

Creating Options Aimed at Reducing Sexual
Exploitation (COARSE)
Court Diversion program

Social Return on Investment

Final Report – October 2005



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Part A: Introduction

COARSE Court Diversion Program Overview

Creating Options Aimed at Reducing Sexual Exploitation (COARSE) is a provincial court-approved diversion program specific to individuals charged with S. 213 C.C. (communicating for the purposes of prostitution) and other prostitution-related offences. COARSE is operated by The Prostitution Awareness and Action Foundation of Edmonton (PAAFE).

COARSE began in 2002 as a pilot project funded through the federal Voluntary Sector Initiative via the Department of Justice. The pilot had two primary objectives:

1. To create new options for the criminal justice system to break the cycle of court appearances, “failure-to-appear” charges, and incarceration; and
2. To offer hope and concrete assistance to those individuals charged with prostitution-related offenses so they can address the causes of their involvement in prostitution and the criminal justice system. This tool provides individuals wishing to end their involvement in prostitution the opportunity to create and work on a court-approved plan that may result in withdrawal of charges or reduced criminal justice system sanctions.

The pilot project included a Court Diversion program and a variety of peer and community support initiatives designed to increase the ability of the community and government sectors to work together to create positive change. The current phase of the project, including the Court Diversion component, continues with the support of government funders, private donors, church groups and foundations.

Information about COARSE and the document: [COARSE: A resource for communities exploring innovative Court Diversion options for prostitution-related offenses](#) (2004) can be downloaded from the website at www.paafe.org

The Court Diversion process

The Edmonton Police Service members charge an individual with a prostitution-related summary conviction offense and inform her about the diversion program.

- The person decides if she¹ is ready to make a change and contacts the COARSE Diversion Coordinator.
- Together, they work out a plan to address the immediate reasons for turning to prostitution. (For example: homelessness, addictions, abusive boyfriend/pimp, short of money for basic needs, mental health conditions).
- The Coordinator offers information about drug and alcohol rehabilitation, education, job training, income support, housing, health care and other programs and resources that apply to the individuals’ personal situation.

¹ COARSE is available to men, transgender individuals and women. Since women are the vast majority of participants of the program, for simplicity, feminine pronouns are used throughout this document.

- The Coordinator provides a personal contact for the resources and the individual does some of the research for her plan so that she is invested in making the changes to end her involvement. The individual commits to the plan in writing.
- The case plan is presented to the Alberta Provincial Crown Prosecutors' Office for approval. The Coordinator and the client attend court. The court case is put over for long enough for the individual to complete her plan. After this time period, the Coordinator provides a progress report to the Crown Prosecutors Office. The charges are withdrawn or there is a reduced court-imposed penalty.
- One condition is that she refrains from prostitution while she is on the plan. She must keep in contact with the Coordinator and actively participate in the programs she has chosen.
- The length of the average plan is two (2) months.

Eligibility for Court Diversion

The COARSE Court Diversion eligibility requirements are:

- The person is an adult (over 18 years of age)
- The person is charged with a S. 213 C.C. or other offenses related to prostitution. The requisite is that these charges relate to the individual's prostitution activity.
- Charges must originate in the Edmonton area (Note that there is demand for the Diversion program from people charged with S. 213 C.C. and related offenses from other parts of Alberta. These charges may be considered with permission from the Crown in the city where the charges originated.)

"I've been working the streets since I was 13 years old. Diversion was my last chance, I knew that if I signed on I couldn't go back."

SROI research goals

The Prostitution Awareness and Action Foundation of Edmonton (PAAFE) wishes to assess the relative costs and benefits of providing services to participants in the Creating Options Aimed at Reducing Sexual Exploitation (COARSE) Court Diversion program. Social Return on Investment (SROI) is a qualitative and quantitative study conducted during the second phase of the COARSE program from 2004-2005. This study builds on the Social Return on Investment research that was conducted in the pilot project phase in 2002-2003.

The research has two major goals:

1. **Social Return on Investment:** To illustrate the differences between the costs of continuing the cycle of involvement in prostitution and the criminal justice system, and the costs of supporting individuals to break the cycle, regain their health and stability and increase their participation in education and/or employment options. In theory, while the cost of supports needed for women wishing to exit street prostitution are initially intensive, there should be savings to the taxpayer over time compared with the costs of criminal sanctions.
2. **Policy implications:** To gather rich information about resources that are useful to individuals exiting street prostitution through input from and information about COARSE participants.

The Edmonton Housing Trust Fund (EHTF) provided primary funding for the SROI research component of the project, with supplementary funding from the National Crime Prevention Centre Strategic Fund (NCPC). The overall second phase of the COARSE program was co-funded by the EHTF, the NCPC and with contributions from private donors and PAAFE general funds.

Objectives

This study seeks to quantify the return on investment of COARSE court diversion. The study will:

- Measure the scope, frequency and costs of resources used by COARSE participants during and after their two month plan
- Identify the costs of resources associated with individuals involved in street prostitution but do not participate in COARSE court diversion
- Identify policy implications related to resources for participants

Data collection methods

Interviews with participants

Of 27 participants who completed the COARSE Diversion Program between May 2004 and August 2005, 17 agreed to be interviewed for this study (63%). Only participants who successfully completed their COARSE plan (and therefore had their charges withdrawn) and who volunteered for the project were interviewed. Each participant was interviewed up to 4 times throughout this time frame to learn what resources assisted her to achieve her goal of exiting street

prostitution, and to understand her experiences with the program. The information was recorded in a database.

Each participant received a \$25 gift certificate at the end of each interview. Refer to Appendix II: COARSE interview outline, page 34.

Data collection by partner agencies

The second method of collecting data was to invite partner agencies to submit a form indicating the services they provide and the approximate staff hours spent with each Diversion Program participant. Refer to Appendix III: COARSE Client Follow-Up & Referral List page 35. However, participation from partner agencies was extremely low. The usefulness of this data was limited to affording the opportunity to ask participants (during the interviews) to verify if they actually used a particular resource listed by the partner agency.

COARSE intake data

The Coordinator of the COARSE Court Diversion program collects a wide range of information regarding every application into the program. The intake interview includes questions about demographics, the reasons for and history of street involvement, resource needs and more. This information is recorded in a database.

Confidentiality

PAAFE is bound by confidentiality agreements respecting the privacy of applicants and participants. Each COARSE participant was assigned a number, which was the only identifier that appears on the “COARSE Client Follow-Up and Referral List” and in the databases. Personal identifiers and contact information are recorded separately and kept confidential. Only the project researcher, the COARSE Diversion Coordinator and the partner program referral person knew the participants identity.

Each participant was advised: “We respect any choice you make about your participation in the project. Even if you agree to participate in the research project, you can withdraw at any time. You can refuse to answer any question that makes you feel uncomfortable. Your decision of whether or not to participate will not affect your access to services.”

The opinions of participants are in quotations in throughout this report. No identifying information is included with the quotations.

Limitations of the data

The information obtained from participant interviews indicates the scope and frequency of the services that individuals accessed but does not measure the outcomes or relative benefits of the services provided. Although participants were asked to comment on which program or resource was most helpful to them, this report is not an evaluation of the quality of those services.

Part B: Social Return on Investment

Approach

It is postulated that the cost of supporting participants who no longer engage in prostitution will realize savings over time, compared with the costs accrued by non-participants who re-offend and continue to be involved in the criminal justice system.

This report calculates the social return on investment in two-month (equivalent to the period of the COARSE Court Diversion plan), one-year, and ten-year time periods. While participants used a wide array of community supports and services, the SROI is limited to calculating the costs of a selection services that are funded or delivered by government.

Supports and resources used by participants both during and after the two-month Court Diversion plan were quantified through the interviews with participants. Assumptions required for the SROI cost calculation for participants are based on supports and resources that were actually used by participants. Assumptions for the non-participant and no support groups are based on experience about average scenarios from PAAFE and the program Coordinator, since measured data about non-participants was not available.

Costing of programs and services used to calculate the SROI, was obtained from community agencies, government partners or publicly available data. The costs listed are the “global” costs per person, which factors in the total cost of service delivery including administration and overhead, as well as the face value of the cost of services. (See page 16) However, costs are limited to the portion of costs directly funded by government. For example, while the cost of delivering COARSE includes administration, travel and overhead expenses, the total global amount does not factor in funding provided by donations or in-kind contributions.

Summary of the data

The following analysis concerns the 17 participants who successfully completed their COARSE Court Diversion plans, had their charges withdrawn and volunteered to participate in this study. This data was collected at intake and in the interviews and illustrates the status of individuals at intake and during their two-month COARSE Court Diversion plans. Participants used a wide variety of resources both during and after the two-month Court Diversion plan. Other demographic information is listed in the appendix on page 36.

Source of income

Of the 17 participants included in Figure 1, two participants were already off the street prior to becoming involved in COARSE. Further, half of the participants were already receiving IS or AISH, some of them using it to supplement their income from prostitution. Others had no income or relied on prostitution for income.

“The most important thing is financial support”

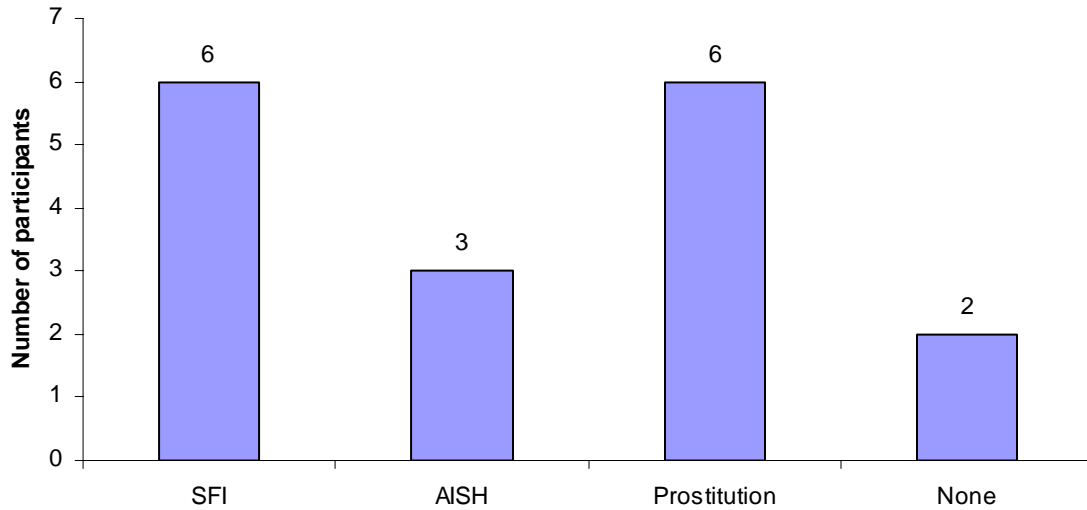


Figure 1. Income source at intake

The COARSE Coordinator assisted the balance of participants with applying for income support. While most participants need IS income support, a few accessed student finance income, gained employment, or were supported by a partner or family during the two-month plan as shown in Figure 2. The usage of these supports increased only slightly over a one-year period.

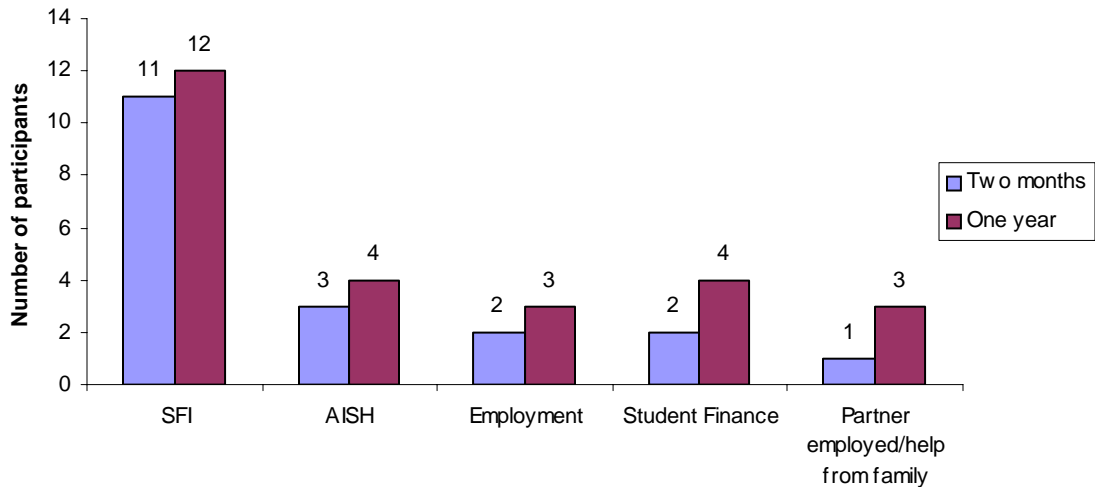


Figure 2. Income source during two-month and one year period

Housing

As shown in Figure 3, over half of participants (52.9%) were homeless prior to starting their Court Diversion plan. They were likely “couch surfing”, staying with

whoever would accommodate them for a few days or weeks at a time. Of the remainder, participants who had their own place were renting, and those staying with family or friends had a longer-term personal commitment for support to get off the street. Safe/supported housing is defined as institutional shelter or transitional housing.

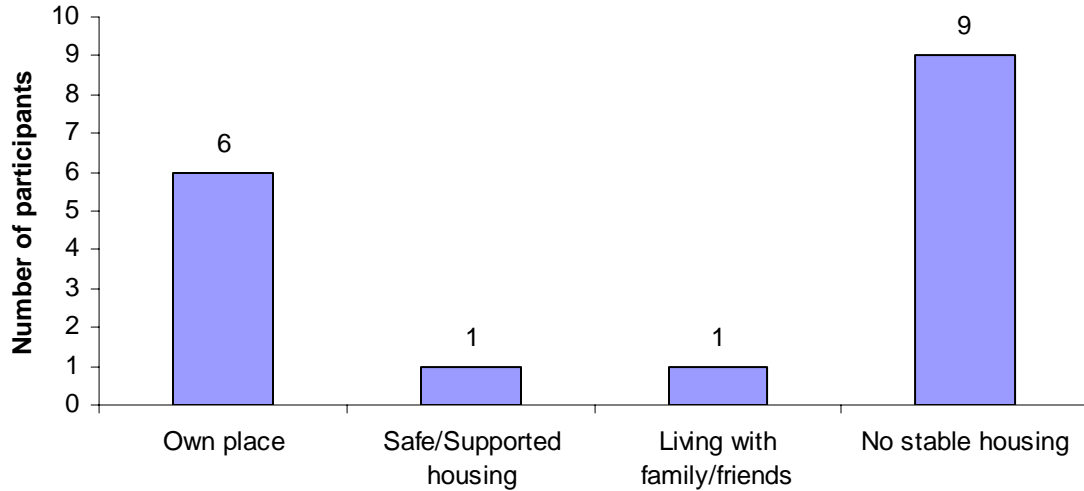


Figure 3. Housing at intake

The Coordinator assisted homeless participants to find and access supported housing (SH) or emergency shelter options. Others found accommodation with family or friends (Figure 4).

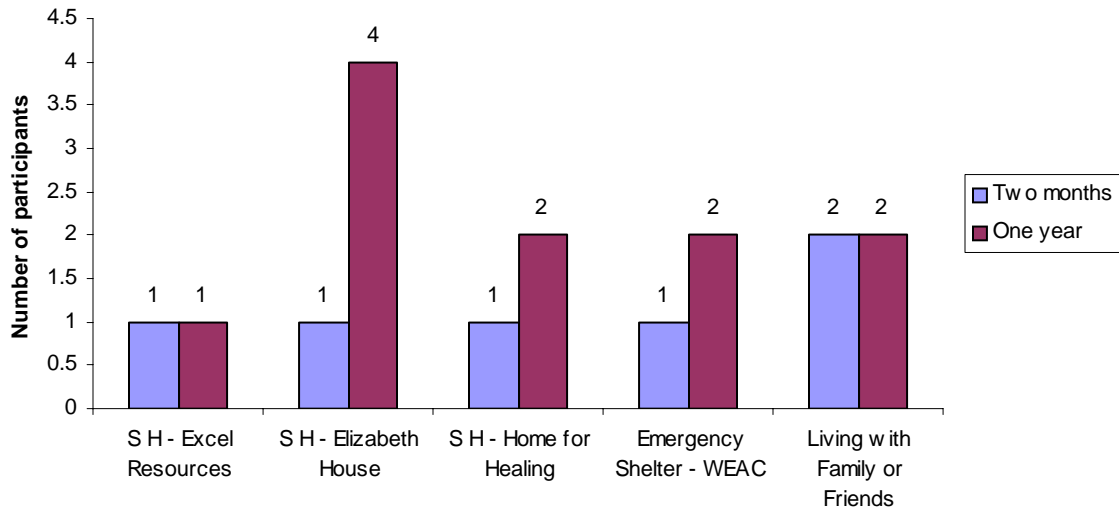


Figure 4. Housing accessed during two-month and one year period

During the one-year period, 12 participants (71%) eventually found rental housing. One participant each used Crossroads Too (supportive housing for

pregnant women), McDougal House and the Anchorage program (follow-up supportive housing for addictions treatment) in the one-year period.

Addictions

Treatment for addiction to drugs or alcohol is a significant support issue for participants. 77% of participants (13 individuals) disclosed an addiction to drugs; and 35% disclosed an addiction to alcohol (6 individuals) at intake.

Some participants took an addictions treatment program as part of their two-month plan; and others had already completed treatment prior to participating in COARSE. Figure 5 shows the range of treatment options accessed by participants. Some participants repeated the day program treatment as a result of relapses after the plans were completed.

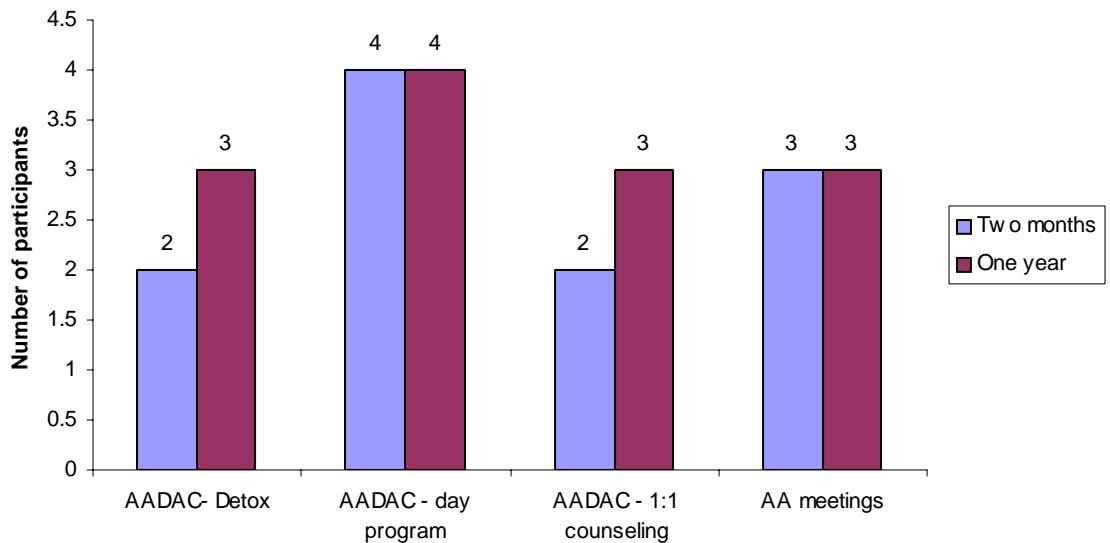


Figure 5. Addictions treatment accessed during two-month and one-year period

Health, mental health & mortality

Participants disclosed significant health issues; namely, HIV+, Hepatitis C and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome; the outcome of drug and alcohol abuse. One COARSE Diversion study group participant died of complications from AIDS two months after completing her plan. Mental health issues are also identified, often connected with abuse and trauma experienced on the street as well as at home.

	(n=17)	Percent
Participants who disclosed having HIV+ and Hepatitis C	1	5.9%
Participants who disclosed having Hepatitis C only	3	17.6%
Participants who disclosed FAS diagnosis	1	5.9%
Participants with identified/ diagnosed mental health issue	6	35.3%

Participants' access to health services and supports is shown in Figure 6. One woman, an absolute newcomer to prostitution and unable to afford insulin and diabetic supplies, received a subsidy from the Canadian Diabetes Association. Note that some of the medical visits were in relation to pregnancy. Over the one-year period, frequencies remained constant for the services listed, except for the addition of Home Care services used by a participant who eventually died of AIDS.

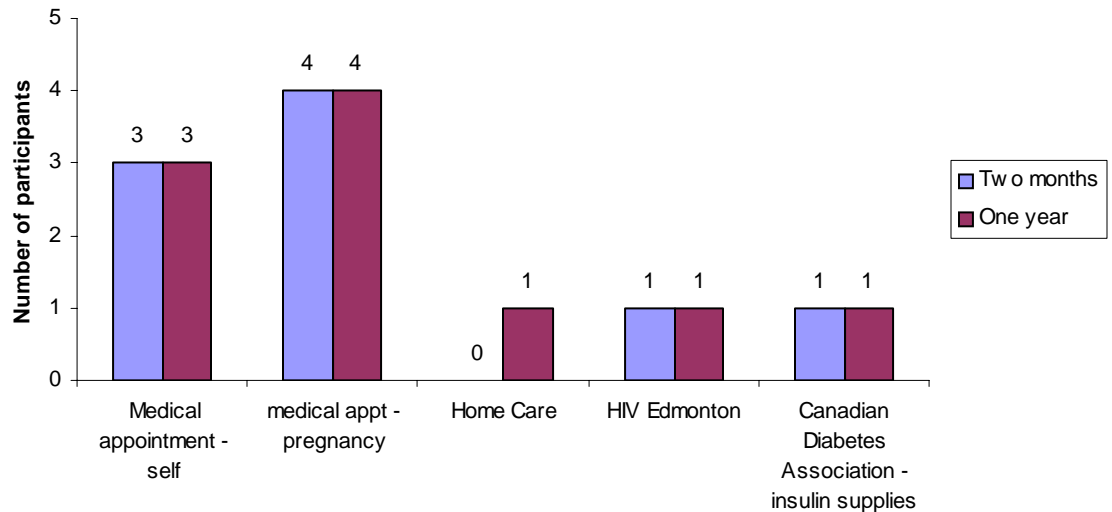


Figure 6. Health services accessed during two-month and one-year period

Several counseling services were accessed during the two-month plan (Figure 7). The range of services broadened during the one-year period with a total of 10 participants accessing this type of service.

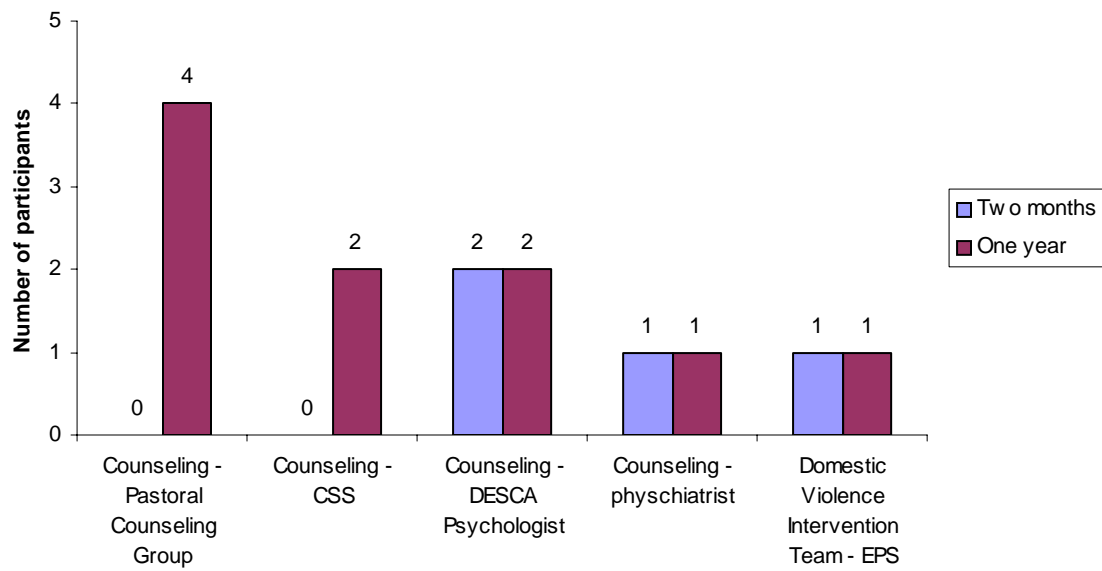


Figure 7. Counseling accessed during two-month and one year period

Children

Thirteen participants or 76% had a total of 39 children at intake versus 4 participants or 24% who had no children. (Of 17 participants, 15 were women and 2 were transgender individuals. There were no men in this group.) Four women were pregnant at intake and one woman became pregnant after completing her two-month plan for a total of 29.4% of participants who were pregnant. Five births occurred after intake.

Tragically, one child died shortly after birth. The mother had a healthy full-term pregnancy. The infant died of complications from a congenital birth defect.

The number of children per participant ranged from one to seven. Three women had children at home at intake. On average, each woman had 2.2 children. Figure 8 illustrates the number of children per individual.

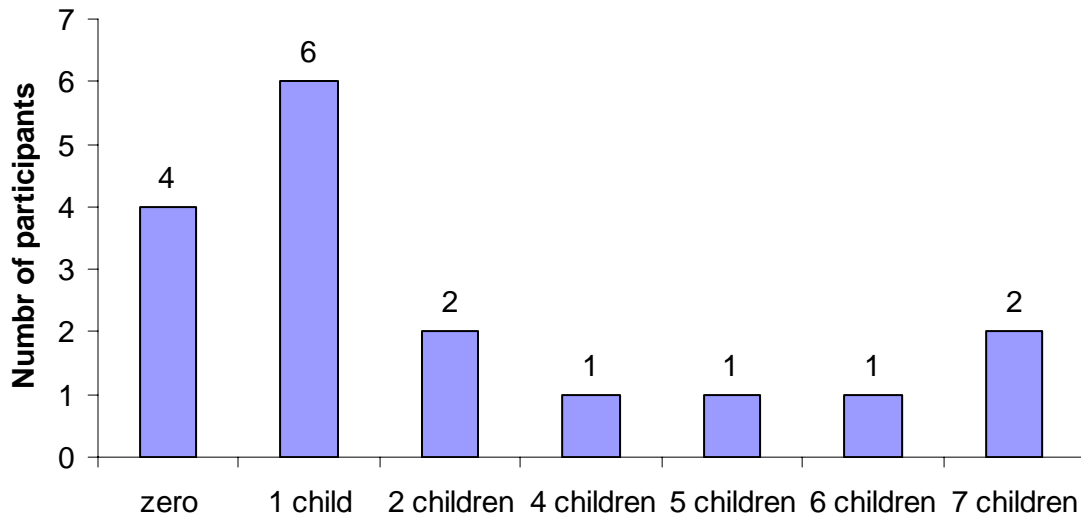


Figure 8. Number of children per participant at intake

The children of participants lived in a variety of care settings:

- Adult independent children no longer in care of an adult,
- Minor children living with participant,
- Minor children in care of Child Welfare,
- Minor children living with family, and/or,
- Combinations of care settings for multiple children.

Participants with children	(n=13)	Percent
Adult independent children	1	8%
At home with participant	1	8%
In care (Child Welfare)	2	15%
Living with family	3	23%
In care/living with family	2	15%
At home/in care/with family	1	8%
Adult children/with family	2	15%
At home/in care	1	8%

Resources accessed for children shown in Figure 9 include outreach supports for mothers with young children from First Steps and Child Welfare (CW). Health for Two is a program that offers pre- and post- natal information and resources.

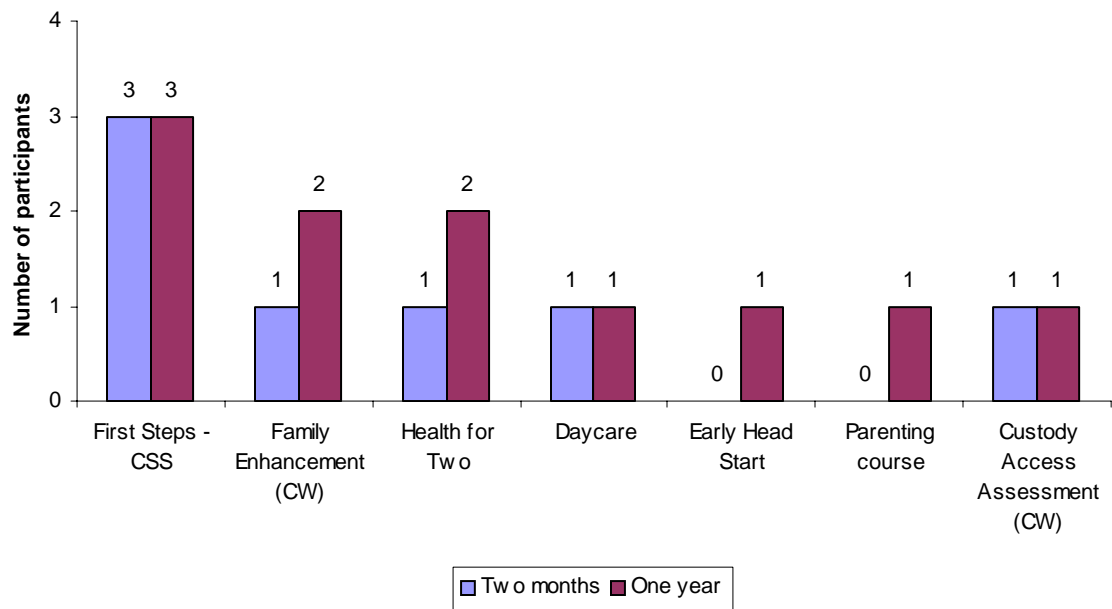


Figure 9. Resources for children accessed during two-month plan

“This is my last chance with my kids and I don’t want to blow it.”

Employment & education

While 72.9% of participants had “some” job experience, these jobs were entry-level unskilled positions, usually in fast food restaurants. For most, these jobs did not last more than a few weeks. Of those with some or no job experience (91%), few are likely to be immediately employable.

Education levels are extremely low: 88% have not completed high school. Most participants require education and/or training in order to gain skills needed for employment that generates sufficient income to support a family.

	Participants	
	(n=17)	Percent
Prior employment history		
No job experience	3	17.6%
Some job experience	9	72.9%
Extensive job experience	5	29.4%
Education level attained prior to COARSE		
Grade 8 or less	3	17.6%
Grade 9 plus some high school	12	70.6%
Completed high school	1	5.9%
Some university	1	5.9%

Despite the low levels of education and prior employment, only a few participants' accessed education and literacy programs over the two-month period as shown in Figure 10.

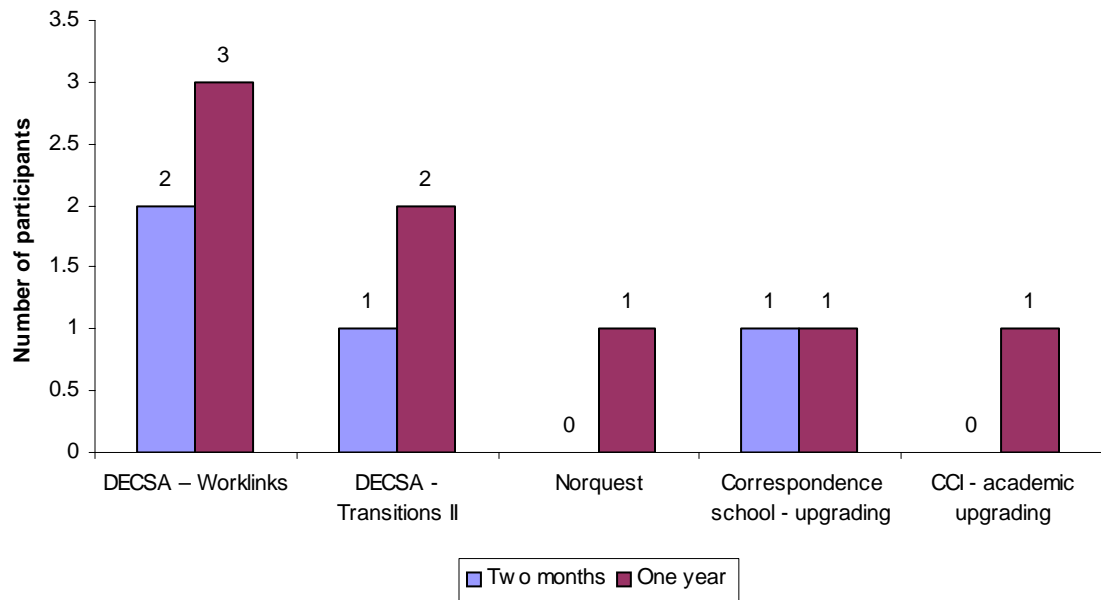


Figure 10. Education programs accessed during two-month and one-year period

Over the one-year period however, more participants accessed education programs, although the total number of participants accessing these programs is still low. An interesting fact is that two participants (12%) became involved in volunteer work in the community as a way of gaining skills and making social contacts.

“DECSA is my main support- Mike, Angie and now Melanie give me a chance to practice my typing, use the Internet, apply for jobs. I’ve decided to go to Work Links – I need them to help me with finding a job.”

Other support needs

Participants accessed a variety of outreach and drop-in support services during the two-month plan period. (Figure 11) Outreach workers assist participants according to individual needs: transportation to medical appointments; help with housing and other basic needs; non-therapeutic counseling; instruction in daily living skills; etc. The range of services and frequency of use increased slightly over the one-year period.

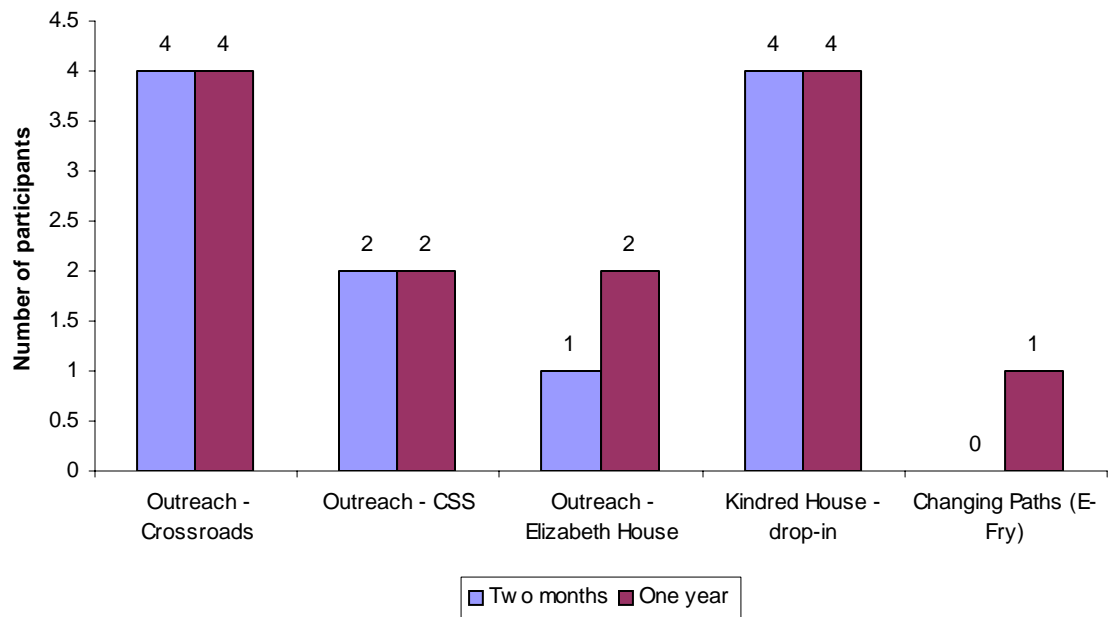


Figure 11. Support programs accessed during two-month and one-year period

In addition to the resources listed in Figure 11, one participant each used the services of the Two Spirit program at the Native Friendship Centre, Nechi Centre, the Support Network and Legal Aid (in relation to a child custody matter).

“The Support Network is a big help for finding resources – I call them at least two times a month.”

Participants also accessed resources for other basic needs such as food, formula for infants, diapers and furniture as seen in Figure 12. The use of food banks increased for the one-year period and many participants used them repeatedly over the one-year period.



Figure 12. Other basic needs accessed during two-month and one year period

Lastly, informal social support networks figured prominently in interviews with participants. 47% of participants said that family and friends were most helpful in terms of their ongoing recovery from street prostitution. Relationships with family and children are often a key motivation for staying off the streets. One participant said:

“What was most helpful? Me, my thinking. I thought that I wanted to be clean when I used all these programs but I realized that I had to stay off the streets. Now I’m here ninety days clean. This baby too is helping me. My family too is a big motivation. My mom wouldn’t tell me her phone number, where she lives. But she came to see me in detox and gave me clothes and money for the vending machines. Now that I’m here [in supported housing] she spends time with me all the time. I want to move back in with them again after I have the baby. I know that if I don’t stay clean I’ll put them at risk and I may not see them again. I have a younger brother and sister to be a role model to, that’s what my sister is learning. She’s bright, intelligent, beautiful and talented. She was following me but now she’s off [drugs] because I’m off.”

One participant received ongoing informal support from her former parole officer, stating:

“There’s no legal reason to see my Parole Officer – I just keep in touch for added support.”

Another 35% said that a church played a helpful role by offering not only spiritual support and encouragement, but other types of assistance as well:

“The Church – they helped move us about 6 months ago and they visit all the time”

Future projected cost savings

Schedule of program/service costs

Program or service	Cost* per person	Unit of cost per participant	Derived from
Incarceration	\$101.00	per diem	Fort Saskatchewan costs, Alberta Solicitor General
COARSE Court Diversion program	\$4,722.05	per annum	Analysis of PAAFE budget
Alberta Works: Income Support	\$8544.00	per annum	Alberta Human Resources & Employment
Transitional Employment Training	\$7,681.00	per program	Alberta Human Resources & Employment
Crossroads outreach support	\$25.00	per hour	Edmonton City Centre Church Corporation
Elizabeth House (supported housing)	\$39.00	per diem	Edmonton City Centre Church Corporation
WEAC (emergency shelter)	\$39.00	per diem	Edmonton City Centre Church Corporation
Counseling (funded through COARSE)	\$50.00	per hour	PAAFE
AADAC addictions counseling	\$750.00	per annum	AADAC
Child Welfare - costs for child in care	\$28,680.64	per annum	Analysis of data from <u>Child & Family Services, Region 6, 2003-04 Annual Report</u>
Office visit, family physician	\$27.29	per visit	Alberta Medical Association
Institution visit, family physician	\$58.65	per visit	Alberta Medical Association
Emergency room visit, minor other injuries (code 1021)	\$157.00	per visit	<u>Health Costing in Alberta, Alberta Health & Wellness, 2004 Annual Report</u>

*Longer-term projections are increased by 3% per year for inflation

**Approximate cost of policing for prostitution-related offences
Edmonton Police Service 2004**

Description	Total Vice budget (100% of Vice budget)	Attributed to Prostitution (75% of Vice budget)
Policing costs (Vice actual budget)	\$704,517.00	\$528,387.75
Court costs (Vice actual budget)	\$15,299.90	\$11,474.92
Patrol costs (estimate)		\$31,175.47
Total		\$571,038.89

Total number of charges	205
Number of individuals charged	164
Number of individuals charged and do not participate	139
Percent of individuals charged and do not participate	85%
Number of individuals charged who participate in COARSE	25
Percent of individuals charged who participate in COARSE	15%

Total Police costs for COARSE participants per year	\$79,258.16
Police costs per COARSE participant per year	\$3,170.33

Total Police plus Court costs plus Patrol costs for non-participants per year	\$485,382.41
Police, Court & Patrol costs per non-participant per year	\$3,491.95

Notes:

- Police costs for participants: (police costs attributed to prostitution) x 15%
- Police costs for non-participants: (police costs attributed to prostitution + patrol costs + court costs) x 85%
- Participants are assumed to add nothing to the cost of policing once participating

- Assumes that the cost for more than one charge per arrest the same as with one charge
- Some individuals are charged more than once

Case comparison assumptions for two months

	A: COARSE Court Diversion plan participant scenario	B: No COARSE Court Diversion – Non-participant scenario	C: No support scenario
Current situation assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charge(s) for prostitution (CC s. 213, FTA) • Successful participation in COARSE Court Diversion • Individual has the desire to exit street prostitution and to deal with issues of addictions, poverty, abuse, self-sufficiency, family issues etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charge(s) for prostitution (CC s. 213, FTA) • Individual declines COARSE Court Diversion option • Court date for charges is set, individual fails to appear • Individual is picked up on outstanding warrants and jailed for 15 days • Individual pleads guilty and is sentenced to time served 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual has evaded prostitution-related charges • Still has warrants for old charges • No legal support • New charges (failure to appear) are accumulating • This is an individual who is street involved, but is “under the radar” in terms of enforcement or social support networks
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charge(s) withdrawn – no criminal penalty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time served is 15 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No sentencing as yet
Income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receiving Alberta Works IS support benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income derived from prostitution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income derived from prostitution
Education & Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending transitional employment program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No education or literacy programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No education or literacy programs
Social Support Networks & Social Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly outreach home visits (2 hours) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involved with pimp or gang – no other supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involved with pimp or gang – no other supports
Physical Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 days living with family or friends • 30 days living in supported housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No stable housing • 4 nights at shelter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No stable housing • 4 nights at shelter
Personal Health Practices & Coping Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counseling for trauma – 1x/month • AADAC addictions one to one counseling support 3x/week 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active addictions issues – no treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active addictions issues – no treatment
Healthy Child Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two children in care of a family member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One child in care of Child Welfare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One child in care of Child Welfare
Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One visit to family doctor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 medical consultation while in jail • 2 visits to emergency at hospital (bad date, overdose, sick from HIV or Hepatitis) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 visits to emergency at hospital (bad date, overdose, sick from HIV or Hepatitis)

Cost projections for two months

Cost Category	Details	A: COARSE Court Diversion plan participant	B: Non-participant	C: No support
Police costs	Policing Costs	\$528.38	\$581.99	
Criminal Justice	Incarceration costs		\$1,515.00	
COARSE Program	Cost per program participant	\$4,722.05		
Income	Alberta Works - Income Support	\$1,424.00		
Education & Literacy	Attending transitional employment program	\$2,560.33		
Social Support Networks & Social Environments	Outreach support	\$400.00		
Physical Environments	Supported Housing	\$2,340.00		
	Emergency Shelter		\$156.00	\$156.00
Personal Health Practices & Coping Skills	Counseling for trauma	\$100.00		
	AADAC Addictions counseling	\$125.00		
Healthy Child Development	Child Welfare (care/custody of one child)		\$6,038.83	\$6,038.83
Health Services	Office visit, physician	\$27.29		
	Institution visit, physician		\$59.00	
	Emergency room visit, minor other injuries (code 1021)		\$314.00	\$314.00
Total cost per person for two months		\$12,227.05	\$8,664.82	\$6,508.83

Case comparison assumptions for one year

	A: COARSE Court Diversion plan participant scenario	B: No COARSE Court Diversion – Non-participant scenario	C: No support scenario
Current situation assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual has exited street involvement (no new criminal charges) Individual continues to deal with issues of addictions, poverty, abuse, self-sufficiency, family issues etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charge(s) for prostitution (CC s. 213, FTA) Individual declines COARSE Court Diversion option Court date for charges is set, individual fails to appear Individual is picked up on outstanding warrants and jailed for 15 days Individual pleads guilty and is sentenced to time served 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual has evaded prostitution-related charges and has warrants for old charges New charges (failure to appear) are accumulating This is an individual who is street involved, but is “under the radar” in terms of enforcement or social support networks In year two, individual is charged and declines COARSE option
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incarcerated as a result of accumulating charges an average of 60 days per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No sentencing in year one
Income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving Alberta Works Income Support for self 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income derived from prostitution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income derived from prostitution
Education & Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attending transitional employment program in year one 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No education or literacy programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No education or literacy programs
Social Support Networks & Social Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly outreach home visits (2 hours) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involved with pimp or gang – no other supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involved with pimp or gang – no other supports
Physical Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Living in rental accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No stable housing 24 nights per year shelter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No stable housing 24 nights per year at shelter
Personal Health Practices & Coping Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Counseling for trauma – 1x/month AADAC addictions one to one counseling support for two years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active addictions issues – no treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active addictions issues – no treatment
Healthy Child Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has one child living at home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One child in care of Child Welfare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One child in care of Child Welfare
Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care from family doctor four times per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 medical consultation while in jail 12 visits to emergency at hospital (bad date, overdose, sick from HIV or Hepatitis) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 visits to emergency at hospital (bad date, overdose, sick from HIV or Hepatitis)

Cost projections for one year

Cost Category	Details	A: COARSE participant	B: Non-participant scenario	C: No support scenario
Police costs	Policing Costs	\$3,170	\$3,491	
Criminal Justice	Incarceration costs		\$6,060	
COARSE Program	Cost per program participant	\$4,722		
Income	Alberta Works Income Support	\$8,544		
Education & Literacy	Transitional employment program	\$7,681		
Social Support Networks & Social Environments	Outreach support	\$2,600		
Physical Environments	Supported Housing	\$1,170		
	Emergency Shelter		\$936	\$936
Personal Health Practices & Coping Skills	Counseling for trauma	\$600		
	AADAC Addictions counseling	\$750		
Healthy Child Development	Child Welfare (care of child)		\$36,233	\$36,233
Health Services	Office visit, family physician	\$109		
	Institution visit, family physician		\$59	
	Emergency room visit, minor other injuries (code 1021)		\$1,884	\$1,884
Total costs per person for one year		\$29,346	\$48,663	\$39,053

Case comparison assumptions for ten years

	A: COARSE Court Diversion plan participant scenario	B: No COARSE Court Diversion – Non-participant scenario	C: No support scenario
Current situation assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual has exited street involvement (no new criminal charges) Individual continues to deal with issues of addictions, poverty, abuse, self-sufficiency, family issues etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charge(s) for prostitution (CC s. 213, FTA) accumulate annually Individual declines COARSE Court Diversion option Court date for charges is set, individual fails to appear Individual is picked up on outstanding warrants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is an individual who is street involved, but “under the radar” in terms of enforcement or social support networks for the first year In year two, individual is charged, declines COARSE Court Diversion option, court date for charges is set, individual fails to appear Individual is picked up on outstanding warrants
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incarcerated as a result of accumulating charges an average of 60 days per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incarcerated as a result of accumulating charges an average of 60 days per year (starting in year two)
Income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving Alberta Works Income Support for self Obtains part-time employment in year four 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income derived from prostitution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income derived from prostitution
Education & Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only in year one 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No education or literacy programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No education or literacy programs
Social Support Networks & Social Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly outreach home visits (2 hours) continue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involved with pimp or gang – no other supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involved with pimp or gang – no other supports
Physical Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Living in rental accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No stable housing 24 nights per year shelter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No stable housing 24 nights per year at shelter
Personal Health Practices & Coping Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Counseling for trauma – 1x/month for five years AADAC addictions one to one counseling support for two years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active addictions issues – no treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active addictions issues – no treatment
Healthy Child Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has one child living at home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One child in care of Child Welfare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One child in care of Child Welfare
Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care from family doctor four times per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 medical consultation while in jail 12 visits to emergency at hospital (bad date, overdose, sick from HIV or Hepatitis) annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 visits to emergency at hospital (bad date, overdose, sick from HIV or Hepatitis) annually 1 medical consultation while in jail starting in year two

Projected costs for ten years

	Projected costs for ten years													
	Cost Category	Details	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Totals	
COARSE participant	Police costs	Policing Costs	\$3,170										\$3,170	
	Criminal Justice	Incarceration costs											\$0	
	COARSE Program	COARSE	\$4,722										\$4,722	
	Income	AHRE - Alberta works	\$8,544	\$8,800	\$9,064	\$9,336	\$9,616	\$9,905	\$10,202	\$10,508	\$10,823	\$11,148	\$97,947	
	Education & Literacy	Transitional employment program	\$7,681										\$7,681	
	Social Support Networks & Social Environments	Outreach support (2 hours per week)	\$2,600	\$2,678	\$2,758	\$2,841	\$2,926	\$3,014	\$3,105	\$3,198	\$3,294	\$3,392	\$29,806	
	Physical Environments	Supported Housing	\$1,170											\$1,170
		Emergency Shelter												\$0
	Personal Health Practices & Coping Skills	Counseling for trauma (12 sessions)	\$600	\$618	\$637	\$656	\$675	\$696	\$716	\$738	\$760	\$783	\$6,878	
		AADAC Addictions counseling	\$750	\$773										\$1,523
	Healthy Child Development	Child Welfare (care of child)												\$0
	Health Services	Office visit, family physician	\$109	\$112	\$116	\$119	\$123	\$127	\$130	\$134	\$138	\$142	\$1,251	
		Institution visit, family physician											\$0	
Emergency room visit												\$0		
Total costs per COARSE participant scenario			\$29,346	\$12,981	\$12,575	\$12,952	\$13,341	\$13,741	\$14,153	\$14,578	\$15,015	\$15,466	\$154,149	
Non-participant	Police costs	Policing Costs	\$3,491	\$3,596	\$3,704	\$3,815	\$3,929	\$4,047	\$4,168	\$4,293	\$4,422	\$4,555	\$40,020	
	Criminal Justice	Incarceration costs	\$6,060	\$6,242	\$6,429	\$6,622	\$6,821	\$7,025	\$7,236	\$7,453	\$7,677	\$7,907	\$69,471	
	COARSE Program	Cost per program participant											\$0	
	Income	AHRE - Alberta works											\$0	
	Education & Literacy	Transitional employment program											\$0	
	Social Support Networks & Social Environments	Outreach support											\$0	
	Physical Environments	Supported Housing												\$0
		Emergency Shelter	\$936	\$964	\$993	\$1,023	\$1,053	\$1,085	\$1,118	\$1,151	\$1,186	\$1,221	\$10,730	
	Personal Health Practices & Coping Skills	Counseling for trauma												\$0
		AADAC Addictions counseling												\$0
	Healthy Child Development	Child Welfare (care of child)	\$36,233	\$37,320	\$38,440	\$39,593	\$40,781	\$42,004	\$43,264	\$44,562	\$45,899	\$47,276	\$415,371	
	Health Services	Office visit, family physician												\$0
		Institution visit, family physician	\$59	\$60	\$62	\$64	\$66	\$68	\$70	\$72	\$74	\$77	\$672	
Emergency room visit		\$1,884	\$1,941	\$1,999	\$2,059	\$2,120	\$2,184	\$2,250	\$2,317	\$2,387	\$2,458	\$21,598		
Total cost per non-participant scenario			\$48,663	\$50,123	\$51,626	\$53,175	\$54,770	\$56,413	\$58,106	\$59,849	\$61,644	\$63,494	\$557,863	
No support	Police costs	Policing Costs		\$3,596	\$3,704	\$3,815	\$3,929	\$4,047	\$4,169	\$4,294	\$4,423	\$4,555	\$36,532	
	Criminal Justice	Incarceration costs		\$6,242	\$6,429	\$6,622	\$6,821	\$7,025	\$7,236	\$7,453	\$7,677	\$7,907	\$63,413	
	COARSE Program	Cost per program participant											\$0	
	Income	AHRE - Alberta works											\$0	
	Education & Literacy	Transitional employment program											\$0	
	Social Support Networks & Social Environments	Outreach support											\$0	
	Physical Environments	Supported Housing												\$0
		Emergency Shelter	\$936	\$482	\$497	\$511	\$527	\$543	\$559	\$576	\$593	\$611	\$4,897	
	Personal Health Practices & Coping Skills	Counseling for trauma												\$0
		AADAC Addictions counseling												\$0
	Healthy Child Development	Child Welfare (care of child)	\$36,233	\$37,320	\$38,440	\$39,593	\$40,781	\$42,004	\$43,264	\$44,562	\$45,899	\$47,276	\$379,138	
	Health Services	Office visit, family physician												\$0
		Institution visit, family physician		\$60	\$62	\$64	\$66	\$68	\$70	\$72	\$74	\$76	\$610	
Emergency room visit		\$1,884	\$1,941	\$1,999	\$2,059	\$2,120	\$2,184	\$2,250	\$2,317	\$2,387	\$2,458	\$19,714		
Total per non-support scenario			\$39,053	\$49,641	\$51,130	\$52,664	\$54,244	\$55,871	\$57,547	\$59,273	\$61,052	\$62,883	\$543,357	

Summary of SROI findings

Participant point of view

There are indications that Court Diversion itself is an incentive to staying off the streets. Several participants offered their insights:

“I did things (for my plan) as fast as I could, because if I didn’t, I ran the risk of going back out there again. You don’t have options – you do what you have to do to succeed.”

“JoAnn gave me something to look forward to. I proved myself in six weeks. Getting busted was a good thing, if not I’d still be out there.”

“I’ve been working the streets since I was 13 years old. Diversion was my last chance, I knew that if I signed on I couldn’t go back.”

COARSE costs in the initial two-month period

The cost of providing support to a COARSE participant is more than the costs incurred by non-participants, a difference of \$3562 for a two-month period. Similarly, the difference between costs for a COARSE participant and an individual who receives no support is \$5718 in the initial two-month period.

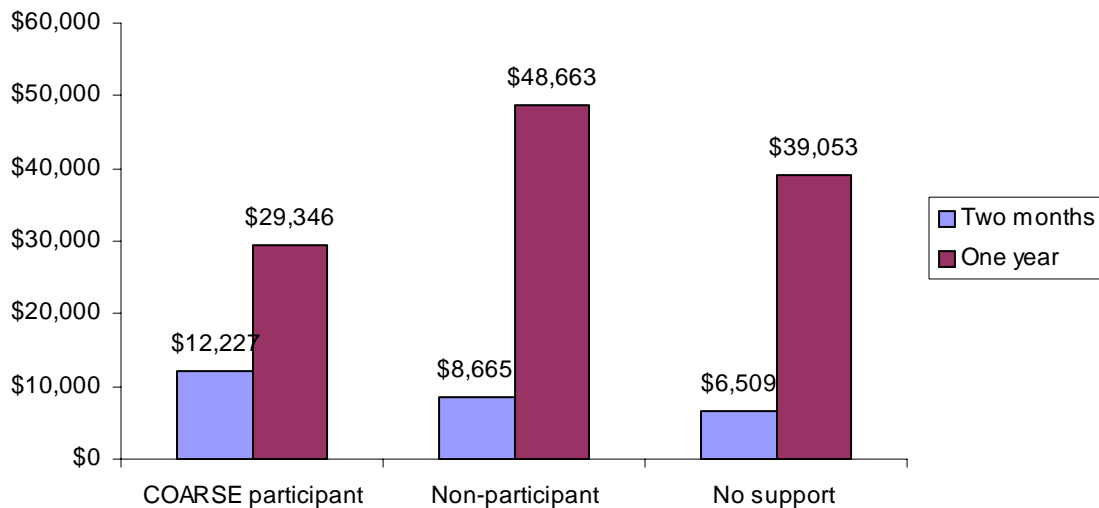


Figure 13. Projected costs per individual for periods of two months and one year

COARSE costs over a one-year period

The proportion of costs for the three scenarios changes dramatically when projected over a one-year period. The cost for COARSE participants is markedly less than costs for non-participants and those in the no-support scenario, as shown in Figure 13. Non-participants incur substantial costs related to policing and incarceration. As described in the assumptions, while the no-support

scenario individuals do not incur costs relative to the criminal justice system, there are immediate costs associated with healthcare, shelter and the care and custody of their children. Apparently, over in a one-year period, it costs much less to provide court diversion and the accompanying supports than it does to incarcerate or to simply do nothing.

COARSE savings over a ten-year period

Over the longer term, Figure 14 indicates that the cost of providing ongoing support to COARSE participants may drop after year two and then remain flat for the next eight years. In contrast, costs for the no-support scenario individual is expected to rise sharply due to the assumption that the individual will eventually be charged and face incarceration by year two. Individuals who are involved in street prostitution, and who are not yet incurring expenses relative to policing, addictions treatment, income support or other social services, use a lot of services in relation to poor health and the care of their children. These otherwise invisible individuals actually cost a lot to the taxpayer and by year two, their costs would be almost equal to the costs incurred by non-participants.

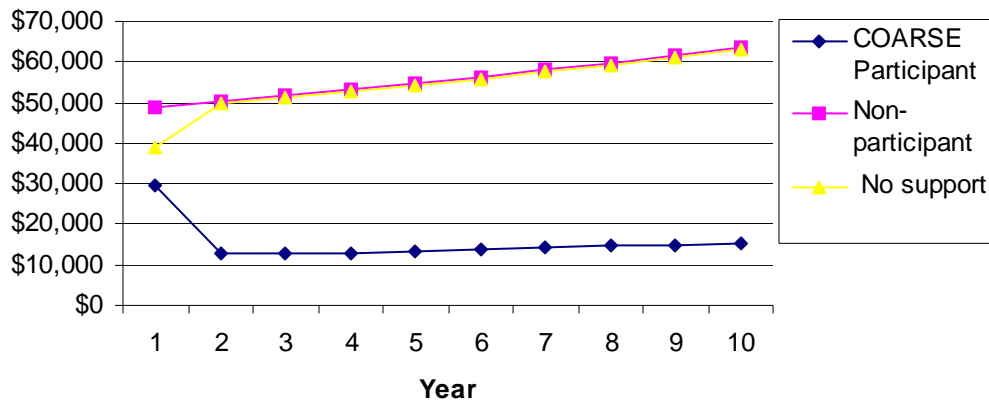


Figure 14. Projected costs over 10 years

Cost-efficiency of court diversion

The findings show that investment in COARSE Court Diversion and the accompanying support services is efficient and bears a substantial return on investment in a relatively short time frame.

Cost savings over ten years

In the long term, the savings compared against the non-participant and the no support scenarios are significant. The average annual savings per year are \$40,371 and \$38,920 respectively. The projected costs savings for each year are shown in Figure 15 and Figure 16.

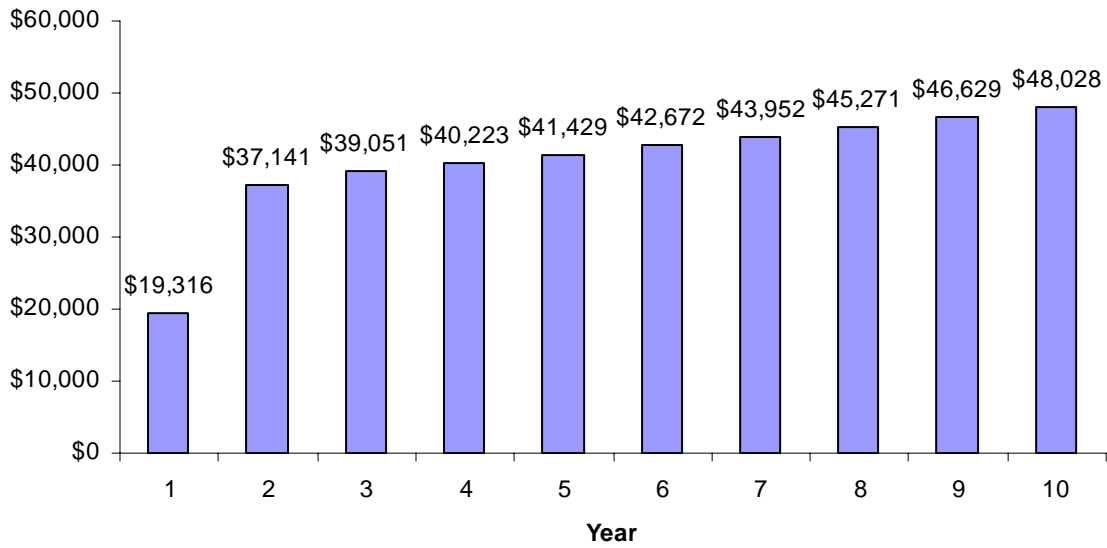


Figure 15. COARSE annual cost savings per person relative to non-participant scenario

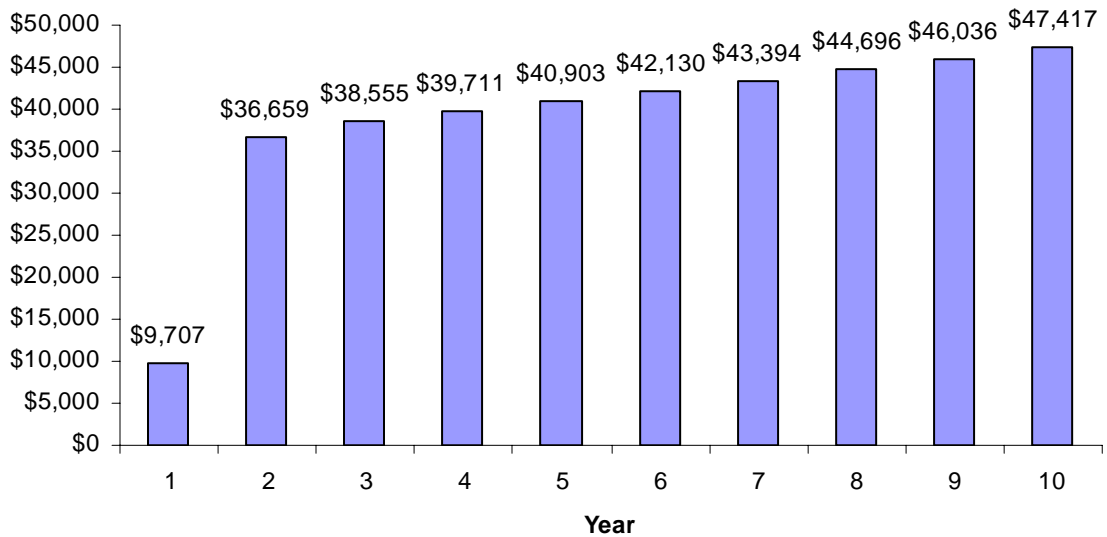


Figure 16. COARSE annual cost savings per person relative to no support scenario

Total costs over ten years

The total costs per person of providing services over ten years shown in Figure 17 are: \$154,149 for COARSE court diversion participants, \$557,863 for non-participants and \$543,357 for those in the no support scenario. COARSE Court Diversion breaks even at approximately three months against the costs of the non-participant and no support scenarios respectively.

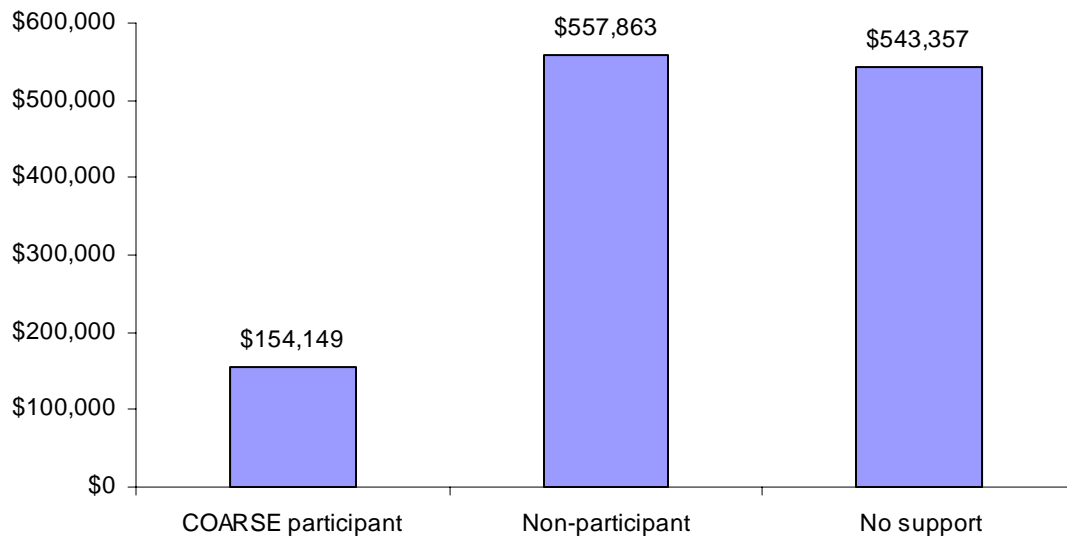


Figure 17. Total costs per person for ten years

Effectiveness of court diversion

There is evidence that COARSE Court Diversion and the provision of resources and supports is effective in terms of helping participants to stay off the streets.

Recidivism

In the strictest sense, the rate of recidivism, defined as those who re-offended and accumulated new prostitution-related charge(s), is 6% (one person). This person eventually repeated her Court Diversion plan (which included a drug abuse treatment program) and is still off the streets.

	0-6 months		6 months -1 year	
	n=17	percent	n=17	percent
Off the streets	12	70.6%	12	70.6%
Re-offended, charged again	1	5.9%	0	0%
Returned to prostitution, not charged	4	23.5%	2	11.8%
Repeated diversion plan	0	0%	1	5.9%
Repeated drug treatment program	0	0%	2	11.8%

However, two participants disclosed that they experienced a drug relapse and went back to the street, each for a period of less than three weeks. Both of these individuals repeated a drug treatment program (which they initiated independently), adding 30 and 65 days of treatment to the cost of COARSE for year one. They are both still off the streets.

At present, two former participants are active in street prostitution, but have not been charged. Interestingly, these individuals (12%) fit the description of the no support scenario used in this study: for the time being, they are “under the radar” in terms of policing and other social service resources.

Actual savings for 2004

A total of 164 individuals were charged with prostitution-related offenses in 2004. Every person charged was offered the COARSE Court Diversion option. The total costs are calculated in the table below:

	COARSE participants	Non-participants
Number of individuals	25	139
Less: 6% recidivism of COARSE participants (rounded)	23	
Annual cost per individual	\$29,346	\$48,663
Sub-total	\$674,958	\$6,764,157
Plus: corrected cost of recidivism	\$97,326	n/a
Total cost	\$772,284	\$6,764,157

Actual social return on investment

The total cost for non-participants charged in 2004 is expected to be a staggering \$6,764,157. The total cost for COARSE participants was \$772,284. However, if the same 25 individuals had not participated in COARSE, the costs to the system would have been \$1,235,750, as calculated below:

Number of individuals	25
Annual cost per individual	\$48,663
Total cost	\$1,216,575

When the total actual cost for COARSE participants is subtracted from the expected cost had they not participated, the total savings realized by COARSE court diversion program in 2004 is \$444,291. This represents a social return on investment for a single year (\$1,216,575 divided by \$772,284) of 157%.

Part C: Policy Implications

Advocacy & crisis intervention

Nine participants asked the researcher for information about other resources during the interviews. These requests included: finding an advocate to help with an Income Support (IS) appeal, finding a computer for an individual going to school, obtaining legal aid for a child custody matter, transportation, getting funding for counseling (6 requests), getting a damage deposit, and, finding donated furniture clothing and food hampers. These individuals were referred to knowledgeable resource people. One person stated:

“I thought that when the two-month plan was up that I couldn’t get more resources”

Focus on the vulnerable

Advocacy is an important service for individuals who are struggling or vulnerable. A case in point: The individual who asked for help with her IS appeal was unable to locate an advocate in time for her appeal hearing. She had been charged with fraud because she failed to claim her common-law spouse on her IS claim. Although this act exhibited poor judgment on her part, the overriding issue in her life was the recent death of her baby. She was suffering from grief and depression, and was beginning to use drugs again. She lost the appeal, her housing and her income, and she returned to the streets.

“These resources are really letting me down. We need the resources when summertime comes. I can’t resist the money because I need the money. Welfare won’t give me money, so where am I supposed to live? I can’t stay here because I don’t fit in. I don’t give a [expletive] anymore, I’ll do what I know best. I have to do something to survive.”

Recall that there was a direct correlation between relapses in drug and alcohol abuse and relapses in street prostitution as discussed on page 28. Participants have demonstrated that they want help with relapses. These situations usually require urgent attention and response. Other issues likely to emerge for participants post-plan are poverty, pregnancy, child and family issues, housing and income support. These too would benefit from proactive assistance, before the situation turns into a crisis.

Supportive, non-judgmental supports are valued

As demonstrated by the number of requests for resource information, not every participant has the benefit of a long-term resource support. A central theme that emerged in interviews with participants was the value of supportive, non-judgmental support on an ongoing basis:

“Them (Crossroads) being there, supporting me, that makes me feel like there’s help out there for me instead of going out to use.”

“PAAFE has been the most helpful – they’re a good support for me just to have someone to talk to”

“After I hooked up with Gaye [Catholic Social Services], she got me in here [affordable housing], got me furniture, helped me to get on assistance. Without her being around I’d probably still be in WEAC going nuts.”

“JoAnn and Gail were most helpful – they helped me out with finances. It really helps to have people with are there supporting you. They always have good things to say and there were no issues of judgment. They are informative about options, information, resources...”

“All of these programs are important, but JoAnn and CSS got the ball rolling to get me all of these supports”

“Shauna and Veronica at Kindred House have been a great support – in person and on the phone”

Participants receive proactive case management throughout their two-month plan. One of the objectives of the plan is to connect participants with longer-term resources. Poverty will likely be a constant issue for most past participants and as life circumstances change, new resources may be needed. Although many former participants maintain informal contact with the Coordinator after the plan is completed, COARSE does not have the resources to offer ongoing advocacy and referral for longer than the two-month plan period.

Recommendation: Advocate for a community resource that can provide proactive advocacy and referral services in response to crises and changing life circumstances on a long-term basis.

Housing

Another issue that arose during the interviews and observed in the data was the scarcity of housing. Recall that many participants were effectively homeless at the commencement of their two-month plan (Figure 3. Housing at intake) and required immediate access to transitional supported housing for the short-term. The reason that many participants were “couch-surfing”, related to having to wait until a transitional supported bed became available.

“Stability – affordable housing at the beginning – that’s the most important thing -and a way to pay for it.”

Participants who were in independent living situations were all asked if they were in subsidized housing. Although three participants were living in rental housing that charged rent below average market rates, no one was receiving any kind of subsidy. Further, only one person interviewed seemed to know about the existence of subsidized housing. (This is another example of how ongoing advocacy and referral services could be helpful.) Since income levels are likely to

remain below the poverty line due to low education levels and the lack of employment preparedness, housing subsidies would make a huge difference to making ends meet.

Recommendation: Advocate for more transitional, supported housing and for greater access to affordable long-term housing.

Transportation

Given that all participants are living on extremely tight budgets, public transportation is not affordable. Some of the outreach programs help participants with transportation to important appointments.

“The Firsts Steps program - getting to the doctor has been a big help.”

“Crossroads helps me lots, she drives me all over.” [for appointments]

Others who are not receiving outreach supports and especially those living in rural areas have no options:

“It’s really discouraging because I don’t have the transportation I need for me and my baby.”

Once again, poverty is at the root of not having access to public transportation.

Recommendation: Advocate for transportation resources for participants.

Addiction to the street

While addictions to drugs and alcohol are central issues for most participants, what is not widely known is that street prostitution itself is also addictive.

“AADAC helped me to understand my addiction [to drugs], but giving up the streets was the biggest thing. Standing out there is hard on you emotionally, physically, worrying about if you’re the next victim, getting killed. Knowing that you can’t go out is a big incentive. I’ve been off now for 4 months – I’ve never been off even for a month before, and I’ve been out there for 16 years.”

For one participant, the addiction to street prostitution was not connected with a drug or alcohol addiction, and a resource to help with recovery was not available.

“The hard part is that when you’re first coming off the street it’s hard to be poor. Five minutes of work [on the street] is as much as I make in 2 weeks at my job. There’s no place [to go] for a person who works the street and doesn’t have [drug] addictions issues”

Recommendation: Explore ways to provide addiction treatment based on a street prostitution addiction paradigm.

Appendix

I: The Prostitution Awareness and Action Foundation of Edmonton (PAAFE)

The Prostitution Awareness and Action Foundation of Edmonton is a collaboration of community-based individuals and groups working towards long-term solutions to the complex issues central to prostitution. Established in 1997, PAAFE facilitates four major initiatives:

The Prostitution Offender Program

(“john school”), a community diversion program for first time offenders charged with soliciting for the purposes of prostitution (S. 213 CC)

The Supports Program

The majority of the funds generated through the Prostitution Offender Program are used to directly benefit individuals in transition. Private donors, unions, foundations also contribute to these programs. These support programs include helping address basic needs caused by poverty, paying for counseling and offering bursaries to help people achieve their educational goals.

Public Awareness, Education and Community Initiatives

Print materials, audio-visuals, media work, displays and special events, such as an annual Memorial to remember those who have lost their lives through involvement in street prostitution.

Creating Options Aimed at Reducing Sexual Exploitation (COARSE)

This Program was initially funded through the federal Voluntary Sector Initiative via the Department of Justice. The project includes a court diversion program, a variety of peer and community support initiatives, and increases the ability of the community and government sectors to work together to create positive change. The continuing phases of this program continues with the support of government funders, private donors, church groups and foundations.

Breaking Down Barriers

This participatory research initiative funded through the Status of Women Canada engages women in research related to the barriers they encounter through enmeshment in the criminal justice system, limited access to safe and affordable housing and societal barriers caused by stigma and stereotypes.

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II: COARSE interview outline

Thank you for meeting with me. You already know about COARSE court diversion because you're working on a plan to deal with your prostitution-related charges with JoAnn.

We are doing a study about the resources that people use when they participate in COARSE. We want to try to understand what makes a difference to people in the program. My job is to talk with about 25 people involved in COARSE over the next year. Then I will write a report about which community programs and resources that people used, and compare the cost of doing the COARSE program to not doing the COARSE program.

We're meeting today because I want to find out what you are doing in your plan, and to find out about any other resources that you are using. JoAnn already told me a bit about the resources that you are using for your plan.

If you decide to do this, we won't use your name anywhere in this report. The idea is to figure out what services you got and how they helped or not.

Do you have any questions? Before we go on, do you want to do this?

Is it okay if I ask you about your life and what you are doing?

(Show/tell the information provided by JoAnn)

Does this look right to you? Is this information correct?

*Are there other community programs or resources that you're using apart from what we have here?

(Use the list from the client referral form as a jumping off point for listing the resources)

Describe the list to the person.

How often/how much did you use this service?

Does this sound right to you? Is this correct?

Is there anything else we should add?

Lastly:

*Which branch of your tree is most helpful or important to you?

Do you have any other questions about anything that we have talked about today?

I want to talk to you in three months and again in six months to ask you if there are any other resources that you use in the coming year. I will add that information to your list and use it to calculate the cost of service.

Each time you meet with me, you will get a \$25.00 gift certificate to thank you for your time. You can also have a copy of the final report when it's finished.

How can I keep in touch with you?

III: COARSE client follow-up & referral list

Client # _____ Submitting Agency: _____

Report period start date: _____ end date: _____

Type of program involvement (check whichever apply):

- ___ outreach _____ (approx. number of hours)
- ___ housing _____ (number of days)
- ___ programming _____ (number of days)
- ___ one to one _____ (number of hours)
- ___ other _____ (specify involvement and time)

Referrals (check whichever apply)

- ___ AADAC (specify which program) _____
- ___ other addictions program (please specify) _____
- ___ DECSA Transitions II
- ___ Other DECSA programs
- ___ CSS (please check which) Outreach ___; Safe Passages ___; 1st

Steps _____

- ___ Crossroads Outreach staff members
- ___ Native Counseling Services programs
- ___ Housing (please specify which) _____
- ___ Pastoral Counseling Group
- ___ other counseling
- ___ PAAFE support groups (please specify) _____
- ___ Well Communities Well Families
- ___ medical referral
- ___ mental health referral
- ___ DRES assessment referral
- ___ parenting courses
- ___ basic needs referrals (food, clothing, I.D.)
- ___ educational programs
- ___ work readiness courses
- ___ other (please specify) _____
- ___ other (please specify) _____

IV: Other participant demographics

Age

	Participants (n=17)
Range of ages	20 – 61 years
Average age	32.2 years old

Ethnicity

	Participants	
	(n=17)	Percent
Caucasian	8	47.1%
Aboriginal: Treaty	4	23.5%
Aboriginal: Metis	2	11.8%
Other/Unidentified	3	17.6%

Age of entry into prostitution

The participants' age of entry into prostitution ranges widely from 6 years to 61 years of age. Although the average age of entry was 22.9 years old, most individuals (52.9%) started before the age of 18 years as shown in Figure 18.

One participant considered her age of entry to be 6 years of age, as that marked her first incidence of sexual abuse by an adult. She reports that she was given money by the perpetrator to secure her silence. The abuse continued and she began working the streets not long afterward.

In contrast, the eldest participant was 61 years of age, and was an absolute newcomer to street prostitution. Her reason for working the street was extreme poverty. Neither she nor her spouse was able to work due to chronic age-related illness and they were not eligible for supplemental income or medical benefits.

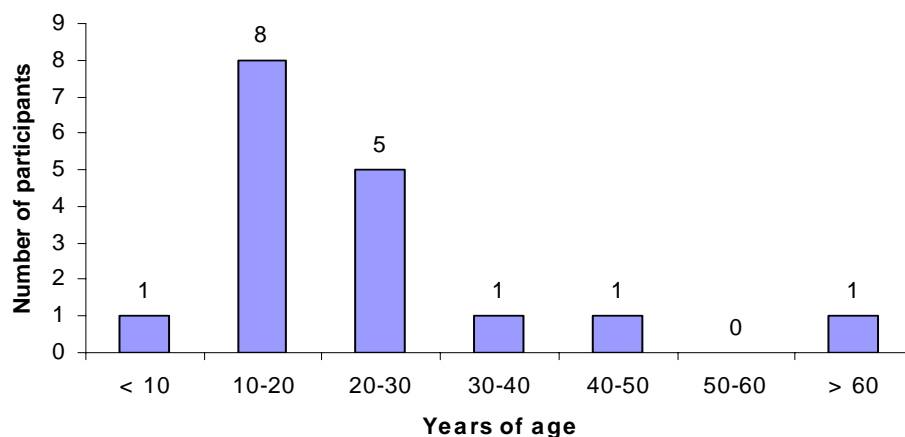


Figure 18. Age of entry into prostitution

Length of time involved in prostitution

Participants reported the length of time they had involvement in prostitution at intake. This ranged from less than one year to 30 years of prior involvement. The average length of time involved in prostitution was 9.3 years.

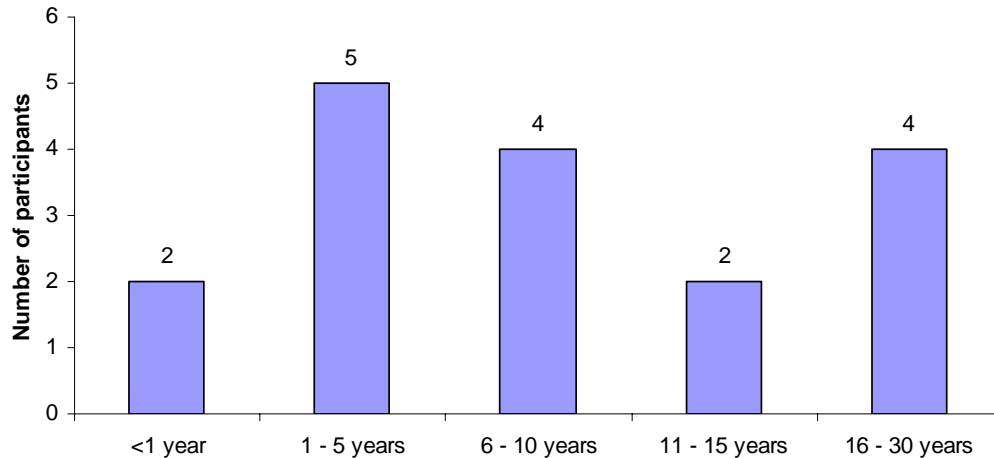


Figure 19. Length of time involved in prostitution

Pimp involvement

Seven participants (41%) were involved with a pimp versus ten participants (59%) who had no pimp involvement.

Reasons for participating

Just under half of participants said that they chose to participate in COARSE because they want to quit the streets (Figure 20). As noted previously, some participants had already been off the streets prior to participating in COARSE, and became involved in order to avoid going to jail or to clear their criminal record.

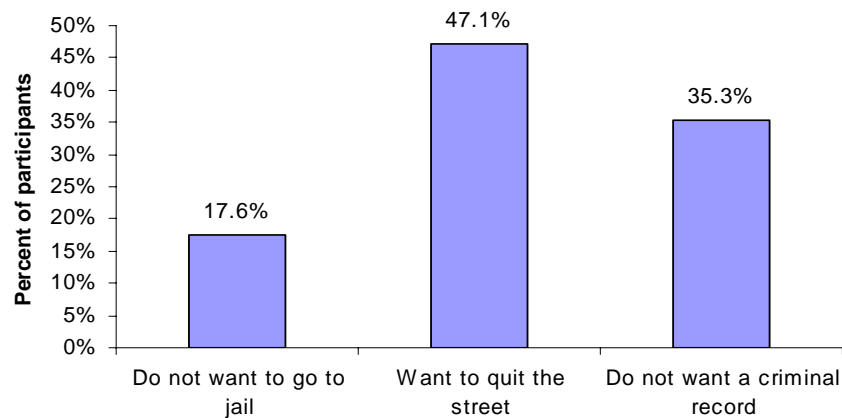


Figure 20. Why participate in COARSE?