Elizabeth Fry Program Statistics Snapshot

2017-2019

The Elizabeth Fry Society of Calgary
1731 10 Ave SW, Calgary, AB
T3C OK1
(403) 294 0737

Adult Legal Advocacy

Q: What percentage of beneficiaries are eligible for Legal Aid or capable of hiring a Lawyer?

As shown by the data below, the majority of our clients would not be able to afford a lawyer. At face value, they appear to meet the low-income requirements set by Legal Aid. However, Legal Aid takes into account all of the assets in an individual's household to calculate household income. Our Legal Advocates describe several instances where a stay at home mom seeking a divorce will not qualify for Legal Aid because her husband makes too much money, despite having no access to his finances.

2019		2018		2017	
Annual Income	**% of Clients**	**Annual Income**	**% of Clients**	**Annual Income**	**% of Clients**
Less than 15,000	78%	Less than 15,000	85%	Less than 15,000	Not enough data on income in this year based on implementation of the data category in November 2017.
15,000 – 24,999	13%	15,000 – 24,999	7%	15,000 – 24,999	
25,000 – 34,999	6%	25,000 – 34,999	7%	25,000 – 34,999	
35,000 – 44,999	3%	35,000 – 44,999	1%	35,000 – 44,999	
Average Family Size	4	Average Family Size	3.5	Average Family Size	

Table 1 shows the distribution of annual income for Legal Advocate clients. Family size is based on nuclear family dependents with 9 being the largest reported family size for our clients.

There are several other nuanced reasons for why our clients may not be able to access legal resources through Legal Aid. Legal Aid is restricted to support certain types of charges. Those seeking to address legal issues outside of those parameters would be disqualified even though they could not afford a lawyer. For example, those with criminal charges must be facing the potential of incarceration to be eligible for Legal Aid.

Many of the clients EFry serves may simply be struggling with filling out forms due to language or education barriers and might require more basic guidance than legal representation of advice. Some individuals that come to our Legal Advocates may even have lawyers, but they have run out of money for retainers as court issues have dragged on or lawyers have suggested they manage portions of the legal issue to assist with time and reducing the strain on further retainers.

Importantly, our Legal Advocates do not work in isolation from Legal Aid or other legal counsel. Part of their role is to assist clients in obtaining a lawyer, or in applying or appealing for Legal Aid if they believe

an individual requires professional legal advice or representation. That being said, we have seen a decrease in clients using other legal services based on lack of access and affordability. In 2017, 23% of our clients reported they were accessing legal services outside of EFry's legal advocacy assistance. This number dropped to just 2% in 2019, as shown by the table below.

	2019	2018	2017
	% of Clients	% of Clients	% of Clients
Accessing other legal services	2%	13%	23%
Had a legal issue that EFry couldn't assist with	4%	9%	12%

Table 2 shows the percentage of EFry Clients from 2017 – 2019 who accessed other legal services or had a legal issue EFry was unable to assist with.

With the ongoing recession and continued cuts to Legal Aid, it makes sense that we see a decrease in people using traditional legal services, alongside of a steady increase accessing our Legal Advocacy Program. The percentage of clients our Legal Advocates assisted has increased by 91% from 2017 to 2019 - essentially doubling their caseloads in just two years' time. Notably, these numbers do not include the caseloads of our Immigrant Legal Advocacy Program, which is outlined in a later section of this report.

In response to the high demand of this service, we recently added a new Legal Advocate to assist individuals in Strathmore and Siksika First Nation, and expanded our Legal Advocate services into Eden Valley alongside of our support on Morley (Stoney Nakoda First Nations); as well as an Indigenous Legal Advocate to help clients navigate the new Calgary Indigenous Court. With these added roles we will see an even greater increase in our number of clients served in 2020 compared to earlier years.

Based on client evaluations, our Legal Advocacy Programs are clearly effective legal resource to our client base. In 2019, 99% of clients reported that EFry helped resolve their legal matters and 98% would recommend EFry to others. This is an increase from 2018, in which 89% of clients reported that EFry helped resolve their legal issue and 95% stated that they would recommend the Legal Advocacy Program.

Q: What percentage of Legal Advocate clients are involved in criminal cases? What is the nature of those cases?

The table below shows the distribution of legal issues that our Legal Advocates addressed in the last three years. The percentage of clients requiring assistance in criminal issues averages to 27% across all three years. It is important to note that we also have court support programs which aid in youth and adult criminal courts in Calgary, Lethbridge and Southern Regional areas, therefore this percentage is reflective of those who access individualized Legal Advocacy supports outside of the courts. EFry Court Programs focus on criminal, domestic violence and traffic bylaw courts. Therefore, some of the work EFry carries out regarding criminal matters in the courts is diverted through highly trained volunteers and

Volunteer Coordinators who provide legal information and resources on the court floors. In the case of our court programs, individualized support is not required. Our Legal Advocacy Programs tend to focus more on those who are falling through the cracks of the legal system, although some of these individuals may have originated from our court programs for further assistance.

Legal Advocacy 2019		Legal Advocacy 2018		Legal Advocacy 2017	
Presenting Legal Issue	**%**	**Presenting Legal Issue**	**%**	**Presenting Legal Issue**	**%**
Divorce	53%	Divorce	41%	Divorce	33%
Family	9%	Family	19%	Family	31%
Civil	0%	Civil	6%	Civil	2%
Criminal	36%	Criminal	24%	Criminal	22%
Traffic/Bylaw	1%	Traffic/Bylaw	7%	Traffic/Bylaw	2%
Other	2%	Other	2%	Other	9%
Total	**100%**	**Total**	**100%**	**Total**	**100%**

Table 3. Legal issues addressed by Legal Advocacy Program from 2017 – 2019.

The above numbers include both the Calgary and regional Legal Advocates. The vast majority of the criminal cases are dealt with by the Regional Legal Advocates since the legal resources in these areas are sparse. Each regional and First Nation community has unique issues relative to the concerns and challenges of the particular community or neighbouring communities using the services.

The West Legal Advocate assists clients in Morley and Eden Valley of the Stoney Nakoda First Nations, Canmore, and Cochrane. Criminal cases in Canmore and Cochrane are primarily assault or impaired driving. In Morley and Eden Valley the majority of criminal charges are usually theft under $5000, theft over $5000, and break and enters. Canmore tends to have a number of cases where the offender was a tourist at the time of their charges, this includes international as well as national and provincial travelers.

Our South Legal Advocate assists clients in Okotoks and Airdrie, where the bulk of criminal charges are for impaired driving, mischief & damage and assault (usually domestic in nature). These differences guide the specific types of supports which each community requires. Didsbury tends to see more domestic charges than some of the other courts as well and alcohol related misdemeanors.

Calgary Legal Advocacy Program sees a number of individuals with no fixed address (NFA) who are referred through the shelters to address outstanding warrants and administration of justice charges. Typically, charges are for thefts under and shoplifting. Additionally, this program supports individuals who are working on record suspensions to address their criminal record from old charges.

Lethbridge, Siksika and Strathmore are new courts in 2020, therefore our data is limited currently in these areas.

Immigrant Legal Advocacy Program (ILAP)

Q: What percentage of beneficiaries are eligible for Legal Aid or capable of hiring a lawyer?

Many newcomers to Canada face language, cultural and financial barriers that create challenges for them to navigate the immigration system in an informed, strategic manner. Difficulty reading and understanding legal documents and the workings of the legal system, filling out forms correctly and knowing which forms to use are all obstacles several newcomers find themselves up against. This population experiences barriers in communicating with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) especially for those non- English and French speakers who are unable to successfully maneuver the complexity of the government telephone system. In addition to this, governmental immigration services do not accept or provide information to third parties unless they are recorded as legal counsel or registered Immigration Consultants, which requires a cumbersome process.

Furthermore, Immigrant serving agencies in Calgary are often limited to providing legal services only to Permanent Residents (PR) in the settlement phase, which excludes those who have not yet achieved PR status. The Immigrant Legal Advocacy Program (ILAP) does not place this restriction on those the program serves. Due to this, a large proportion of ILAP clients are seeking legal assistance in achieving PR status for themselves or for their family members. ILAP also commonly assists clients with family reunification, the ability to work in Canada legally and attaining Canadian status or Citizenship.

ILAP Client Average Annual Income 2019	
Average Annual Income	**% of Clients**
Less than 15,000	68%
15,000 – 24,999	14%
25,000 – 34,999	9%
35,000 – 44,999	4%
45,000 – 54,999	3%
55,000 +	0%

Family unification makes up a significant portion of the work ILAP undertakes with clients. Many of the women who access our services may have had sponsorships with Canadian partners with Canadian children. Their status in Canada may become in jeopardy when the relationship breaks down and often the spouse or partner will commence cancelation of the sponsorship leaving them without an application in process or with expired status in Canada.

Another area which the ILAP addresses is family reunification to assist women with the ability to bring their families into Canada. Many temporary workers, also access services to achieve permanent residency or citizenship and wish to attempt to bring their families to Canada once they have achieved their own stability and status in Canada.

A significant majority of ILAP clients are low-income and face substantial financial barriers to accessing legal assistance. Based on 2019 data, 88% of ILAP clients had an annual average income of less than $25,000, (See Table 4) which is below the federally set Low-Income Cut Off (LICO) measure for a one-person family unit size in 2018[1]. The average monthly income for 2019 ILAP clients was $895/mo. As the above information indicates, very few, if any, clients who seek out ILAP services can afford to hire a lawyer. Additionally, as mentioned earlier in this report, accessing Legal Aid is not always as simple as being able to meet the low-income eligibility requirements threshold.

Legal Aid is limited to the type of support they can provide immigrants based on their parameters of their resources. Immigration supports from Legal Aid are primarily provided to refugees who are not government assisted, address judicial reviews and failed claims, detention reviews, and admissibility hearings for those being deported or removed from Canada for criminal offenses. ILAP, instead, focuses on status issues of women and families to resolve reunification and/or preventing families from being separated due to immigration issues. The EFry Immigrant Legal Advocate is a Registered Immigration Consultant who is familiar with and remains up to date on immigration legislation, which can be updated daily.

Table 4 shows the distribution of average annual income among 2019 ILAP clients.

[1] Statistics Canada. Table 11-10-0241-01. Low income cut-offs (LICOs) before and after tax by community size and family size, in current dollars.

Youth Mentorship

Q: What are the risk levels of Youth Mentorship participants (i.e., how many had offended previously, what were the nature of their offenses) and how is this distributed?

Roughly 88% of the youth in the Youth Mentorship program in 2019 had prior offences. The remaining 12% have exhibited risky behavior or have experienced trauma that makes them vulnerable to criminal involvement. Below is a table delineating in greater detail the type of offenses youth entered the program with from 2017 to 2019

Type of Offence	Percentage of Youth with This Charge		
	2019	2018	2017
Administrative or Bylaw	34%	42%	75%
Assault	27%	27%	0%
Sex Assault	10%	19%	13%
Person's – Other	49%	23%	25%
Robbery	39%	19%	13%
Theft Over $5000	19%	8%	13%
Theft Under $5000	29%	19%	38%
Property – Other	31%	15%	13%
Substances - Possession	3%	0%	0%

Table 5 *shows the distribution of the type of charges youth in the mentorship program have incurred. Since most youth have multiple charges, they will be represented in more than one category. "Person's – Other" includes charges such as: possession of a weapon, assault with a weapon, voyeurism, kidnapping, human trafficking, unlawful confinement, child pornography, DUI, and threats ending in death. "Property – Other" includes charges such as: armed robbery, break and enter, possession of stolen property, and mischief.*

In recent years, our Youth Legal Advocate had been increasingly collaborating with the Calgary Young Offender Centre (CYOC) on obtaining youth participants for the mentorship program. This led to taking on higher-needs participants with more serious charges, which is reflected in the changing distribution of charges during the past three years seen in the above table (Table 5). Taking into consideration the increasing supports provided to youth in detention, we began the process of diverting more of our work in our Youth Mentorship Program to community youth, where earlier intervention and prevention options can be implemented.

It is important to note, although we do serve youth who have more serious charges, these youth have still demonstrated considerable positive outcomes. Youth in our mentorship program show low levels of recidivism and notable increases in overall well-being, as shown in the data explained in more detail below. Part of the reason for these successes is related to the youth developing relationships with their mentors, who often are the first positive adult role model in their lives. Therefore, even those youth with significant struggles tend to achieve success in the mentorship program.

Q: How many youth participants of the prevention program reoffend?

Our most recent data, collected from April 1st to September 30th, 2019 shows that 79% of youth in the Youth Mentorship Program avoid incurring new charges in the year following contact with a mentor. 17% of youth involved in the program have incurred new charges, but remain in contact with their mentors and are therefore categorized as "In Progress" toward achieving this outcome. As well, in the year following contact with their mentor, 66% of youth who are subject to court ordered conditions have avoided breaching their conditions. Overall, 33% of youth subject to conditions have breached their conditions, but all remain connected with the program and are therefore categorized as "In Progress" toward achieving this outcome. These findings establish the important protective role the Youth Mentorship Program plays in mitigating the risk of re-offense and/or breaching court ordered conditions in the majority of its youth participants.

Youth Mentorship Program Outcomes April 2019 - September 2019			
Target	Outcome Achieved?		
	Yes	In Progress	No
30-50 youth are connected with an appropriate, supportive mentor.	79%	21%	0%
80% of youth report that they received emotional support from their mentor when required.	100 %	0%	0%
70-80% of youth avoid incurring new charges in the year following contact with a mentor.	79%	17%	0%
70-80% of youth avoid breaching conditions in the year following contact with a mentor.	66%	33%	0%

Table 6. Youth Mentorship Program Outcomes April 2019 – September 2019. Data includes mentees who began our program in years prior who are still engaged in services. Many youth retain supports for longer than a year and the longer there is a connection to the mentor the more likely for positive outcomes for the youth. The period of April to September reflects the active clients of the program during this period and reflects existing youth in the program as well as new intakes during the period.

Q: How many youth achieve positive outcomes and what are these?

According to data collected from April 1st to September 30th, 2019, 79% of youth participants in the Youth Mentorship Program were connected with a mentor during this period and 80% showed increased Physical, Emotional, Mental, and Spiritual well-being as a result of their mentor relationships (see top two rows of Table 6). These findings demonstrate that connection with a mentor is a salient factor in promoting the overall well-being of youth participants in the program.

Increased overall well-being is measured based on change over time in the Medicine Wheel Service Plan (MWSP). This is based on comparison between an intake, baseline measurement, and subsequent interim and exit measurements. In order for a score to be calculated, youth must complete at least two assessments throughout their mentorship. The change in well-being is calculated using two measures. The first is change in overall score, calculated as the sum of the score in each of the eight domains. Scores can range from 8-40, with 8 being the optimum score indicative of balanced success. For example, if a client scored 5s in all domains at intake, and 1s in all domains at exit, the score totals would be 40 and 8 at intake and exit respectively, and the change in score would be 32. Positive numbers indicate positive change.

The second measure reports the change in the sum of the deviation in each domain from the average score overall. The measure is meant to indicate the degree of balance between each domain, because a balanced medicine wheel is a desirable outcome regardless of the total score. The total deviation on a single medicine wheel can range from 0-16. The balance score, or sum deviation ranges from -16 to 16. A positive score in this measure indicates the degree of improvement in balance, whereas a negative score represents imbalance has increased from intake to interim/exit. For the purposes of this report, youth are considered to have shown successful outcomes in this target if they improve in at least one overall score, or balance in their medicine wheel.

In the reporting period April 1, 2019 – September 30, 2019, nine of the twenty-four active youth in the program completed at least two MWSP assessments, and are therefore included in this analysis. The remaining active youth have not yet completed the required number of assessments to be included in the analysis.

Medicine Wheel Service Plan Outcomes April 2019 – September 2019					
	Total # of Youth	# Included in Analysis	# Score Improvement	# Balance Improvement	# Overall Improvement
Active	24	**9**	78%	56%	89%

Table 7. Medicine Wheel Service Plan Outcomes April - September 2019.

The assessment indicates that 78% of participants have shown an improvement in overall wellbeing, and 56% have shown improved balance in their medicine wheels.

Overall, 89% of the youth assessed have shown improvement in their well-being in at least one measure; either improved total score or improved balance**.** The remaining youth are categorized as "In Progress" because they remain actively engaged with the program. (See Table 7 above). It is important to note that balance is a harder outcome to achieve based on normal living conditions, therefore it is a positive outcome to have 56% of youth improve their balance throughout their participation in the program. Improvement in this measure is a lifetime goal for most people and is contingent on a number of variables, including ongoing stability, capacity, opportunities and resilience. Personal balance may be affected by crisis, personal challenges or familial strife, which may change over time based on individual resiliency and continued personal growth.

The next two tables delve into the above findings further and more specifically by presenting the exit and/or interim outcomes for the eight domains of wellness measurement as outlined in the Medicine Wheel Service Plan.

2017-2018 Youth Mentorship Program Outcomes							
% Participants Achieving Target Outcomes Upon Exit of Program							
Physical Well-Being	Purpose & Direction	Housing & Basic Needs	Emotional Well-Being	Relationships	Mental Well-Being	Community & Cultural Connection	Spirituality
100%	86%	86%	86%	100%	100%	71%	71%

Table 8*. 2017 – 2018 Youth Mentorship Program exit assessment outcomes identifying the percentage of participants meeting target outcomes upon exiting the program. A minimum rating of 3/5 was used to indicate success, due to the accompanying measurement scale which defines the number 3 as "Learning with Supports".*

2018-2019 Youth Mentorship Program Outcomes							
% Participants Achieving Target Outcomes Upon Interim Assessment							
Physical Well-Being	Purpose & Direction	Housing & Basic Needs	Emotional Well-Being	Relationships	Mental Well-Being	Community & Cultural Connection	Spirituality
100%	89%	89%	56%	67%	78%	89%	67%

***Table 9**. 2018 – 2019 Youth Mentorship Program interim assessment outcomes identifying the percentage of participants meeting target outcomes at three months of participation in the program. A minimum rating of 3/5 was used to indicate success, due to the accompanying measurement scale which defines the number 3 as "Learning with Supports".*

The program outcomes data is illustrated including the specific outcomes pertaining to each domain of wellness measurement, as demonstrated in the above tables, it is revealed that a majority of the youth participating in the Youth Mentorship Program from 2017-2019 are achieving target outcomes in all eight categories of wellness measurement at both the interim and exit assessments. These findings are significant and serve to further underscore the important role the Youth Mentorship Program plays in improving overall wellness measured in such a comprehensive manner. This enhancement in wellness measured in all eight domains achieved through participation in the program subsequently works to protect against potential recidivism and to lay a strong foundation for more successful reintegration outcomes for youth participants overall.

Group Programming

Q: What are the outcomes of the Group Programming offered at EFry?

EFry provides a number of group programs that focus on promoting healing and wellness for women and youth. These programs are offered both in the community and within provincial institutions. For EFry, Indigenous culture is at the core of how we operate as an organization. Elders and Knowledge Keepers provide valuable guidance and contributions to our organization's work with women and youth on their healing path. This includes individualized supports, talking and healing circles, ceremonies and gender-based teachings. We also provide Indigenous cultural programing such as beading, and drumming sessions on a weekly basis at the EFry office for community members and also at the Calgary Young Offender Centre (CYOC) and the Calgary Remand - Women's Annex for incarcerated youth and women. In 2019, we saw altogether 1732 non-unique clients participate in these programs. The below table shows the participation numbers for each group program offered during 2019.

2019 Group Programming Participation	
Program Name	***Total Number of Non-Unique Clients in Each Program***
Beading & Beginner Beading (Community & CYOC)	401
Drumming	192
Taking Circle (Community and CRC)	127
Sweat	31
Blackfoot Language (Community, CYOC & CRC)	487
UNLOCK (Community & CRC)	155
Institution Events	297
Language Camp	16
Individual Meetings with Elders (CRC)	16

Table 10 illustrates the total number of non-unique clients that participated in each group program in 2019.

As shown in Table 10, another group program we offer is UNLOCK, which stands for “Unlocking New Levels of Capacity and Knowledge”. This program is run under the Prison Community Outreach Program (PCOP) and conducts workshops for individuals both in prison and the community. These workshops focus on teaching important life skills and promoting emotional and mental wellbeing from an Indigenous epistemological and ontological standpoint. “Healthy Relationships,” Codependency,” “Communication Skills,” “Renting Smart,” “Emotional Expression,” “Goal Setting,” “Self-Esteem,” and “Anger Management,” are some of the topics presented in UNLOCK workshops. The themes addressed in these workshops and the practical advice given are important to building a healthier psychological, emotional, and spiritual base for the individuals who participate. The new understanding, knowledge and skill-sets that are gained from attending these sessions allow individuals to begin to disrupt negative patterns in their lives and to make healthier decisions for themselves going forward. An example of the learning outcomes achieved in our most highly attended workshop in 2019 is provided in Table 11 below. The table reveals high levels of achievement for those who participated in the 2019 workshop focused on the topic of "Communication Skills."

2019 UNLOCK “Communication Skills” Workshop Learning Outcomes				
% Participants Achieving Target Outcomes				
I understand the four different communication styles	I can identify negative versus positive communication strategies	I understand the difference between verbal and non-verbal communication	I can identify strategies to improve my communication skills	I learned something new today
93%	93%	100%	100%	100%

Table 11. *This table demonstrates the 2019 UNLOCK “Communication Skills” workshop learning outcomes by identifying the percentage of participants meeting target outcomes upon completion of the workshop. A minimum rating of 4/5 was used to indicate success, due to the accompanying measurement scale which defines the number 4 as a response of "A lot” and the number 5 as a response of “Completely”.*

Additional group programing provided under the Prison Community Outreach Program (PCOP) is similarly focused on building self-confidence, reconnecting individuals to their Indigenous culture and promoting mental, emotional and spiritual stability and well-being. One of these programs is the Indigenous Literacy and Language Program, which teaches individuals the Blackfoot language (spoken among the Piikani, Siksika and Kainai Nations in Southern Alberta) and works to connect and reconnect participants with Blackfoot culture, teachings and traditional ways of knowing.

According to those clients who took part in the client feedback survey conducted throughout the Indigenous Language program in 2019, a significant majority of clients (88%) reported having gained confidence in themselves through their participation in the program. Almost all clients (98%) agreed that they had felt a sense of belonging throughout their participation in the program. As well, 92% of respondents reported that the program had aided them in making progress toward their goals (see Table 12). This assessment demonstrates that the vast majority of individuals participating in the Indigenous Language Program are seeing improvements in their self-confidence, sense of belonging and progress toward attaining their goals. This is a significant outcome, as improvements in all of these areas subsequently contribute to the promotion of healing and an enhanced sense of overall well-being in the clients we serve.

2019 Indigenous Language Program Feedback		
% Participants Achieving Target Outcomes		
Gained Confidence in Myself	Felt Sense of Belonging	Program Helped Me Make Progress Toward My Goals
88%	98%	92%

***Table 12*.** This table illustrates the percentage of clients who responded to each question indicating that they either "Agree" or "Strongly Agree". A response of "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" was assessed as meeting the Target Outcome for each client in the program.

SAGE

Q: What percentage of beneficiaries find employment post program?

Employment readiness for its participants is a key competency the SAGE program seeks to cultivate. In an evaluation of SAGE recently conducted throughout the last quarter of 2019 and the first quarter of 2020, a representative sample of past program participants from 2015 up until the end of 2019 were contacted in order to assess the long-term impact the program had made on their lives. Of the SAGE alumni that were contacted, one third were able to find employment during their participation in SAGE or immediately after completing the program. Another third of those surveyed had gone on to participate in additional employment training programs after exiting the program. Additionally, half of those contacted reported attending school (upgrading education or attending post-secondary or a trades program) after finishing the program (See table 13). This is an important step, considering 81% of SAGE graduates between 2017 and 2019 entered the program having not finished high school and faced significant personal barriers such as past addiction, homelessness, mental health and trauma, and in many cases no or minimal employment history.

	% of SAGE graduates that have found employment after graduation	**% of SAGE Graduates that upgrade their education after graduation**	**% of SAGE Graduates that access additional employment training programs after graduation**
2015 - 2019	33%	50%	33%

Table 13. Findings of recent SAGE evaluation that illustrate the percentage of SAGE graduates from 2015-2019 that have found employment, upgraded their education, and have accessed additional employment training programs.

These findings are comparable to the goals SAGE participants set for themselves upon completing the program, demonstrating that SAGE participants are indeed realizing the goals they make for themselves during SAGE, and are even at times surpassing them (i.e., the employment rate after graduation for past participants surveyed was slightly higher than the percentage of participants that had listed gaining employment as one of their goals).

Our SAGE facilitator works with every participant to develop an exit plan that is tailored to their individual needs and experience. For instance, participants that have not completed high school will often make upgrading their education their highest priority. As well, individuals that are struggling with addictions or trauma may require access to additional programming in order to continue learning skills before they are ready to seek employment. Of the participants that graduated from the SAGE program, 93% embark on their chosen next step with the support and guidance of the SAGE facilitator. Based on the documented data of the participant exit plans, the distribution of goals is as follows:

	% of SAGE Graduates that Seek Employment	% of SAGE Graduates that Upgrade Education	% of SAGE Graduates that Train Toward a New Skill or Trade
2019	29%	57%	14%
2018	22%	50%	27%
2017	27%	63%	0%

***Table 14*.** Distribution of goals for SAGE participants from 2017 – 2019 upon program exit.

To further underline the impact SAGE has had on promoting employment readiness in its participants, below are three success stories concerning how participation in the SAGE program was able to make employment acquisition and education upgrading a reality for its participants:

The first testimonial comes from a past graduate of the program who participated in the previously mentioned SAGE evaluation. The SAGE graduate interviewed commented on how pivotal the program was in transforming her thinking concerning her employability. She said her participation in the program helped her to become aware of the “transferable employment skills” she possessed. Because this individual had been facing issues with a criminal record, she had been greatly discouraged regarding her prospects of finding employment and had not attempted try. Yet, through her participation in SAGE, she was able to, as she put it, “awaken my drive for employment,” and to see that finding employment would actually be a possibility for her.

The next two stories concern SAGE alumni from 2019 and are shared by our current SAGE facilitator. For reasons of confidentiality, the names of the below mentioned participants have been changed and signified by a single uppercase letter.

> “D was dedicated to participating in the SAGE program from day one. She had the highest attendance record of the program and would arrive on time every day. Throughout the program, D demonstrated a willingness to try new things, to explore her opportunities, and emerged as a

leader in the group. During job shadowing, she impressed the company [she was placed with] so much that she was offered a job."

Without having enrolled and participated in SAGE, this graduate of the program may not have had the opportunity to job shadow at this local business and been afforded the chance to demonstrate the value she could offer to the company as an employee. Her participation in SAGE directly enabled her to accomplish her goal of finding employment.

Much like D, V's story below reveals the instrumental role SAGE played in helping her to first gain confidence in herself, reconnect with her culture, and to work through her anxiety. As these underlying emotional and spiritual issues were addressed, the opportunity to visit a local College on a group trip with SAGE then assisted her in making the decision to upgrade her education and set herself on the path toward achieving her goal of becoming an addictions counsellor.

> "V's journey in the SAGE Program has been dynamic. She was unsure whether she would be able to participate in the program because of severe anxiety issues. However, she showed great perseverance and drive by not only participating, but thriving in the program. V was hungry for cultural connection and it has been very exciting watching her take every opportunity in the SAGE program to do this. V attended sweatlodges, healing circles, and connected to other programs offering cultural ceremonies and connection. V also realized early on a trip to Bow Valley College that she would like to become an addictions counsellor. She took this opportunity to learn what she needed to do in order to make this happen and was able to apply, complete her placement test, and enrol in the Aboriginal Upgrading Program at Bow Valley. V has shown consistent drive and desire to actively build the future she wants for herself."

As mentioned in the above success story, SAGE focuses on building self-esteem and enhancing emotional and spiritual wellness to develop the stability and confidence required for our participants to change their lives and follow through with their goals. We measure progress in wellbeing through the Medicine Wheel Service Plan (MWSP) assessment tool, as a majority of the women participating in this program are Indigenous and Indigenous teaching, cultural and spiritual practices are a focal point of the program's curriculum. Participants report their wellbeing on a one to five scale in each of the following four quadrants: Spiritual, Physical, Mental and Emotional wellness. The assessment is completed at intake, interim and exit of the program. This allows us to compare the growth of each individual throughout the program. The below tables show the results of the final assessment given upon exit of the program and signify the percentage of SAGE participants that achieved each outcome based on recent sessions.

March-May 2019 SAGE Final Program Feedback							
% Learners Achieving Target Learning Outcomes							
Increased Personal Awareness	Increased Confidence	Increased Cultural Competency	Reduced Barriers to Employment	Safe/ Welcome	Progress Towards Goals	Achieved Learning Goals	Used New Skills
100%	100%	71%	100%	100%	100%	100%	83%

Table 15. SAGE Final Program Feedback Form outcomes March-May 2019 identifying the percentage of participants meeting target outcomes at graduation. A minimum rating of 4/5 was used to indicate success, due to the accompanying measurement scale which assigns a value of "Mostly Agree" with the number 4.

September-December 2018 SAGE Final Program Feedback							
% Learners Achieving Target Learning Outcomes							
Increased Personal Awareness	Increased Confidence	Increased Cultural Competency	Reduced Barriers to Employment	Safe/ Welcome	Progress Towards Goals	Achieved Learning Goals	Used New Skills
100%	80%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 16. SAGE Program Feedback outcomes September-December 2018 identifying the percentage of participants meeting target outcomes at graduation. A minimum rating of 4/5 was used to indicate success, due to the accompanying measurement scale which assigns a value of "Mostly Agree" with the number 4.

The contrasting outcomes between sessions can be attributed to the different starting points of participants. The Fall 2018 session had more individuals coming from First Nation communities that already had a high level of cultural competency. The participants that attended in spring 2019 had higher levels of skills obtained from prior programming, which may have reduced the number of individuals identifying that they used new skills. Across both sessions, 100% of participants identified that SAGE helped them to increase personal awareness, progress towards their goals, achieve their learning goals, reduce barriers to employment, and provided them with a safe and welcoming environment.

In the recent evaluation conducted of the SAGE program, a SAGE alumnus commented that beyond the comprehensive curriculum put forward by the program, her interaction and close working relationship with EFry staff made a transformative impact on her life.

She remarked:

> " SAGE changed my life. Honestly the SAGE program helped me to open up and network more than I ever have been able to do. Completing the SAGE program gave me a sense of pride and sense of emotional wellbeing that I did not have before and it helped me to be integrated."

As the findings in this section demonstrate, SAGE helps a significant portion of its participants that have the goal of finding employment or of upgrading their education to do exactly that. It empowers these women to cultivate the competencies and skillsets essential to finding gainful employment and to furthering their education. It also works to promote the emotional, spiritual and cultural well-being necessary to create the underlying stability and confidence each participant needs in order to succeed in their goals.