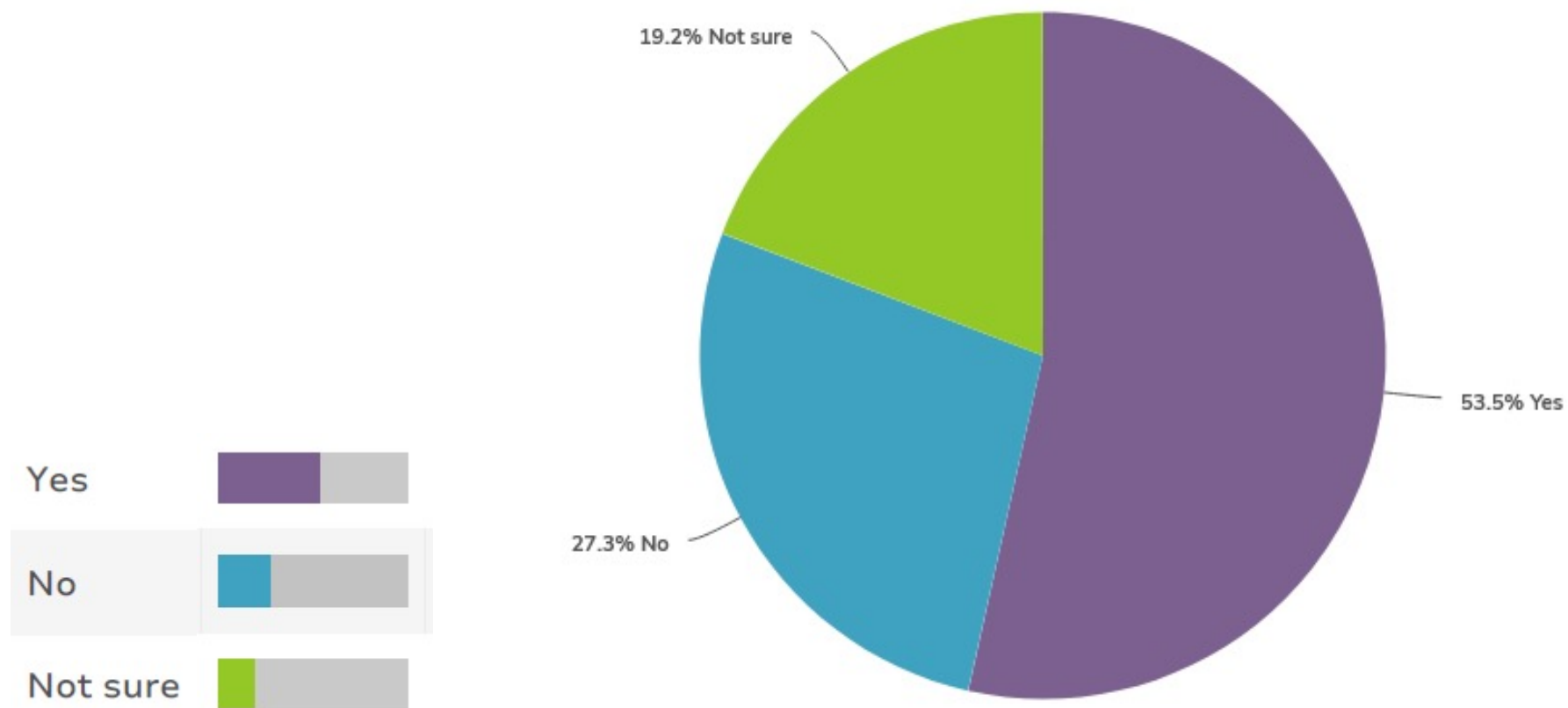




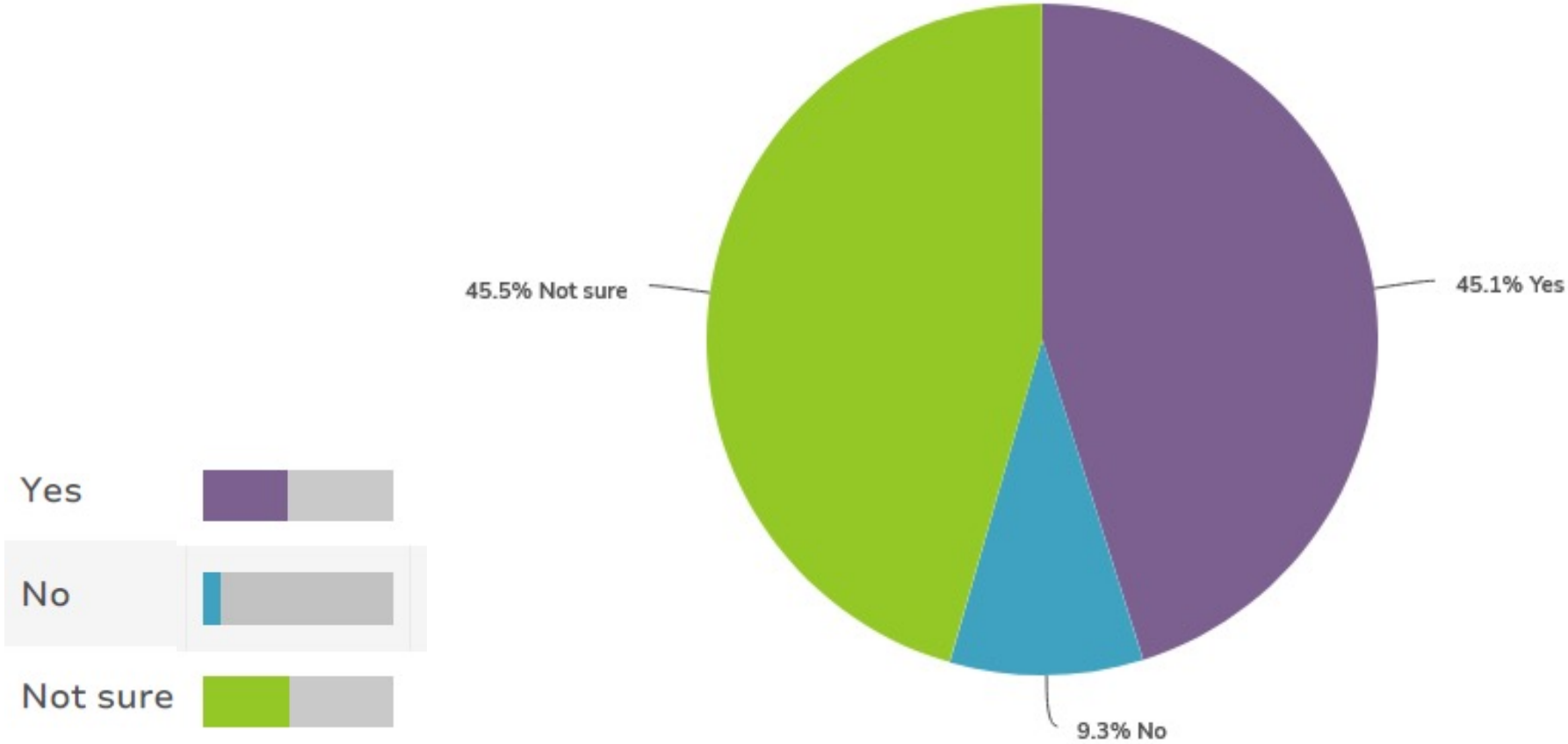
Do staff at your library receive training in the use of assistive technology and disabilities related to reading traditional print materials?



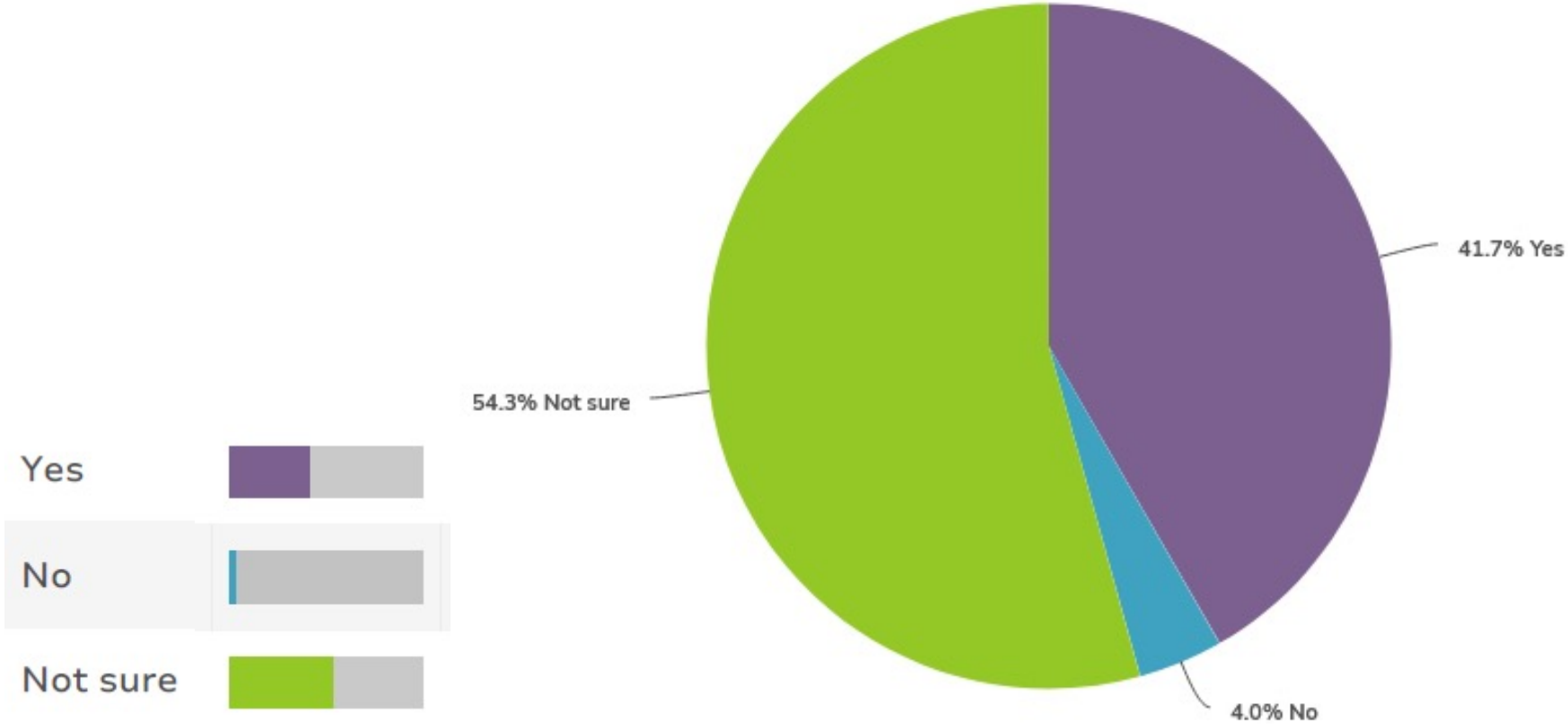
# Do you provide tech help to patrons requesting or requiring assistive technology?



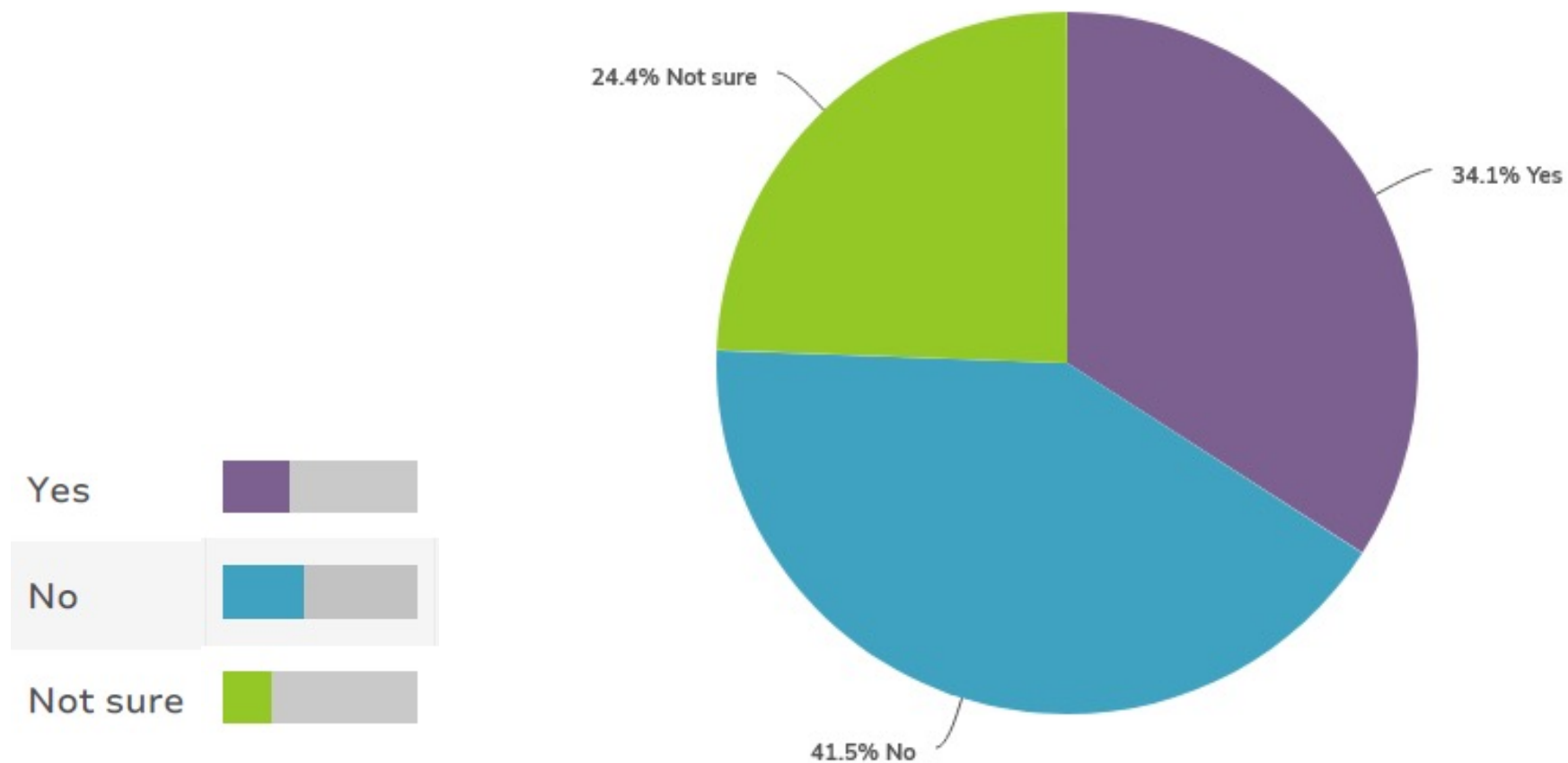
Does your library allow patrons to bring their own assistive technology, such as a Braille Display or software on a flash drive, to attach to a computer/reading system?



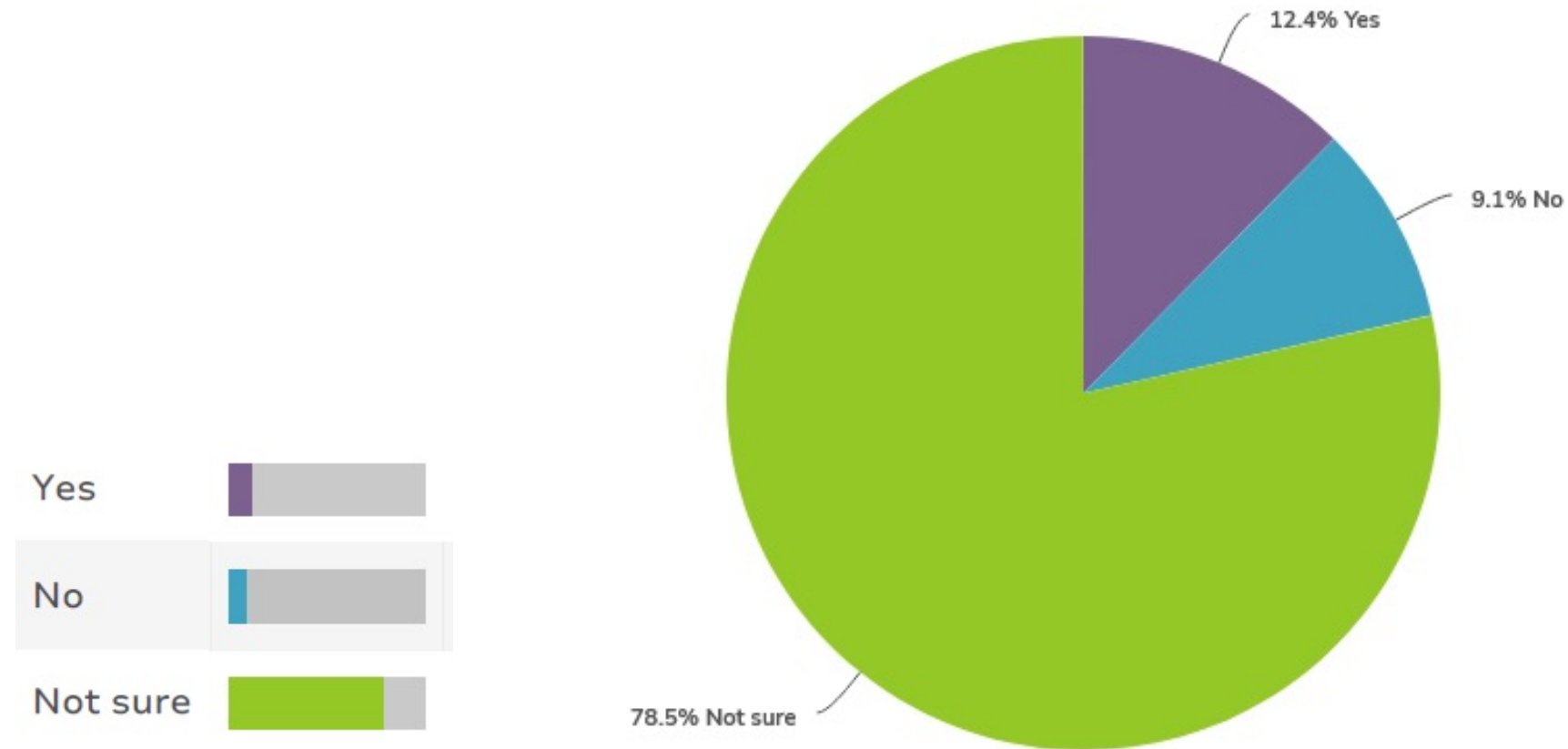
# Is your online catalog accessible to persons with disabilities?



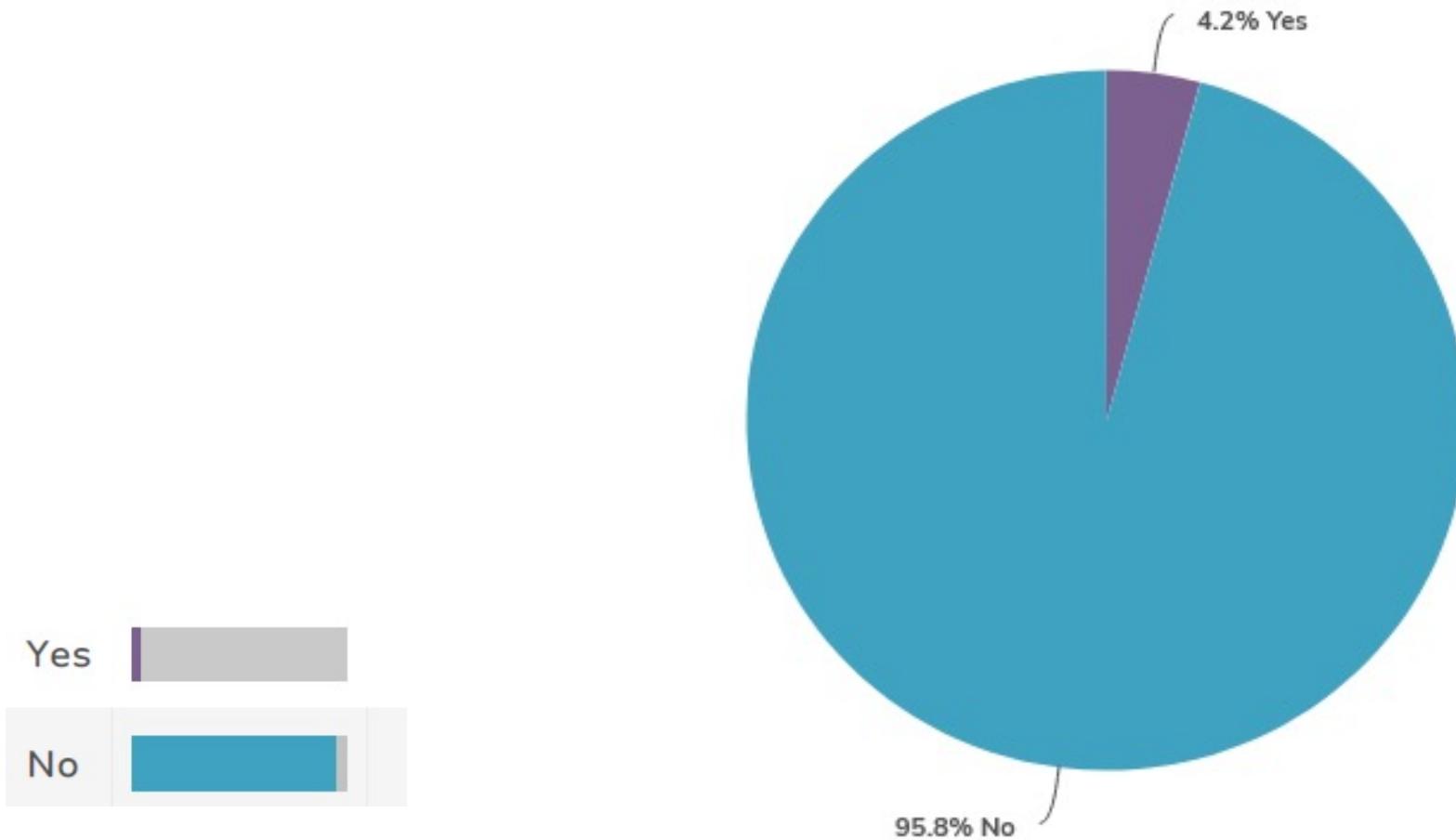
Do you actively promote your library's accessible materials and technology to your print-disabled patrons?



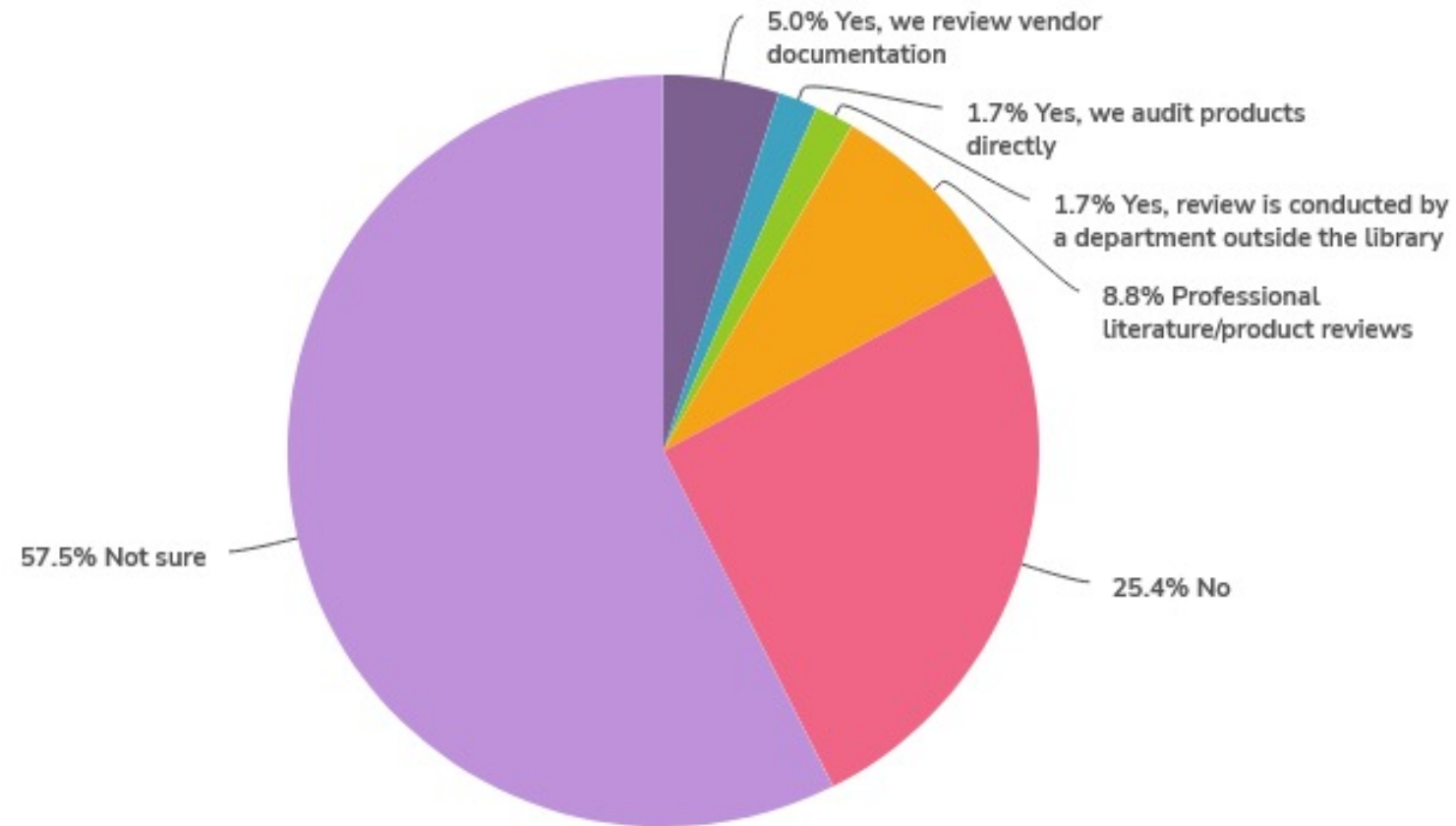
Does your catalog include accessibility metadata for items in your collection?



Are you familiar with the work of the DAISY Consortium to rate these reading systems?



# Does your library have a process to evaluate resources for accessibility?





# CLOSING THE KNOWLEDGE GAP

---



# The Training Module

---

The module and an introduction are on the Connecticut State Library website:

<https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/ReadingForAccessibility>

# CONTACT US:

Peyton Stafford

[peyton@peytonstafford.com](mailto:peyton@peytonstafford.com)