

REVEALING RESEARCH & EVALUATION (RREv)

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This issue highlights the Essential Skills to Success (ESS) and Integrated Offender Management and Homelessness Intervention Project (IOM/HIP) available through B.C. Corrections and in partnerships with other service providers.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS TO SUCCESS

Essential Skills to Success (ESS) is a series of skill building program modules offered by BC Corrections for remand and sentenced inmates. ESS provides the skills people need to succeed at work, in learning and in other daily activities.



ESS is divided into two areas with multiple modules. Each module is separately offered, and can act as a stepping stone to other corrections programs such as educational, work, and cognitive behavioural programs.

Living Skills:

- Communication Skills
- Goal Setting
- Healthy Relationships
- Substance Abuse Education

Employability Skills:

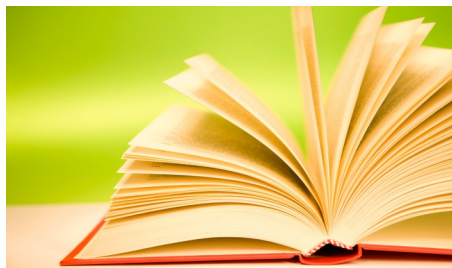
- Employability Expectations
- Resume Writing
- Job Search

ESS sessions are interactive and skill based, and participants are given materials to guide them through the sessions. Participants are encouraged to reflect on these materials, to continue building their own Self Management Plan in between sessions.

*"I think it's cool the jail is doing this for everyone.
Having these programs shows you want to help us.
It's nice to know there are still people who have faith in us..."*
- remanded ESS participant (2009)

The Essential Skills to Success program targets 9 essential skills:

1. Reading
2. Document Use
3. Numeracy
4. Writing
5. Oral Communication
6. Working with Others
7. Thinking
8. Computer Use
9. Continuous Learning



Inmates complete the ESS Orientation session and can then request to attend any of the modules. In some cases, ESS

modules may be recommended by COs if the need is present, and can be included in offender case planning.

ESS modules are intended to assist offenders with their successful reintegration into society.

ESS delivery adjusts for differences in offender needs (such as literacy, gender and cultural backgrounds) by offering peer tutoring, First Nations elements and gender specific modules in relationship and healthy living skills.

2013 ESS - ESSENTIAL SKILLS TO SUCCESS SURVEY REPORT

From 2011 to mid-2013 a total of 2,491 ESS modules were given to 18,155 attendees throughout BC. Over 40% of these attendees were housed at the FRCC (Fraser Regional Correctional Centre).

In late 2013, an ESS report was published that summarizes the results of a series of ESS surveys given to course participants, staff and facilitators regarding their experience with the ESS program in all centres.



Inmate Survey Results (2013)

567 inmates in eight custody centres returned survey responses.

Overall, inmates responded to the program positively. They found the facilitators and modules understandable and clear, and felt comfortable participating in ESS.

Inmates wanted the modules to be extended, offered more often, and wanted more reading materials and resources following module completion. Inmates also appreciated receiving certificates following the modules.

Staff Survey Results (2013)

Staff from all nine centres responded to the survey, and the results shows that the majority of staff encouraged inmates to participate in ESS.

ESS staff reported that inmates had gained some introductory knowledge related to skills development, as expected with short modules and that the participants felt they had gained valuable skills.

Staff comments helped produce several recommendations for future ESS implementation. For example, staff recommended an increased level of support for ESS by custody management, including a standard selection process for ESS facilitators, and more facilitators.

Facilitator Survey Results (2013)

Forty-six ESS facilitators responded to the survey. In general, facilitators felt that ESS was both gender and culturally appropriate.

Recommendations from facilitators included shortening or removing the orientation session, training more ESS facilitators and increasing hands-on CORNET training for recording ESS participation data.

Facilitators suggested dropping the continuous enrollment system, to develop better group dynamics, but noted that continuous ESS enrollment allows remand inmates to participate and increased overall participation.

92% of facilitators said they were able to engage and facilitate group discussions, and felt this was true for all sessions provided.



IOM - INTEGRATED OFFENDER MANAGEMENT

In the Integrated Offender Management program, custody and community staff work together with a high risk sentenced inmate to develop an integrated case plan for release. The case plan identifies and addresses the offender's specific criminogenic factors, and provides guidance when transitioning into community living. See RREv Issue #5 for more information.

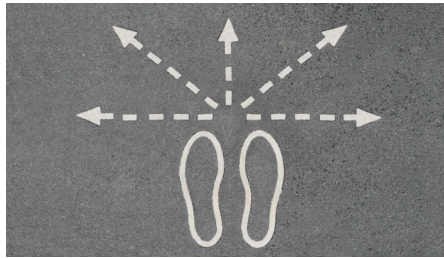
IOM Goals include:

- Improving reintegration of the client into the community;
- Reducing client reoffending;
- Using cost effective strategies for offender management.



IOM began at Alouette Correctional Centre for Women (ACCW) and Fraser Regional Correctional Centre (FRCC) in 2006; in April 2012 at Vancouver Island Regional Correctional Centre and June 2013 at Prince George Regional Correctional Centre.

A series of evaluations were completed for IOM at ACCW and FRCC in early 2014: a program impact analysis, and two forms of



participant surveys, one given at release and one if the client returned to custody.

IOM participant surveys suggest that program goals are well communicated and participants at both ACCW and FRCC found the program supportive and helpful; 95% of respondents found the case planning process useful.

IOM appears to be equally well received due to both the planning and support aspects: 42% of respondents found the planning, housing and relocation aid the most helpful, and 36% found the meetings and emotional support provided through this program the most helpful.

IOM Impact Analysis (2014)

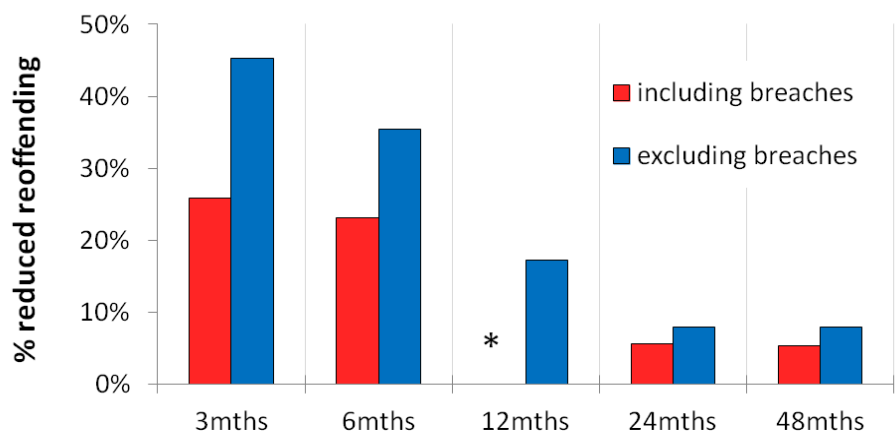
619 IOM participant records from ACCW and FRCC between 2006 - 2013 were compared to similar clients without IOM enrolment.

The reoffending rates were analysed three ways; a) over time (3, 6, 12, 24, and 48 months), b) between institutions (ACCW, FRCC or both centres combined), and c) by including and excluding probation breaches.

Result highlights:

- IOM participation is associated with lower reoffence rates at both FRCC and ACCW.
- Both breach and non-breach reoffence rates were lower after IOM completion.
- IOM reoffence rates remained lower up to 4 years after participation (compared to non-participants).

IOM Reoffence Rates over Time



*reoffences (including breaches) were not significantly decreased at 12mths.

IOM/HIP - INTEGRATED OFFENDER MANAGEMENT/HOMELESSNESS INTERVENTION PROJECT REPORT

In 2011, IOM partnered with the Homelessness Intervention Project (HIP) to aid IOM clients who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

IOM/HIP is co-managed by the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation and BC Corrections. Additional support is provided by BC Housing, the Ministry of Health, Community Living BC, the Provincial Health Services Authority, and the local health authorities: Fraser Health, Vancouver Coastal Health and Island Health.

The IOM/HIP pilot project began in 2011, at FRCC and ACCW and was expanded to VIRCC in 2012.

IOM/HIP Goals include:

- Increasing housing stability;
- Increasing connections to the community;
- Increasing employability, self-sufficiency and well-being.



The IOM team works with regional HIP Key workers and HOP (Homelessness Outreach Program) workers, to support clients transitioning into the community.

Both the HIP Key Workers and HOP Outreach Workers collaborate with IOM participants to develop their Case Supervision Plan for housing and support services, focusing on transition and community releasing plans beginning 60-90 days before custody release.

HIP key workers coordinate delivery of integrated services, including access to housing, income assistance, referrals to health services and an introduction to employment planning.

IOM/HIP Evaluation (2014)

Considering the specialized needs of IOM/HIP participants, no direct comparison group can be used to determine statistical effects of IOM/HIP completion.

However it is worthwhile to note that IOM/HIP client reoffence rates were typically 35% (excl. breaches; two years after release), while similar IOM clients had 61% reoffence rates (as noted in the IOM impact analysis; excl. breaches; two years after release).

When comparing the seriousness of offences before and after IOM/HIP participation, 78% of recidivating clients had less serious reoffences (such as breaches) while only 13% had more serious reoffences after IOM/HIP completion. These results indicate a considerable reduction in the seriousness of IOM/HIP client reoffences and may be promising result for future evaluations.

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