

# REVEALING RESEARCH & EVALUATION (RREV)

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PERFORMANCE, RESEARCH AND EVALUATION (PREV) UNIT  
Strategic Operations Division

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*This issue highlights two B.C. Corrections initiatives: the Aboriginal Justice Strategy and the Relationship Violence Prevention Program—Cultural Edition (RVPP-CE), offered in partnership with external service providers to support the culturally diverse population we serve.*

## ABORIGINAL JUSTICE STRATEGY (AJS)



The B.C. Corrections Branch supports 30 community-based Aboriginal Justice Strategy (AJS) programs that provide services ranging from court diversion to the reintegration of offenders returning to the community from

custody. The programs are managed locally either by Aboriginal communities or agencies.

B.C. Corrections works with Aboriginal Justice partners to deliver key programs designed to attend to factors that contribute to the overrepresentation of Aboriginal peoples in the justice system. Although people of First Nations, Inuit and Métis ethnicity represent only 4.5% of the adult population of British Columbia, they represent

27% of the adults in B.C. Corrections Centres and 24% of the clients supervised in the community.

The Aboriginal Justice Strategy is a key component in B.C. Corrections strategy to reduce the disproportionate number of Aboriginal clients and offenders.

## A WORKING EXAMPLE

The Chilliwack Community Corrections Office has worked in partnership with the Stó:lô Nation dating back to the early 2000s. During the past decade, the two teams have worked to develop effective program delivery of the Substance Abuse Management (SAM) program and Respectful Relationships (RR) program. The goals of the Qwi:qwelstóm—Stó:lô Nation's Justice Program are to restore harmony in the

community by involving young people, adult offenders, victims, family members, and elders of the Aboriginal community; repairing harm done by the offender's behaviour; and in particular, providing an opportunity for the community to assume responsibility for what is happening to its young people.



**Chilliwack Probation Officer Helen Sterling and Aboriginal Justice Worker Justin Williams facilitate a Respectful Relationships session**

### ABORIGINAL JUSTICE STRATEGY SURVEY RESULTS

A survey was administered to the AJS programs in 2011. The objective of the survey was to assess which areas of the program staff thought were working effectively, and where improvements could be made. The survey questions related to a range of topics including: governance, policy and procedures, program delivery, justice partner relationships, victim services, program success, reporting schedules and ongoing performance measures.

*“There is a big interest in returning to our traditional cultural roots, when dealing with offender/victims”*

- survey respondent

The survey was designed by the B.C. Corrections Branch Aboriginal Programs and Relationships Section, and the Performance, Research and Evaluation Unit.

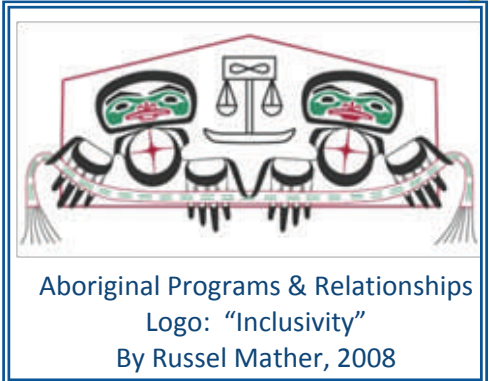
The survey reached out to 105 communities throughout B.C. where Aboriginal Justice programs and services were delivered to clients, and included responses from 26 justice workers in 24 programs. Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that AJS programs are assisting individuals with treatment, healing and support ser-

vices. All respondents indicated that they believe their programs keep individuals from re-offending.

Twenty-three of the 26 respondents provided suggestions for expanding access to the justice program in their community; suggestions included promoting an increased awareness of these programs, increased funding and staffing, while creating more holistic assistance where services are available. The value of victim services was clear, with an emphasis on the need for greater victim support in the future.

The majority of respondents would like to see the justice system develop stronger connections with AJS partners, and incorporate AJS programming within a larger restorative justice mandate.

Finally, results indicate a desire to expand on the training of AJS workers in delivering Respectful Relationships, Substance Abuse Management and other B.C. Corrections programs.



The Aboriginal Justice Program is designed to address the unique cultural needs of Aboriginal peoples in their interactions with the criminal justice system and to respond to the overrepresentation of Aboriginal peoples as both crime offenders and victims. It includes a number of initiatives, among them:

- ◆ Improving the relationships and understanding between the Corrections Branch, justice officials and Aboriginal people and their communities;
- ◆ Program delivery approaches aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of our programs and services for Aboriginal offenders; and
- ◆ Being responsive to the justice needs identified by Aboriginal communities.

For more information go to <http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/corrections/aboriginal/index.htm>.

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: A MULTICULTURAL STRATEGY

In 1996, the B.C. Corrections Branch introduced domestic treatment programs for adult males convicted of assaulting their female partners. The **Relationship Violence Prevention Program** was designed to address the criminogenic needs of domestic violence offenders. These needs include the thoughts, behaviour, decision making and lifestyle skills that lead to criminogenic activities.

The Branch offers a two part RVPP Program:

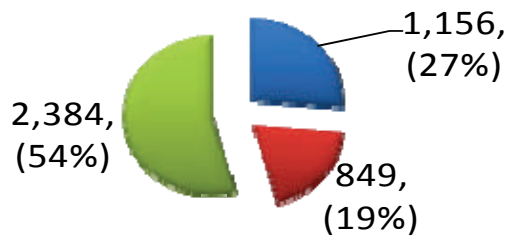
- ◆ the **Respectful Relationships** (RR) program, a staff-run pre-treatment program by probation and correctional Officers, and
- ◆ the **Relationship Violence Program** (RVP), a contracted treatment program.

The ultimate vision of the combined RR and RVP program is the elimination of all forms of violent and abusive behaviour by male offenders against their female partners. **A 2009 evaluation of RVPP shows that completing RR and RVP programs in the community can reduce domestic violence reoffending up to 50%.**

See RREv Issue #1 for more information and a summary of the evaluation results.

#### Domestic Violence Sentenced Community Clients

■ Aboriginal ■ Multicultural ■ Caucasian



#### RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM CULTURAL EDITION (RVPP-CE).

In FY 2012/13 there were just over 4,300 sentenced offenders under Community Corrections supervision for domestic violence. As the figure above shows, domestic violence crosses many cultures.

The B.C. Corrections Branch recognises that there are sentenced offenders who have unique needs due to language barriers, cultural norms and influences, and experiences assimilating to western cultures. In response to these diverse needs, the Branch worked with partners to develop a **Cultural Edition of the Relationship Violence Prevention Program**.

This innovative program combines the learning objectives of the Branch's existing domestic violence programs and facilitates its delivery in a variety of languages. The content of the program is of-

ferred across many ethnic groups while the language and cultural relevance of the material is modified to meet the specific needs of the participants. The program is offered through several partnership agencies (see next page). Each agency has been delivering the RVPP-CE since April 2003, however, the majority of the agencies have been working with the Branch for more than ten years.

Available language include Punjabi, Farsi, Mandarin, and Cantonese. An evaluation of the impact of the RVPP cultural edition is scheduled to commence in 2014/15.

For more information on B.C. Corrections programs go to <http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/corrections/programs/index.htm>

### AGENCIES THAT DELIVER RVPP CULTURAL EDITION



Abbotsford Community Services (ACS), established in 1969, is a community-based agency serving children, youth, families, and seniors of all personal, social, ethnic, and economic groups. The broad goals of ACS are:

1. To plan for and provide direct social and community services;
2. To heighten awareness of social concerns within the community and to foster community involvement;
3. To create opportunities for community members to participate in serving, developing, and strengthening our communities through partnerships with government, private organizations, and individuals.



DIVERSEcity Community Resources Society is a non-profit agency offering a wide range of services and programs to the culturally diverse communities of the lower mainland. Established in 1978 (formerly known as Surrey Delta Immigrant Services Society), this society has serviced the community for three decades. DIVERSEcity prides itself on its well-

founded expertise in assisting new immigrants in their integration into their new community. DIVERSEcity Community Resources Society offers counseling, employment, and outreach among other services.



**MOSAIC**

MOSAIC's mandate is to support and to empower immigrant and refugee communities, helping them to address critical issues in their neighborhoods and workplace.

A multilingual non-profit organization MOSAIC is a dedicated to addressing issues that affect immigrants and refugees in the course of their settlement and integration into Canadian society. MOSAIC has worked for over 35 years to strengthen communities and push for positive change.

Services offered range from legal advocacy, settlement assistance, specialized family programs,

English language classes, to skills training and employment programs. Professional fee-based translation and interpretation services are available in over seventy languages.



Established in 1973 and incorporated in 1974, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. is one of the largest social service agencies in B.C.. With the vision to create "A World of Multicultural Harmony", S.U.C.C.E.S.S. is well supported by its mission: to Build Bridges, Harvest Diversity and Foster Integration.

With over 20 offices in B.C., including one in Fort Saint John and two overseas offices in Taipei and Seoul, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. provides services in settlement, English as a second language training, employment, family and youth counselling, business and economic development, health care, housing, and community and volunteer development.

#### The Performance, Research and Evaluation (PREv) Unit

**Contact us!** If you have comments, questions, or ideas about this publication, please contact:

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**Evidence-Based Practice - What Works!**

<http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/corrections/research/index.htm>