

Peterborough Youth Services: Family Program Evaluation

From an Employee Perspective

Background

Peterborough Youth Services (PYS) is a local organization established in 1976. It was created to provide counselling and support to youth ages 10-18. It offers a variety of Youth Justice programs, including Community Support, Intensive Supervision and Support, Youth Justice-Directed Counseling, and the Family Program. The Family Program seeks to improve relationships/dynamics between youth and their caregivers, offering various services, including reintegration programs, counselling, interventions, and assessments.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to evaluate PYS's Family Program and analyze the effectiveness, efficiency, accessibility and inclusivity of its services from a professional employee perspective. This research aims to ensure that this new program follows best practices when working with youth in conflict with the law and following Ministry standards, with the ultimate hope of reducing the chance of reoffending.

Research Questions

- Is PYS's Family Program effective and efficient?
- Is the PYS's Family Program accessible and inclusive?
- Is PYS's Family Program following best practice when working with youth in conflict with the law while following Ministry Standards?

Methods

This project applied mixed methods, including quantitative data collected through a survey and qualitative data collected through a semi-structured interview. The participants consisted of three PYS employees and one employee of an external organization. The 10-question survey was followed by a 30-minute structured interview focused on the program. The quantitative data collected was analyzed using statistical analysis by a comprehensive thematic analysis of the responses.

Results

- From the surveys, all employees strongly agreed that their corresponding programs were accessible/inclusive and helped promptly.
- Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT), or steps involved in the approach, was a common intervention type that popped up when working with youth.
- There is need for more collaboration among organizations about methods to see what is and is not effective.

"Since COVID and everything going to webased training we don't get to hear from other organizations anymore."
~Ontario Youth Justice Worker

Conclusions

Based on these results, the Family Program is efficient, accessible, and inclusive to its participants; it creates goals and caters to each family individually. For both PYS and the external Ontario organization, DBT was seen as a key intervention when working with youth in conflict with the law. Collaboration with other organizations to discuss different methods is suggested to improve the program.



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Youth Services



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