



Thomas E. Nelson
Chief Judge

Self-Help Legal Resource Center

Courthouse – 811 Port Street, St. Joseph, MI 49085
(269) 983-7111, Ext. 8453 • Fax (269) 982-8634

South County – 1205 N. Front Street, Niles, MI 49120
(269) 983.7111 Ext. 6202 • Fax (269) 687-1276

Brian E. Ray
Administrator

February 24, 2015

To those helping with the success of the Self-Help Legal Resource Center:

The results are in for 2014! This year the S-H LRC proudly served 8118 patrons. Truly, our success is due to your support and encouragement. Please take a moment to review the attached 2014 Annual Report.

Should you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Dee Kuelbs, Coordinator
dkuelbs@berriencounty.org

Self-Help Legal Resource Center 2014 Annual Report



Berrien County Courthouse

811 Port Street, 2nd Floor

St. Joseph, MI 49085

Telephone No. (269) 983-7111 Ext. 8793

8:30 am – 4:30 pm

South County Building

1205 N. Front Street

Niles, MI 49120

Telephone No. (269) 687-1276 Ext. 6202

Wednesday Only 9:00 am – 4:30 pm

2014 Annual Report

The S-H LRC of Berrien County was established in St. Joseph on April 20, 2009 through generous funding from the Michigan State Bar Foundation, Frederick S. Upton Foundation, Berrien Community Foundation and Benton Harbor Connect Up Partnership Fund. Current funding is generously provided by the Berrien County Court System. The Center established a secondary location in the Niles Courthouse in October 17, 2012.

The S-H LRC provides information and assistance to community residents who choose to represent themselves in family court and civil matters. Our services provide vital access to justice for patrons who may be unable or unwilling to retain legal counsel. Services, other than selected forms and copies are provided at no cost. Our dedicated staff and volunteers are trained to work individually with each patron to determine their specific needs, assist with the completion of court forms and provide general information about court process and procedure.

Both locations are conveniently located within our courthouses providing an accessible location to assist patrons, Judges, court staff, local administrative and government agencies routinely refer clients to the center saving themselves valuable time and resources.

S-H LRC AT A GLANCE

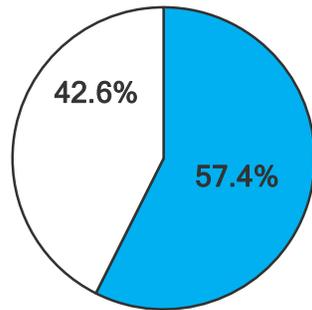
Number of patrons Served 1/1/2014 – 12/31/2014	8,118
Total Number of patrons from 2009-2014	40,021
2014 patrons served with incomes 20,000 or below	57%
2014 patrons served with high school education or less	60%
2014 patrons residing within Berrien County	90%
2014 patrons seeking assistance with family law, matters primarily divorce or custody	81%

2014 HIGHLIGHTS

1. Created, developed or modified consumer friendly packets including procedural and legal information which are customer friendly and easy-to-read forms and instructions.
2. Coordinated procedures between Civil Division, Family Division, and Friend of the Court to streamline the legal process for S-H LRC patrons.
3. Presented informational seminars to various local community groups.
4. Compiled Spanish versions of most available forms and instructions.
5. Organized and adapted forms to be filled out online.
6. Developed training manuals and reference manuals for staff and volunteers.
7. Implemented online survey database to easily and efficiently collect patron data.
8. Participated in quarterly domestic relations stakeholders meetings.

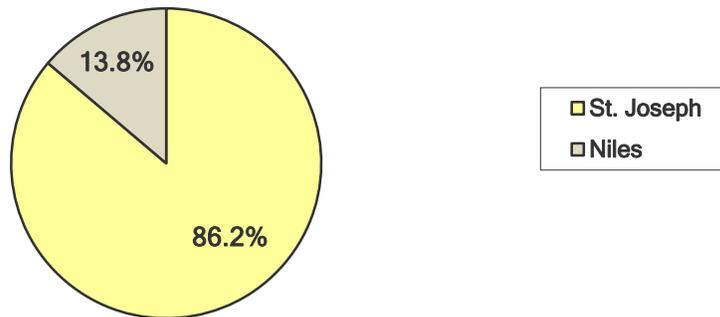
Total # of patrons = 8118

42.6% 1st Visit at S-H LRC - 57.4% Repeat Customers

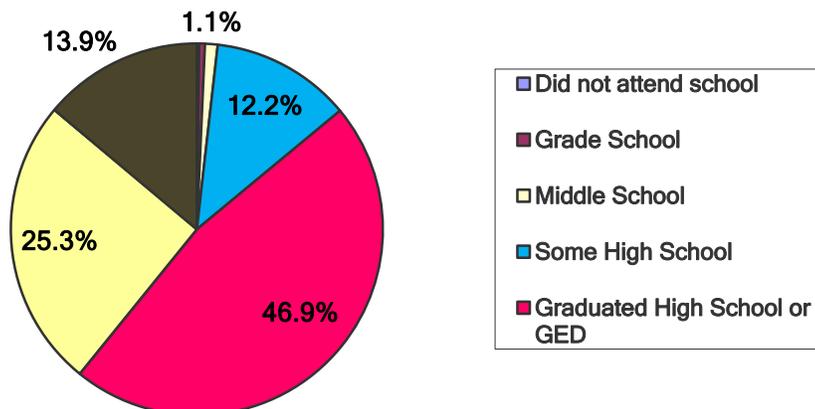


Location of Services

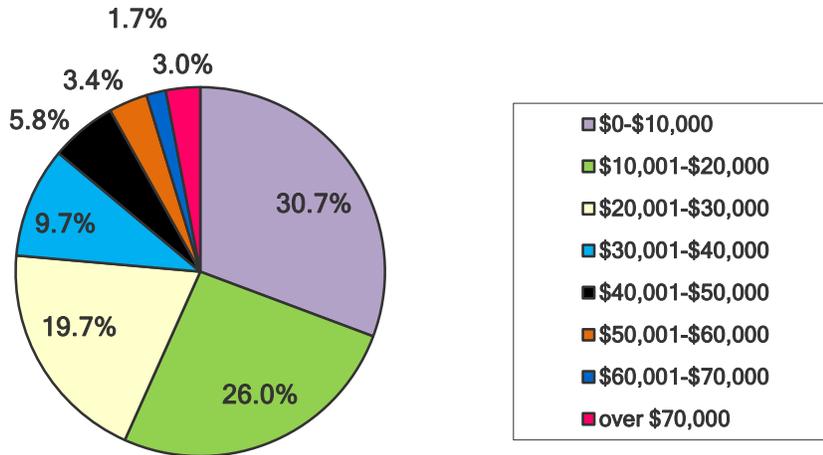
(St. Joseph vs. Niles)



Highest Level of Education Completed

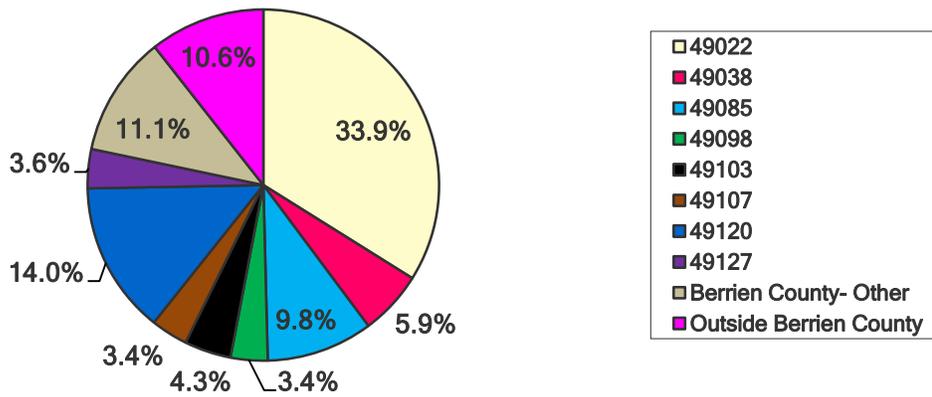


Annual Household Income



Residence of Patrons

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
49022	33.9%	2731
49038	5.9%	475
49085	9.8%	793
49098	3.4%	275
49103	4.3%	350
49107	3.4%	275
49120	14.0%	1124
49127	3.6%	286
Berrien County- Other	11.1%	892
Outside Berrien County	10.6%	850
<i>answered question</i>		8051
<i>skipped question</i>		67



Purpose of Visit

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Adoption	0.3%	22
Child/Spousal Support	15.9%	1288
Court Audio/Video	0.3%	24
Custody Matters	18.6%	1507
Divorce	40.6%	3280
Garnishment	0.9%	69
General Civil	2.3%	184
General Criminal	2.5%	200
Landlord/Tenant	4.1%	331
Notary Services	2.7%	217
Personal Protection Order	5.7%	460
Probate Matters	3.0%	245
Real Estate Deeds/Liens	2.0%	160
Small Claims	2.6%	208
Other	19.5%	1580
answered question		8086
skipped question		32

