

Survivors of Violence & Abuse: Group Case Study

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Overview

- Linking Disability to Abuse
- Regional & Aboriginal Context
- Data Collection & Report Samples
- Client Selection Process
- Sample Cohort Topics
- Service Delivery Data

Overview, Cont.

- 2 Cohort Models: Advantages & Disadvantages
- Best Practice Suggestions
- Participant Quotes
- Success Stories
- Moving Forward
- Women's Recommendations & Requests

Violence, Abuse, & Disability

Two World Health Organization studies in 2012 found that:

Adults with a disability are 1.5 times more likely to experience violence than those without a disability.

Adults with mental health conditions are at nearly 4 times the risk of experiencing violence.

Violence, Abuse, & Disability

DAWN Canada (2014) Reports:

Considering all violent crimes, including those committed by spouses, a Canadian study shows 51% of women with activity limitations had been victims of more than one violent crime during the 12 preceding months compared to 36% of women without limitations.

Survivors of Violence & Abuse: Rural & Remote Populations

Clients reporting are most often:

- Female
- Aboriginal
- Experiencing effects of partner abuse, but sometimes lasting effects of multiple types of abuse experienced throughout lifetime

Aboriginal Context

- While it is true that women of all backgrounds experience abuse, and access cohort and other ESC services, there are a number of systemic factors “that make Aboriginal women far more susceptible to being victims of violence than their non-Aboriginal counterparts” (Byrne & Abbott, 2011, p. 3).
- Systemic factors such as historical abuse, loss of language, culture, and family values/bonds, and so much more.

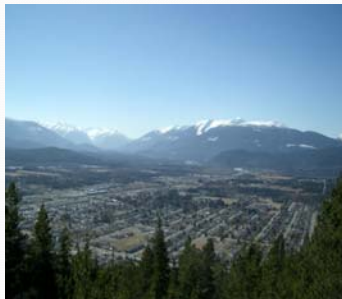
Regional Context



Source: www.bcwildfire.ca

Catchment #67 includes communities up to 1300kms away from the ESC located in Terrace, BC

Regional Context



Source: www.ourbc.com

Terrace Transition House was operating at 150%+ capacity for the entire year of 2013. Stats Canada called them thinking the numbers had been given in error only to find out they were correct.

Regional Context

Overall, approximately 17.5% of the population of the Northwest region is Aboriginal
(www.northernhealth.ca)



Source: www.revelstoke.com Waap Galts'ap Tsimshian Longhouse

This is the highest proportion of Aboriginal people in of all BC per capita

Rural & Remote Challenges

- Rural & remote challenges include transportation, cost of living, current housing crisis, and higher rates of social issues such as addiction, suicide, unplanned pregnancy, and more, making life skills a critical pre-employment step.
- Cultural barriers to employment and racism are other challenges faced in the region.

Data Collection

- Not originally intended for a case study, but still relevant qualitative data
- Occurred September 5, 2012 - November 28, 2013
- ICM data for statistical info (i.e. Tier, age, outcomes)
- Interpretivist: Contextual knowledge, aimed at understanding subjective information

Data Collection

- Anonymous written evaluation forms: Likert Scale, open-ended questions
- Group discussion, with facilitator recording on paper
- One-on-one conversations with EPBC Case Managers and/or Facilitators
- Reports created upon cohort completion

Report Sample

Women's Cohort Jan.8, 2013-Feb.14, 2013

6-week cohort running 9:30am-3:00pm
Tuesdays, Wednesdays, & Thursdays

15 participants attended the women's cohort

1 client left in week 4 because she found employment

1 client left in week 2 due to medical reasons

1 client left in week 2 due to relocation

Report Sample, Cont.

Clients ranged in age from 25-55

Of the 15 clients who participated, their assigned tiers were as follows:

- Tier 2: 6
- Tier 3: 7
- Tier 4: 2

Report Sample, Cont.

General Info Included:

Combined number of workshop hours (for tracking STOC hours)

Financial supports (for those eligible) issued such as bus passes and lunch cards to attend, flash drives to store resumes and other important employment-related documents, hygiene packs when necessary, etc.

Client Selection

- EPBC Case Managers offered cohort services mainly to Tier 3 & 4 clients who had established a need for a number of life and employability skills
- In some cases, Tier 2 clients participated, where it was rationalized that specific circumstances made cohort services the most appropriate option for the client

Client Selection

- Word-of-mouth created many self-referral situations, especially among Tier 4 clients who brought in unemployed friends and relatives who were struggling with life and employability skills



Sample Cohort Topics



- **Life Skills:** RUOIA, Building Healthy Relationships, Stress & Anger Management, Substance Abuse Prevention, Positive Parenting, Building Self Esteem...
- **Visits** from and to other relevant agencies such as the Transition House, Free Store, Public Health, Women's Resource Centre...

Sample Cohort Topics, Cont.

- **Employability Skills:** Communication, Resumes, Interview Skills, Women-Focused Employer Forum* ...
- **Referrals:** Mental Health, Education through Partnerships...



Cohort Service Delivery Data

- 48 female clients of EPBC participated in the women-specific cohort groups, in groups of 7-15 participants at a time (Sept. 2012-Dec.2013)
- Tier 3 clients showed the highest level of consistent participation
- Tier 2 clients often found work, training, or re-location opportunities
- Tier 4 participation was often interrupted by factors related to abuse, housing, addiction, etc.

Cohort Service Delivery Data

- 3 cohorts were 6-week, 3 days/week (Tues.-Thurs.), women's groups (combination life & employability skills)
- 2 cohorts were 3-week, 4 days/week (Mon.-Thurs.), co-ed groups (employability skills), followed by a 4-day week of gender-specific groups (life skills)

6-Week Cohort Advantages

- 3-day week (Tues.-Thurs.) allowed for less sporadic attendance due to a number of factors
- Allowed EPBC clients adequate time to work through stages of group and move into becoming a support network to each other

6-Week Cohort Advantages, Cont.

- Longer period of structured activity, opportunity to create routine and implement time management & organizational strategies
- Opportunity for modification of topics
- Greater likelihood of employment and/or community attachment outcomes for EPBC clients

6-Week Cohort Disadvantages

- Strain on facilitator time

3-Week Cohort Advantages

- Allowed EPBC clients to experience realistic work expectations (i.e. having to work with co-workers and/or clientele of both genders)
- In some cases, supportive friendships were formed in appropriate male/female relationships within the groups

3-Week Cohort Advantages, Cont.

- Male/female couples were able to attend together, increasing probability of attendance amongst some Tier 3 & mainly Tier 4 coupled EPBC clients. It created a situation of practicing healthy, respectful relationship modeling in a safe environment.

3-Week Cohort Disadvantages

- Some women would not participate in co-ed portion, leaving 1-on-1 topic delivery as the only timely option
- Group became less cohesive overall, rarely reported socialization as part of support networking outside of cohort time
- Less opportunity for modification of topics
- Fewer employment/community attachment outcomes

Best Practices

- Start with Orientation to address safety, confidentiality, establish guidelines, community resources, etc.
- Each workshop begins and ends with “check-in” & “check-out”
- Provide snacks when possible

Best Practices, Cont.

- One EPBC Facilitator oversees all the life skills for a cohort, to establish trust and rapport
- Revise content and/or schedule as necessary
- Take relevant “field trips” (e.g. Transition House, 1 Billion Rising participation, etc.)

Best Practices, Cont.

- Bring in other appropriate service providers to speak to the group:

Legal Aid→ Women often don't know their rights when it comes to children, division of assets, and more.

Public Health→

- There is a higher percentage of Aboriginal women with AIDS than in the non-Aboriginal population. The proportion of adult female Aboriginal AIDS cases is actually more than that in the total adult (female and male) general population with AIDS (15.9% vs. 7.0%). (Canadian Aids Society, 2014).

Best Practices, Cont.

- Wrap-up celebration: food, certificates of completion, social time, activity for moving forward
- One-on-one planning with each participant to determine next steps for EPBC Action Plan

Participant Quotes

- “It (the group experience) inspires people.”
- “The best part is having facilitators who relate—they have real-life experience.”
- “I had a good time.”
- “Down-to-earth instructors.”
- “This program really helps with trying to find a job and do a resume.”

Participant Quotes, Cont.

- "I've completed my WorldHost through this program and it helped me quite a bit".
- "I worked hard to overcome my addictions."
- "It helped me open up and get over my shyness to open up and work with the group."
- "Coming here and being part of something has given me hope."

Success Stories

- *Recently, when dining at a local restaurant, I encountered a former women's cohort participant working as a server in the restaurant. She broke into a huge smile when she saw me and excitedly came over to say hello. I wasn't seated in her section, and she was busy doing a really professional job of serving her tables, so I didn't interact with her for the duration of my meal. When I was getting ready to leave, she rushed over to me, threw her arms around me in a tight hug and said, "Thank you". Two small words with so much meaning for a woman who had achieved employment and a way to support herself and her daughter.*

Success Stories

- *In a recent phone conversation between myself and a client who had participated in a women's cohort, she stated that she appreciated all our support and that it was because of the program that she has made positive changes in her life including her outlook for her future, not drinking and working full time at a job she is enjoying and even applying for other internal positions in the company. We had been able to refer to personal counseling services after the cohort which was also instrumental in helping her make these changes.*

Success Stories

- *I was shopping in Walmart and the cashier was a woman from a women's cohort that took place earlier in the year. She was excited to see me and was so excited to be working. She wanted to thank me for encouraging her to take part in the women's cohort and wanted to thank us all (at our ESC) who taught workshops throughout the cohort. She really appreciated the support she got from us. She said without the support she never would have been able to be where she is today. This woman suffers from depression and said that she feels so much better now that she is working and taking care of herself.*

Moving Forward

- The fee schedule changes in CPAC 3 will allow greater flexibility for cohort service delivery
- Revisions to our data collection methods (i.e. updated evaluation forms, final reports with greater detail)
- Continue to pursue connections to employers for placement & other opportunities

Moving Forward

- At our WorkBC/Northwest Training Ltd. ESC, we are exploring the possibility of offering extended services as necessary, such as cohorts that include:
- Life skills
- Employability skills (including CAMERA (Communications and Math Employment Readiness Assessment & Activities))
- Unpaid work experience placements
- Opportunities to obtain Dogwood

Moving Forward

- Offering services directly in First Nations' communities to eliminate transportation barrier to service
- Working closely with community leaders and service providers to determine the needs of the community and the most appropriate interventions through EPBC
- Continue to be curious, and to recognize and honour the cultural practices of the various Nations

Women's Recommendations & Requests

Self-Esteem Building:

Finding/creating women's support groups for social interaction, positive role modelling, shared experience, "creating happiness" and "getting out there".

Ideas:

- Free Store visit for interview clothes to model for each other
- Activities that involve complimenting each other

Women's Recommendations & Requests

Grief, Loss, & "Letting Go":

Increase number of funded counselling appointments in recognition that surviving violence and abuse requires time to heal from trauma.

"It's a process that can't be forced."

Women's Recommendations & Requests

Count life skills workshop time towards STOC:

- It recognizes the hard work of those who participate in life skills learning
- Helps keep participants motivated
- Benefits the client in reaching employment goals
- Rural/Remote factors-some training/certs offered less frequently

References

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Thank you!

If you would like additional
information, please contact me.

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