

# Q and A NJ: New Jersey's Statewide 24/7 virtual reference service



## What is Q and A NJ?

A Web-based service that lets the user connect online with a real librarian—one to one in real time—for help with any topic or information need. Accessible at [www.QandANJ.org](http://www.QandANJ.org).

## What is a typical question on Q and A NJ?

There is no "typical" question. Users ask questions across the board whether they are seeking health or legal information, doing genealogy research, researching a term paper topic, looking up real estate prices and business contact information, embarking on a job hunt, or researching virtually anything else.

## How does this work, anyway?

Through a live chat component, the user interacts with the librarian who then sends relevant Web sites, articles from specialized databases, multimedia files, and other pertinent information directly to the user's computer screen. Librarians use both electronic sources and library print collections to answer questions. All the user needs to use QandANJ is a Web browser.

## Who provides the service?

300+ librarians from forty-six different libraries and library systems across the state of New Jersey staff the service, working mostly from their libraries but some from home. Fifteen New Jersey Librarians have also been hired as freelancers to provide service during evening and weekend hours. Overnight coverage, backup and some weekend hours are provided by QuestionPoint librarians and librarians from other libraries that take part in QuestionPoint's cooperative coverage (they back us up; we back them up.) Q and A NJ is supported by federal *Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds administered by the New Jersey State Library*. The project is managed by the *South Jersey Regional Library Cooperative*.

## Who uses the service?

The service is used by young and old, professionals and students alike. During the school year, approximately 50% of Q and A NJ users are students, K-12 right up through college. Many live in communities directly served by the participating libraries, but all residents of New Jersey can use the service.

## Usage Statistics

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
'01										451	415	479	<b>1345</b>
'02	813	2,265	2,484	2,367	2,568	1,364	1,051	1,063	1,900	3,774	4,140	3,881	<b>27,670</b>
'03	4,985	5,122	5,991	5,364	4,957	3,131	1,479	1,564	3,948	5,656	5,158	4,571	<b>51,926</b>
'04	5,996	6,469	7,405	6,175	6,428	2,935	1,382	1,466	4,108	5,359	5,467	4,789	<b>57,979</b>
'05	5,471	5,590	6,488	6,108	5,971	2,790	1276	1583	4280	5,773	5,236	4,038	<b>54,604</b>
'06	6,046	6,340											

- Total Sessions to date: **193,524**
- Average number of Sessions per year: **54,836** (2003-2005)
- Average number of sessions per month: **4570**

- Atlantic Cape Community College
- Atlantic City Free Public Library
- Bloomfield Public Library
- Burlington County College Library
- Burlington County Library
- Caldwell College
- Camden County Library
- Centenary College
- Cherry Hill Free Public Library
- Cumberland County Library
- Drew University
- East Brunswick Public Library
- Gloucester County College Library
- Gloucester County Library
- Hunterdon County Library
- Kean University
- Livingston Public Library
- Mercer County Library
- Middlesex County College
- Middletown Public Library
- Millburn Free Public Library
- Monmouth County Library
- Montclair Public Library
- Mount Laurel Library
- New Jersey City University
- New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT)
- New Jersey State Library
- Newark Public Library
- New Brunswick Public Library
- Ocean County Library
- Old Bridge Public Library
- Piscataway Public Library
- Princeton Public Library
- Ramapo College of New Jersey
- Rowan University
- Somerset County Library
- South Brunswick Public Library
- UMDNJ Health Sciences Lib in Stratford
- UMDNJ Smith Library in Newark
- Vineland Public Library
- Wayne Public Library
- West Deptford Public Library
- West Orange Public Library
- William Paterson University
- Woodbridge Public Library

