

Client Feedback on Outcomes of Services at the Elizabeth Fry Society of Ottawa

Research Findings Fact Sheet

Presented by:

Julia Arenas, Chandni Desai, Leigh Hortop, Matthew Manion and Lee Ann McGuire

Quantitative Research Findings

Please Note:

Our objective was to analyze the questionnaire items across age, program type, number of groups participated in, and additional demographic, however, due to very small sample size this was not possible. Numerous questionnaires were incomplete, either due to incorrectly filled out responses, or missing responses. Naturally, this also impacted data analysis.

A One-Way ANOVA test was completed to compare the means across age groups for questions 4-19, 24-31. Results: Not significant

In order to conclude whether or not participation in E-Fry services had resulted in a significant reduction of drug and/or alcohol use among participants, a Paired Samples T-Test was completed for pre/post questions 20 & 21, 22 & 23. Results: Not significant

As such, noteworthy findings will be reported as frequencies (%), but do not indicate significant p. values.

For 5-point scale questionnaire items the top two categories were combined for the high (positive) end rating, and the bottom two were combined for the low (negative) end rating, unless otherwise stated. Results were calculated based on data from participants who responded to each question. As such, missing values were removed from the analysis for valid percentages.

Sample Demographics

- In total 20 participants completed the questionnaire. Data was collected from a sample size of 19 participants.
- 100% of participants were female and English speaking.
- 2 youth participants; 17 adult participants
- Of all participants, **42.1% (n 8) identified as having a mental health issues**, 10.5% (n 2) as Aboriginal, 10.5% (n 2) as Immigrant, 5.3% (n 1) as a member of the GLBTIQ2 community, 5.3% (n 1) as having a physical disability, and 5.3% (n 1) as having a learning disability.
- 10.5% (n 2) of sample participated in only 1 program; 89.5% (n 17) participated in 2 or more programs

Conflicts with the Law

- 52.9% were required by law to attend E-Fry services
- 88.9% were charged with an offense at some point in their lives
- Since completing their program with E-Fry, **86.7% report no new conflicts with the law**; 6.7% report a new charge or arrest; 6.7% report a breach.
- Of those with a new charge, arrest, or breach, **100% strongly agree** that they have had fewer conflicts with the law since receiving support from E-Fry

Employment, School and Housing

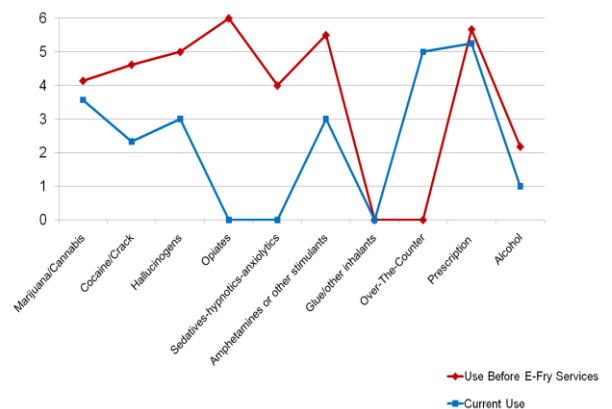
- 17.6% indicated working before their involvement with E-Fry versus 6.7% after. (10.9% decline)
- 31.6% indicated going to school before their involvement with E-Fry versus 18.8% after. (12.8% decline)
- 29.4% agreed (“agree” and “strongly agree”) that they feel E-Fry has helped them access more stable housing
- 44.5% agreed that they feel more able to meet their needs financially

However...

- 100% agreed that they feel more committed to accomplishing their goals
- 94.8% agreed that they feel more in control of their future
- 94.5% agreed that they feel more aware of the resources in their community

Addictions and Addiction Relapses

- Top three drugs of choice before receiving services: 1st Cocaine/Crack, 2nd Marijuana, 3rd Opiates
- 72.7% indicate their alcohol and/or drug use have reduced since they received services; 18.2% have changed or switched drugs; 9.1% report no change
- **None of the participants** indicated an increase in drug use since participating in E-Fry services
- 68.8 % agreed that E-Fry has taught them skills to help them cope with their addiction
- Before and after percentages of participants indicating they “never” drink alcohol: 27.3% and 45.5% respectively (18.2% increase)
- Before and after percentages of participants indicating they drink alcohol once a day or more: 27.3% and 9.1% respectively (18.2% decrease)
- Before and after percentages of participants indicating, when they do drink, they drink 7 or more drinks a day: 30.0% and 9.1% respectively (20.9% decrease)



Relationships and Skills

Since their involvement with E-Fry...

- 87.5% agreed that their communication skills have improved; 6.2% disagreed (“disagree” or “strongly disagree”)
- 94.2% agreed that they feel E-Fry has helped them learn skills to deal with conflict
- 76.5% agreed that they feel less stressed in their current relationships; 11.8% disagreed
- 82.3% agreed that their current relationships have a *more* positive influence on them; 5.9% disagreed
- 88.2% agreed that they feel that they are better able to cope with stressful situations in their life; 5.9% disagreed

Qualitative Research Findings

- 17 out of 19 respondents answered open-ended questions on the questionnaire (Q32-35)
- Similar results were reported for Q32 & 33 which asked participants why they feel better about themselves and to describe skills they have learned through E-Fry:
 - 8 respondents said that they improved their communication skills.
 - 14 respondents reported that they had gained better coping skills when dealing with stress, anger, and their addictions.
 - 12 respondents said they had received support from E-Fry staff.
 - 6 respondents stated that their self-confidence and self-esteem improved.
 - 6 respondents said they were more open in discussing their problems and feelings.
 - 4 respondents reported that they have more happy and fulfilling relationships.
 - 4 respondents said that they were more self-aware in terms of knowing themselves and being able to identify their feelings.
 - 2 respondents said they gained empathy for themselves and others.



- 6 out of the 9 respondents who asked Q34 were not dissatisfied with E-Fry services. Three additional participants each stated that JF Norwood halfway house should not house people with federal paroles; more volunteers are needed to take women out who

are on full house arrest so they can learn to cope with outside life; and the anger management program should be better facilitated.

- For Q35, 5 respondents described services they would have wanted that were not offered by E-Fry. These respondents each stated that they want more young women groups and more activities to cope with stress; invitations to events and activities for past clients; and programs to emphasize gradual re-integration, to stop smoking, and to learn French.
- All 10 respondents who provided additional feedback reported feeling grateful for the programs and staff at E-Fry. Out of these 10 respondents, 3 reported having positive experiences at JF Norwood House.

Quotes from Participants

“I have learned better ways of dealing with my anger and stress. I am always more calm and think about my actions before I do them. I feel more happy about myself and the people I hang around with”

“I’ve learned how to talk about my problems instead of holding them inside me”

“I’m learning that I don’t have to do this alone. E-Fry is there every step of the way. They are awesome people and support me. I could not be where I am today without them”

“I have left my dysfunctional, abusive relationship and I’m committed to remaining clean from drugs”

“I admit my faults, past, the new outlook on clean living. I am not alone”

“I am very grateful for E-Fry programs. They help you when you think no one else cares”

Conclusions

Overall, according to client responses it appears that participation in E-Fry services has had a positive impact on reducing the interval, frequency or seriousness of participants’ conflicts with the law; decreasing relapse behaviour; building healthier relationships and increasing client empowerment.

Results from the *Employment, School and Housing* section identify potential areas to focus additional efforts and funding in order to increase clients’ levels of community engagement.

Overall, participants report *very positive* experiences from their involvement with E-Fry; however, some participants have outlined potential gaps in services. We encourage E-Fry to carefully consider these recommendations and explore opportunities to improve program delivery.

Recommendations

Participants were likely overwhelmed by such a lengthy and holistic questionnaire. Future research should be broken down into parts and focus on one area of program delivery or skill development at a time (i.e. Addictions, Skill developments, program evaluation, etc.)

E-Fry should explore creating a form as part of client intake paperwork that asks if the client would accept to be contacted and informed of any future research conducted by E-Fry. Collecting this information initially may make recruitment for future research simpler and more successful.