

————— **Research Report** —————

**The “In Search of Your Warrior”
Program for Aboriginal Offenders:
A Preliminary Evaluation**

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**The “In Search of Your Warrior” Program for Aboriginal Offenders:
A Preliminary Evaluation**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This project examined the “In Search of Your Warrior” (ISOYW) program, an intervention developed for federally-incarcerated, male Aboriginal offenders with a history of violence. The program blends aspects of traditional Aboriginal spirituality with western approaches to treatment. At the time of this study, the program was being delivered by trained facilitators in the following federal correctional facilities: William Head Institution (British Columbia), Bowden Institution (Alberta), Pê Sâkâstêw Centre (Alberta), Stan Daniels Healing Centre (Alberta), Saskatchewan Penitentiary (Saskatchewan), Stony Mountain Institution (Manitoba), and La Macaza Institution (Quebec).

At the time of data collection for this study (February 2003), 143 offenders had completed the ISOYW program. The research involved an examination of how the ISOYW program operates, an outcome evaluation of offenders who completed the program (compared to a matched comparison group of offenders serving time in federal correctional facilities who did not participate in the program), and a discussion of areas for potential improvement. This involved an examination of offender files, interviews with 46 program participants, interviews with 17 program facilitators, and interviews with 20 other key informants (including assistant wardens, psychologists, Native liaison officers, and parole officers).

Program success

Findings from interviews with program participants, facilitators, Elders and other key respondents demonstrate a high level of satisfaction with the ISOYW program. It is clear that all parties felt the program was contributing to positive changes in the lives of the participants. Respondents relayed that the ISOYW program addressed key criminogenic need areas, and could help improve the behaviour of offenders in the institution and upon release. Respondents also suggested that the ceremonies and spiritual content were crucial to successful programming.

In terms of outcome, several positive changes were observed for those who successfully completed the ISOYW program. After programming, participants demonstrated lower need for intervention targeting personal distress, family issues, substance abuse, community functioning, employment, social interactions and pro-criminal attitudes. Participants also were rated as having greater potential for successful reintegration post-treatment. These findings suggest that the program had an impact on reducing offenders’ need for correctional programming and improving their potential for successful release into the community. Accordingly, a large proportion of participants were successful in the community upon release. Of those released, over two thirds were not re-admitted to a federal institution within a one-year follow-up. Furthermore, of those who returned for a new offence, significantly smaller proportions of ISOYW participants were re-admitted for a new violent offence, relative to the comparison group (7% versus 57%). This may indicate that the program had an

influence on the participants' propensity to recidivate in a violent manner, although more research is required to confirm this.

Although the pre/post outcome results for ISOYW participants show promising results, the post-program ratings and general re-admission rates of ISOYW participants were not significantly different from the comparison group. Further research is required to ascertain why this finding has occurred.

Recommendations for improving the program

Based on a review of program material, interviews with various respondents, and analysis of the effectiveness of the program, the following are suggestions for improving ISOYW:

- It would be useful to further develop the objectives of the ISOYW program, with an emphasis on designing measurable objectives.
- The program manual should be revised to make it more user-friendly. Sessional material should provide facilitators with more information on the purpose of each session, objectives, description and content.
- The training process should be comprehensively reviewed, and adapted to meet the needs of facilitators.
- It may be beneficial to implement a comprehensive screening process for the selection of program facilitators.
- Guidelines which clearly outline the criteria for inclusion and exclusion of program participants should be developed.
- Standardize screening (including the use of assessment measures) and selection procedures in order to reduce subjectivity in identifying candidates.
- Given the intent and design of the program, it is important to ensure that only offenders with a violent history be screened into the ISOYW program.
- The variability of Elder availability and the services they provide across sites should be minimized.
- Stronger consideration needs to be given to the development of maintenance programs in the institutions and in the community upon release to ensure that the benefits gained from treatment are maintained over time. In addition, more thought needs to be given to how Elders can be used to support the ISOYW program after release. Also, a directory of support services that offenders can access in their area at the time of release would be beneficial.
- Formalized pre-post testing measures should be developed. The development of such measures could tap into constructs that are not addressed by standard correctional assessments (e.g., program-specific objectives)¹.

¹ Native Counselling Services of Alberta (NCSA) have developed pre- and post-test measures for participants. However, at the time of writing of this report, no pre/post-test analyses had been published.

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INTRODUCTION

This project examined the “In Search of Your Warrior” (ISOYW) program, a high-intensity violence prevention program for federal male Aboriginal offenders, currently being delivered across Canada at sites in the Quebec, Prairie and Pacific regions of the Correctional Service of Canada. This study involved: a process examination of how the ISOYW program operates; an examination of offenders who have participated in the program (in comparison to matched non-participants); interviews with program participants; interviews with program facilitators; and interviews with other key informants (including staff at institutions that offered the program).

Aboriginal Offenders

Many reports have illustrated that Aboriginal persons are over-represented throughout the whole criminal justice system, from the point of arrest through to incarceration (e.g., Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996; Solicitor General of Canada, 1988; Trevethan, Tremblay & Carter, 2000). For instance, while Aboriginal people account for approximately 3% of Canada's population (Statistics Canada, 2001), Aboriginal offenders account for approximately 18% of the population incarcerated in federal correctional facilities (Trevethan, Moore & Rastin, 2002). According to most reports, the problem of Aboriginal over-representation in the correctional system is getting worse (Boe, 2002; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996; Trevethan et al., 2000).

This over-representation has become a major concern for the federal government. For instance, the January 2001 Speech from the Throne discussed the priority of addressing issues facing Aboriginal people by noting that, “Canada must take the measures needed to significantly reduce the percentage of Aboriginal people entering the criminal justice system, so that within a generation it is no higher than the Canadian average” (Government of Canada, 2001).

Research has also demonstrated that Aboriginal offenders are more likely to be incarcerated for violent offences than non-Aboriginal offenders (Motiuk & Nafekh, 2000; Trevethan et al., 2000; Trevethan et al., 2002). Therefore, in addition to the need to address the over-representation of Aboriginal offenders in the criminal justice system, there is a specific need for programming that focuses on violence prevention.

Aboriginal-Specific Programs

Research has found that many Aboriginal offenders were raised without Aboriginal language, culture, teachings or ceremonies (Ellerby & MacPherson, 2002; Heckbert & Turkington, 2001; Johnston, 1997; Trevethan, Auger, Moore, MacDonald & Sinclair, 2001). However, these core aspects of Aboriginal identity appear critical to the healing process. It is important to provide Aboriginal offenders with the opportunity to participate in programs that introduce Aboriginal culture and spirituality or allow them to continue to develop their understanding. Further, a cultural approach may help Aboriginal offenders acquire the skills to manage their risk to re-offend. According to Heckbert and Turkington (2001), Aboriginal spirituality and cultural activities are major factors in successful reintegration.

Further, a few studies suggest that programs for Aboriginal offenders may be more effective if run by Aboriginal facilitators. For instance, Johnston (1997) found that Aboriginal offenders said they are more trusting and comfortable with Aboriginal facilitators, especially spiritual leaders and Elders. Similarly, Mals, Howell, Day and Hall (1999) found that to enhance the effectiveness of correctional programs and treatment in Australia, it is important to have Aboriginal facilitators in place.

In addition, some studies have suggested that Aboriginal-specific programming is more effective for Aboriginal offenders than more conventional correctional programs. For instance, Weekes and Millson (1994) reported that an Aboriginal pre-treatment substance abuse program produced significant improvement in knowledge and attitudes regarding substance abuse, general problem solving, and recognition of Aboriginal

cultural factors. Ellerby and MacPherson (2002) found that, prior to the introduction of a blended traditional healing/contemporary treatment program for Aboriginal sexual offenders, treatment completion rates were lower for Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal offenders. Once culturally relevant and appropriate programming became available, however, this difference disappeared. Sioui and Thibault (2001) noted that certain programs are more effective in reducing recidivism if they are Aboriginal-specific. Finally, Trevethan, Moore and Naqitarvik (2004) found that the Tupiq program² has shown some success in terms of program completion among participants as well as some indicators of attitude and behaviour.

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) is moving towards greater utilization of Aboriginal-specific programs. Sections 79-84 of the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act (CCRA)* (Department of Justice Canada, 1992) mandate CSC to provide Aboriginal-specific programs and services to Aboriginal offenders. Furthermore, Commissioner's Directive 702 on Aboriginal programming recognizes that "differences in cultural approaches to learning require different techniques" and stipulates the requirement for regions to provide Aboriginal offenders with culturally-specific programs, activities and Elder services (Correctional Service of Canada, 1995).

The development of a national healing program for Aboriginal offenders in federal facilities is underway (Green, 2002). Furthermore, healing lodges operated under Section 81 of the *CCRA* have been established in a number of provinces (Trevethan, Crutcher & Rastin, 2002). Section 81 of the *CCRA* allows Aboriginal communities to provide correctional services. Healing lodges are intended to aid Aboriginal offenders in their successful reintegration by using traditional healing methods, specifically holistic and culturally-appropriate programming.

In 1999, 13 Aboriginal-specific programs were identified for federal offenders (Epprecht, 2000). These programs addressed a wide range of issues, including substance abuse,

² A sex offender treatment program designed specifically for federally incarcerated Inuit offenders. This program is delivered at Fenbrook Institution.

sex offender programming, and anger management. Since that time, other Aboriginal-specific programs have been developed and implemented. For instance, there are currently a few Aboriginal sex offender programs operating in Canada, utilizing unique mandates and client group characteristics that reflect unique program histories and approaches (Hylton, 2003). The Clearwater program is one of the oldest and most well-established sex offender treatment programs within the CSC system. While the program was not designed specifically for Aboriginal sex offenders, at any given time, a majority of the participants are usually Aboriginal. The Native Clan Organization of Manitoba delivers a blended traditional healing/contemporary treatment program for Aboriginal sexual offenders. The Mamisaq Qamutiik program offered at the Baffin Correctional Centre (BCC) in Iqaluit is a multi-faceted intervention consisting of a number of separate program modules that address issues related to violence, grief and loss, alcohol and substance abuse, and sex offending. Finally, Fenbrook medium-security institution delivers an Inuit-specific sex offender program. The “Tupiq” program follows universally-accepted relapse prevention theory but also integrates Inuit culture by utilizing Inuit delivery staff, healing therapy and cultural references (Hamilton, 2002).

Due to their over-representation within the federal correctional system, in particular in relation to violent offending, CSC provides programs designed specifically for Aboriginal offenders. The “In Search of Your Warrior” program is one such program, developed in order to address the needs of violent Aboriginal offenders by delivering a program that incorporates aspects of Aboriginal culture.

In Search of Your Warrior Program

The “In Search of your Warrior” (ISOYW) program is a “high-intensity” violence prevention program, designed by the Native Counselling Services of Alberta (NCSA), to meet the needs of male Aboriginal offenders who have a history of violent behaviour (Laboucane-Benson, 2002). As mentioned, the program blends aspects of traditional Aboriginal spirituality with western approaches to treatment.

At the time of this study, the program was being delivered by trained facilitators in a number of federal correctional facilities: William Head Institution (British Columbia), Bowden Institution (Alberta), Pê Sâkâstêw Centre (Alberta), Stan Daniels Healing Centre (Alberta), Saskatchewan Penitentiary (Saskatchewan), Stony Mountain Institution (Manitoba), and La Macaza Institution (Quebec).

The ISOYW program includes information, therapeutic sessions and suggested resources for facilitators to use over a 6 to 13 week period to help individuals break their cycle of violence. The foundation for this program is the culture, teachings and ceremonies of Aboriginal people. With the assistance of an Aboriginal Elder, the appropriate ceremonies and teachings for each particular group of participants are incorporated into the delivery of the program and form the basis for the therapeutic interventions that take place. A great deal of emphasis is placed on self-awareness and developing the cognitive skills necessary to identify patterns of behaviour and strategies to better manage aggression. The NCSA developed pre- and post-tests for the ISOYW program as a means of measuring the success of the individual, in a way that was culturally appropriate and specific to the program (LaBoucane-Benson, 2002). However, at the time of this current study, analyses of pre/post-tests had not been published.

To date, two formal reviews of the ISOYW have been completed. The first review was a critical analysis of the program's content conducted by Couture (1999). Based on a review of the program materials, Couture found that the ISOYW program had a great deal of potential and emphasized the importance of continued Elder contact and ceremonies. However, Couture felt that several areas needed to be addressed in order to improve the program. He indicated that the program manual required restructuring. Furthermore, he felt that the curriculum needed to be revised and the sessions clearly linked to objectives. Other recommendations were made for pre-post testing, staff selection and training.

In the second review, Mason, Sterling, McDonald and Pentland (2001) conducted interviews with program participants and institutional staff. Their review credited the program for the positive changes made by participants. However, several areas of improvement were identified, and recommendations for modifying the program were made in the areas of program delivery, environment, staffing and quality assurance. Some of the major recommendations included pre-screening participants for readiness to participate in the program, developing a maintenance component, assigning Elders to the program on a full-time basis, and creating a more rigorous screening process for facilitators.

While these reviews provided a starting point for examining the ISOYW program, an empirically-based evaluation was clearly necessary.

Present Study

It appears that a program such as “In Search of Your Warrior”, designed specifically to meet the needs of violent Aboriginal offenders, is useful. However, the overall effectiveness of the program has not yet been examined. Therefore, the present study was conducted to assess the effectiveness of the ISOYW program. The major research questions for this study include:

1. What is the *In Search of Your Warrior* program?
2. What are the characteristics of offenders who have participated in the ISOYW program?
3. How effective is the ISOYW program?
4. How can the ISOYW program be improved?

This information should help CSC to better understand whether the ISOYW program is working as it is intended and can provide information on how to improve the program and/or adapt it for use elsewhere.

METHOD

In order to address the research questions, a number of data sources were utilized, including:

- Program documentation
- Offender files
- Interviews with program participants, program facilitators, program Elders, and other key informants

Program Documentation

A comprehensive examination of program documentation was undertaken. This included the program manual, qualitative analyses conducted on the ISOYW program, and any other available documentation. In addition, the researchers met with the Executive Director and the Director of Research and Evaluation of Native Counselling Services of Alberta to discuss the program goals, origins and development of the program. Finally, the researchers contacted program facilitators to get a better understanding of how the program was operating at different sites.

Offender Files

Case files of the participants of the ISOYW program were reviewed, using CSC's Offender Management System (OMS). As of February 13, 2003, 218 offenders had enrolled in the ISOYW program³. Information on the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants, as well as their current offence, criminal history, static and dynamic factors, and program participation was examined. This information was primarily gathered through the Offender Intake Assessment (OIA; Motiuk, 1997) process. CSC's OIA process collects and stores information on each federal offender's criminal and mental health background, social situation and education, factors relevant to determining criminal risk (such as number and variety of youth and adult convictions),

and factors relevant to identifying offender dynamic needs (such as employment history, family background, criminal associations, addictions and attitudes). Although the results help determine institutional placement and correctional plans, the data are used here to provide a comprehensive profile of program participants. A program database was utilized to examine program participation.

It was thought that some differences may appear between those who participated in camp-style programs (Stan Daniels Healing Centre; William Head Institution) and those who participated in traditional institutional programs. Therefore, in addition to describing the characteristics of ISOYW participants in general, differences between those who participated in camp-like versus institutional programs were examined.

Although there were 218 offenders identified in OMS who had enrolled in the program as of February 2003, only those who successfully completed the program were matched with a comparison offender. Further, some offenders were excluded due to incomplete data (e.g., if their admission date was prior to January 1995 their OMS intake information used for analysis and matching was limited). This resulted in 136 offenders who had successfully completed the ISOYW program and had current sentence start dates after January 1995. These offenders were followed after program completion.

In order to examine whether the changes observed in the ISOYW participants were different from those found in non-participants, a matched comparison group was developed. To develop a comparison group, file data were pulled from offender records and compared to data from ISOYW participants. Offenders in the comparison group had never participated in the ISOYW program and had not received high-intensity violence prevention programming. Furthermore, the comparison group was matched on gender (all male), race (Aboriginal versus non-Aboriginal), violent offence (either current or past), age of admission, year of admission, aggregate sentence and the assessed risk to re-offend. Analyses were performed to determine the extent to which the

³ “Enrolled” includes those who completed the program, early departures from the program and those assigned to the program, regardless of whether they actually completed the program.

comparison group was similar to the ISOYW group. Groups had similar socio-demographic, criminal history, current offence and custody rating profiles. In addition, the ISOYW and comparison group had similar ratings on dynamic need, overall risk, reintegration potential and motivation for intervention. However, it is noteworthy to mention that two significant differences emerged between the groups. A significantly larger proportion of ISOYW participants were married or in common-law relationships (48% versus 35%) and were rated with “some” or “considerable” need in the area of substance abuse (95% versus 86%) at admission.

Interviews

Interviews were conducted with program participants, program facilitators, Elders, and key informants. Respondents were individually interviewed at six sites: William Head Institution (British Columbia), Bowden Institution (Alberta), Pê Sâkâstêw Centre (Alberta), Stan Daniels Healing Centre (Alberta), Saskatchewan Penitentiary (Saskatchewan), and La Macaza Institution (Quebec). In addition to the six sites visited, individuals from three other sites participated in telephone interviews. These included: Stony Mountain Institution (Manitoba), Native Counselling Services of Alberta and Regional Headquarters - Prairies.

Interviews with program participants

Interviews with program participants provided more extensive information than was available through offender case files. In particular, interviews provided some personal information not available in case files, and allowed for in-depth discussions about the participants' perceptions of the program.

Interview questions were designed to examine five key areas: background information on the offender; childhood experiences; involvement in Aboriginal culture; program selection and process; and program effectiveness. The structured interviews included both closed and open-ended questions. Respondents were interviewed individually.

The sample for this component of the study consisted of 46 offenders who had participated in the ISOYW program. The interview took from one to two hours to complete, depending on the amount of information provided.

Interviews with program facilitators

A structured interview was also developed for facilitators of the ISOYW program. Interview questions examined four key areas: program description; program effectiveness; application of the program; and facilitator background and experience. The structured interviews included both closed and open-ended questions. In total, 17 program facilitators were interviewed. In addition, interviews were conducted with five Elders who were involved in the program.

Interviews with other key informants

In addition to interviews with program participants and program facilitators, interviews were conducted with other key informants, namely 20 correctional staff (including assistant wardens, psychologists, Native liaison officers, parole officers, etc). Questions focused on the effectiveness of the ISOYW program.

Process

The project began with a number of meetings with an advisory group, consisting of representatives from CSC (e.g., Research, Aboriginal Initiatives, Reintegration Programs, Regional Headquarters), other federal departments, and Native Counselling Services of Alberta. Following the initial meetings, a set of research questions and interview protocols were prepared and reviewed. Program documentation and offender files were reviewed, and a comparison group was developed.

Interviews were then conducted with program facilitators, program Elders, key informants and offenders who had participated in the program.

The information from the interviews was entered into a database. Open-ended questions were examined and, where appropriate, themes were developed and coded for analysis. Once a dataset was prepared, analyses were conducted to address the research questions.

FINDINGS

The purpose of this project was to examine the “In Search of Your Warrior” (ISOYW) program. This includes providing a description of the program and facilitators, an examination of the characteristics of participants, an examination of the effectiveness of the program to date and a review of any issues the program may be facing or improvements that could be made. This information should help CSC decide whether to continue using the current program model, and suggest any modifications that could be made. The following sections discuss each of the research questions described earlier. All tables are included in Appendix A.

“In Search of Your Warrior” Program⁴

The ISOYW program was developed specifically for Aboriginal men who are caught in a cycle of violence. The main objective of the program is to reduce and ultimately eliminate their violent behaviour. The program immerses participants in a holistic healing approach that encompasses all aspects of the Medicine Wheel (i.e., physical, emotional, spiritual, and mental) with the emphasis on controlling violent and aggressive behaviour. This is achieved by providing the participants with an opportunity to gain insight into how violence evolves and how violence is passed from generation to generation. Offenders are taught new skills to reduce and eliminate their violent behaviour. In providing participants with insight into their own behaviour and strategies for self-management, it is thought that violence can also be reduced in their homes and communities upon release.

Program development

The ISOYW program was developed by Native Counselling Services of Alberta (NCSA) in response to a lack of appropriate programming for the large proportion of Aboriginal

⁴ Information in this section was primarily gathered through interviews with key informants, such as Native Counselling Services of Alberta, and program facilitators.

men incarcerated for serious and violent offences. Originally designed as a community-based program, the intention of the ISOYW program was to address the needs of minimum-security, violent, Aboriginal offenders.

Following the release of a video in the early 1990s, entitled “RAGE”, by the NCSA and Solicitor General of Canada’s Aboriginal Corrections Policy Unit, the idea of a program focusing on violence was conceived (Laboucane-Benson, 2002). RAGE was an in-depth, four-part video series which examined violence from the perspective of men in prison. Upon completion of RAGE, it was felt that the videos could be used in a broader context with men in (and out) of prison, to help them move away from their patterns of violent behaviour. It was with this intention that the ISOYW program was developed.

Curriculum content was designed through extensive consultation with program specialists and Aboriginal Elders and was developed around themes related to violent behaviour. The consultation process resulted in the development of a program manual which guides the treatment process (Native Counselling Services of Alberta, 1999). The ISOYW program was initially piloted at Stan Daniels Healing Centre. In 1999, the program at Stan Daniels was moved to a bush camp for the summer and fall months, in order to provide a more natural setting for the program content. During 2000/01, the program was piloted at four medium-security institutions in the Prairie and Pacific regions: Saskatchewan Penitentiary, Bowden Institution, Matsqui Institution, and Mission Institution. In addition, community people throughout the Prairie region have been trained to deliver the program. Most recently, the NCSA adapted the program for Aboriginal women who are caught in the cycle of violence; this program is named “Spirit of a Warrior” (Laboucane-Benson, 2002).

Program delivery and content

The ISOYW program includes information, therapeutic sessions and suggested resources for facilitators to use over a 6 to 13 week period focusing on helping individuals break their cycle of violence.

The program's foundation is rooted in Aboriginal cultural teachings and ceremonies. With the assistance of an Aboriginal Elder, the appropriate ceremonies and teachings for each particular group of participants are incorporated into the delivery of the program and form the basis for the therapeutic interventions that take place (LaBoucane-Benson, 2002). Traditional Aboriginal cultural teachings are thought to guide individuals back to a non-violent way of life. In order for healing to occur, the spiritual, emotional, physical, and psychological parts of the self must be engaged in the healing process. Aboriginal Elders are employed within the program to guide the participants in the healing journey and provide guidance in the area of spiritual development. While the involvement of Elders is considered crucial to programming, the extent to which participants have contact with Elders is based on the discretion of the facilitators. Consideration is given to security restrictions, Elder availability, time and resources. For these reasons, Elder involvement varies considerably across sites.

The concept of “warrior” has been powerful throughout history in Aboriginal cultures. For this program, it provides participants with a way of being that they can strive to adopt for themselves. The concept of “warrior” is applicable for males and females and includes “the development of such qualities as self-possession, spiritual and psychic awareness/alertness/attentiveness, goodness and caring, endurance, patience, resilience, the capacity to fight for what must be defended and preserved in order to assure a Way of Life” (Laboucane-Benson, 2002).

The ISOYW program is based upon the following guiding assumptions:

- Human beings are part of a number of systems such as the family, community and society at large - we affect these systems and, in turn, they affect us.
- No matter how tortured an individual's history of violence may be, he is respected as a human being - one who has made "mistakes" from which he can and must learn.
- Traditional Aboriginal teachings and culture will guide individuals back to a non-violent way of life.

- All human beings are inherently good, and their behaviour is shaped by their life experiences.
- Personal change takes time and requires readiness, commitment, desire and patience.
- In order for healing to occur, the spiritual, emotional, physical and psychological parts of the self must be engaged in the healing process (Laboucane-Benson, 2002).

The ISOYW program is primarily delivered in a group setting. Participants engage in group therapy and contribute to discussions concerning the program material. More specifically, the ISOYW program consists of 75 sessions that are framed within eight components: 1) anger awareness, 2) violence awareness, 3) family of origin awareness, 4) self awareness, 5) skill development, 6) group skill development, 7) cultural awareness, and 8) cognitive learning. Unlike other programs, not all 75 sessions are always delivered. Depending on specific clientele characteristics, the time available, and the location, facilitators decide which sessions will be used. Descriptions of each session are included in the program manual, facilitating the delivery of the program. In addition, the manual includes ideas for group questions and brief sessional objectives (Native Counselling Services of Alberta, 1999).

The program has been delivered in medium-security institutions (La Macaza, Stony Mountain, Saskatchewan Penitentiary, Bowden, William Head), minimum-security institutions (Pê Sâkâstêw Centre) and a Section 81 healing lodge (Stan Daniels)⁵. The program's setting, length, intensity level and variety of ceremonies varies from site to site. For example, in the spring, summer and fall, the Stan Daniels Healing Centre offers a very intensive (seven days a week, fifteen hours a day) bush-camp program where the offenders remain together in the wilderness for six weeks. However, in some medium-security institutions, the program is delivered in a typical classroom setting

⁵ As noted earlier, Section 81 of the CCRA allows Aboriginal communities to provide correctional services to Aboriginal offenders.

where the offenders receive treatment four days a week for approximately six hours a day. These between-site variations were taken into account when examining the effectiveness of the programs.

Currently, the ISOYW program is recognized by CSC as a violence prevention program (VPP). The program follows basic VPP theory, principles and guidelines. However, the ISOYW program is different from other violence prevention programs in its use of Aboriginal culture. Aboriginal spirituality and traditional activities are viewed as integral to the treatment of violent behaviour among Aboriginal men. While the program follows VPP standards it is important to note that it has yet to be accredited.

Program referral

Prospective participants are referred to the program by case managers who, after reviewing their files, have determined that the ISOYW program would best suit the needs of the offender. The program is currently delivered as a “high-intensity” intervention. As such, only offenders who are assessed as having an elevated level of need and risk are considered for the program. Furthermore, guidelines exist to assist case managers in choosing candidates. Documentation maintained by the Programs Branch of CSC indicates that candidates should be Aboriginal men with a history of violence. Furthermore, candidates should also be involved in Aboriginal spirituality. Prior to being selected for the program, these candidates must have their participation endorsed by an Elder. Provisions are also in place to allow non-Aboriginal, violent, male offenders to be considered for the program (Correctional Service of Canada, 2003).

After candidates have been identified for the program, ISOYW staff are responsible for screening them to ensure suitability. It does not appear that a formal assessment process (i.e., use of pre-screening measures, psychometric testing) is used in the screening process. However, program facilitators do interview potential candidates and consult with other ISOYW staff and Elders prior to making a final selection. While

NCSA suggests that twelve participants is the ideal group size for program delivery, group size varies depending upon the institution. Factors related to funding, space, resources and the availability of facilitators and Elders appear to influence group size.

Staff

Program staff deliver each component of the ISOYW program. Typically, the team consists of male and female facilitators and Aboriginal Elders. The selection of appropriate facilitators and Elders is the responsibility of CSC. However, NCSA is responsible for the training and certification of facilitators. Based on information provided by NCSA, facilitators endure an intensive, four-week training process. Training involves learning the program material as well as developing facilitation skills. Facilitators become familiar with the sessions and are taught how to adapt the content to different groups of participants. During this time, facilitators are also encouraged to engage in “experiential learning”, applying the material to their own life experiences.

At the time of data collection for the current study, program staff consisted of 17 Aboriginal facilitators (9 men and 8 women). Prior to their involvement with the ISOYW program, all of the facilitators had experience working with offenders in some capacity. Furthermore, a large proportion had worked specifically with Aboriginal offenders (88%) and Aboriginal communities (82%). Facilitators said that they had developed a variety of pertinent skills from these professional experiences. The majority of facilitators reported having developed professional skills in program facilitation, counselling, assessment and education (94% each). A large proportion also reported skills in the areas of mediation (82%) and program development (81%). In addition to professional experience, the majority of facilitators had received formal academic training in the social sciences. Approximately two thirds of facilitators (65%) had a post-secondary education in a variety of areas including psychology, social work and Native studies.

In sum, facilitators can be described as having experience working with offenders and Aboriginal clientele in particular. Furthermore, program staff appear to possess the

skills necessary for the successful implementation and facilitation of the ISOYW program. Formal training at the post-secondary level complements the range of skills and experience.

Program Participants

As of February 13, 2003, 218 federal offenders had been enrolled in the ISOYW program. As indicated in Table 1 (Appendix A), the largest proportion was involved in the program through Stan Daniels Healing Centre (40%). An additional 13% participated in the program at Saskatchewan Institution, 11% at Bowden Institution, and 9% at William Head Institution.

The following describes the characteristics of program participants. In addition, comparisons are made between two styles of program delivery: programs delivered in institutions and those delivered in camp-style settings. Finally, this section examines whether appropriate participants are being chosen for inclusion in the ISOYW program.

Characteristics

In general, participants of the ISOYW program were in their mid-thirties at the time of their involvement in the program, and had extensive criminal backgrounds.

Furthermore, participants demonstrated a multitude of programming needs and were most likely to be rated as being high risk to re-offend and having low reintegration potential at the time of admission to the correctional facility.

As seen in Table 1, most of the participants of the ISOYW program were Aboriginal (94%). About one half (47%) were single and another 45% were married or living in common-law relationships at the time of admission to the federal correctional facility. Large proportions had not completed their high school education (92%) and were unemployed (71%) at the time of admission to the correctional facility for their current conviction.

The socio-demographic characteristics of those in institutional programs were compared to those in camp-style programs. No differences emerged regarding marital status, education, or employment. However, although there were large proportions of Aboriginal participants in both types of program, there was a significantly larger proportion in institutional, as compared to camp-style, programs (97% versus 91%). In addition, participants who were involved in camp-style programs were on average three years older than the institutional style program participants (35 versus 32 years of age).

Not surprisingly, since the ISOYW program focuses on violent offenders, 90% of the participants had a violent offence as their most serious current offence (Table 2). This included more than one third (35%) incarcerated for homicide or attempted homicide, 23% for assault, 19% for robbery, and 13% for sexual assault. Of the 22 participants who did not have a violent offence recorded as their current most serious offence, six had a past violent offence on their records. The mean aggregate sentence for the current conviction was 5.5 years for participants⁶. There were no significant differences on current offence between participants who received the camp-style versus institutional-style program.

Participants of the ISOYW program had a fairly extensive criminal history (Table 3). Almost two thirds (62%) had previous youth court convictions and 91% had previous adult court convictions. Furthermore, 83% had previously been under community supervision, 84% had served a previous provincial term, and 30% had served a previous federal term. In addition, a fairly large proportion of participants had experienced past failures in the correctional system. Almost three quarters (71%) had failed on a previous community-based sanction, and one half (49%) had failed on a prior conditional release. Furthermore, 38% had an escape/attempted escape or unlawfully-at-large incident on their record. No significant differences were found on criminal history between those in institutional-style and camp-style programs.

⁶ Mean aggregate sentence excludes offenders serving a life sentence.

At the time of admission to the federal correctional facility, 70% of the participants were rated as requiring a medium level of security (Table 4). Furthermore, three quarters (76%) were assessed as being at high risk to re-offend. Since most of the participants are violent offenders, this is not particularly surprising. In addition, 82% were rated as being high need for correctional programming. In examining individual need areas, the largest proportion of participants were rated as having “some or considerable” need in the areas of personal/emotional issues (97%) and substance abuse (93%). The largest proportions of participants were rated as having medium motivation for intervention (64%) and low reintegration potential (44%).

Analyses were completed to determine if participants in camp-delivered programs were different from participants who were institution based. No significant differences were found between camp and institutional program participants in terms of need areas. However, smaller proportions of those in institutional-style programs were rated as requiring minimum security (6% versus 17%). Also, larger proportions of those in institutional-style programs were rated as high risk to re-offend (84% versus 66%) and having lower motivation for intervention (17% versus 3%). These differences may be a reflection of factors considered in making decisions to allow offenders to participate in camp-style programs; those that are assessed as being higher risk and less motivated may be required to remain in the institutional setting.

Not surprisingly, participants in the ISOYW program had difficult childhood experiences. As illustrated in Table 5, a large proportion of participants interviewed reported having grown up in an unstable home environment (43%). Two thirds (67%) of participants reported a substance abuse problem in the home, and over three quarters (80%) had experienced abuse. Of those reporting abuse, 89% had experienced physical violence, 78% had experienced psychological/emotional abuse, and one half (51%) had experienced sexual violence.

Overall, participants of the ISOYW program shared similar profile characteristics. Camp and institution-based participants had similar socio-demographic, criminal history,

current offence and need profiles. Furthermore, participants were similar to Aboriginal offenders in general. Literature indicates that a considerably large proportion of federally-incarcerated Aboriginal offenders are in their early 30s, have a low level of education and are single at the time of admission. In addition, research demonstrates that Aboriginal offenders have lengthy criminal pasts and violent offence profiles. A large proportion are also admitted with a myriad of criminogenic needs, high level of risk, low reintegration potential and low motivation for intervention (Moore & Trevethan, 2002; Trevethan, Moore & Rastin, 2002).

Additional analyses were completed to determine if the offenders enrolled in the ISOYW program at individual sites differed from one another. Differences between sites could suggest that the ISOYW program is being delivered to a similar type of clientele. These analyses uncovered few differences. The majority of the between-site differences emerged between Stan Daniels Healing Centre and other higher security institutions. For example, the level of motivation for intervention was significantly higher for offenders who received the program at Stan Daniels as compared to offenders who received the program at Bowden Institution. Notwithstanding, it appears that the ISOYW program is targeting a similar group of offenders at each site.

Appropriate participants

As mentioned previously, the ISOYW program is a high-intensity program designed for offenders presenting high need and high risk upon entry into the program (Correctional Service of Canada, 2003). Offenders are eligible for the ISOYW program if they are Aboriginal men with a history of violent offending and are considered to be at high risk to re-offend if released back into the community. In addition, only candidates actively involved in Aboriginal spirituality are considered. The involvement of candidates in spiritual activities must be confirmed by an Elder or Native liaison officer. Under special circumstances, non-Aboriginal male offenders with a history of violent behaviour can also be accepted into the program. Similar to Aboriginal candidates, non-Aboriginal

candidates must be active in Aboriginal spirituality and their participation must be endorsed by an Aboriginal Elder.

As described in the profile of participants above, 94% of participants in the ISOYW program were Aboriginal. Ninety percent were currently incarcerated for a violent offence, and many of the remaining 10% had a previous violent offence on record. In addition, three-quarters of participants (76%) were considered at intake as high risk to re-offend. Of those who were not rated as high risk, almost all were rated as a medium risk. A large proportion of participants also had “some” or “considerable” need for correctional programming in various areas. As such, it appears that the characteristics of participants, as identified in the OMS, correspond with the selection criteria of the program. In addition, participants appear to meet the risk/need requirements for inclusion in a high-intensity treatment program. These findings suggest that appropriate candidates are screened into the ISOYW program. However, it is important to note that information from the OMS cannot gauge the extent to which participants were involved in Aboriginal spirituality prior to participating in the program.

A large proportion of the facilitators interviewed reported that the screening process was effective in choosing appropriate participants (71%). In particular, it was noted that the interview process and team approach was beneficial in selecting participants. Facilitators felt that team consultation and input from Elders were key to effective decision making. However, facilitators acknowledged that the selection process could be improved. Suggestions were made to enhance the role of facilitators and Elders and to develop a more standardized selection process. Some facilitators noted that the selection process could be standardized by developing specific inclusion criteria (apart from those already listed) and implementing objective screening tools in order to reduce subjectivity.

In sum, it appears that appropriate candidates are selected for the ISOYW program. Participant profiles correspond to the selection criteria, as outlined in CSC

documentation. Furthermore, a large proportion of facilitators felt the program was effective in choosing participants.

Program Effectiveness

In order to determine the effectiveness of the ISOYW program, changes on dynamic factor ratings before and after participation in the program were examined. In addition, differences between ISOYW participants and a comparison group on selected outcome variables were examined. Finally, interviews with facilitators, participants and key informants provided information on their satisfaction with the program.

Changes in participants

As a first indication of program effectiveness, it is important to note that a large proportion of ISOYW participants completed the program. As of February 2003, of the 186 offenders who participated in the program, 87% (n = 161) successfully completed it⁷. Furthermore, for most of those who did not successfully complete the program, the reason was not *because* they withdrew from, or failed, the program (6 were released or transferred and 8 were suspended and unable to continue). This is an important finding because it has been noted that Aboriginal offenders have lower program completion rates than non-Aboriginal offenders (Ellerby & MacPherson, 2002) which can impact on the granting of parole.

In order to examine the effectiveness of the ISOYW program, changes in the participants following involvement in the program were examined⁸. As indicated in Table 6, participants of the ISOYW program had lower need for correctional programming after the program. Participants' overall need for programming decreased significantly from before involvement in the program to immediately after completion

⁷ Of the 218 offenders enrolled, 186 participated in the program (32 were assigned but had not taken the program) and 161 successfully completed the program (17 did not complete the program, and 8 were not successful).

⁸ Of the 161 successful participants, 25 had limited data and were excluded from further analyses.

(M = 2.75 versus 2.44). Further, participants demonstrated significantly lower scores on all need domains following involvement in the program. The largest pre-post differences were in the areas of substance abuse (pre = 3.53 versus post = 3.05), personal/emotional orientation (pre = 3.61 versus post = 3.22), associates/social interaction (pre = 2.84 versus post = 2.53) and attitudes (pre = 2.62 versus post = 2.32). These findings suggest that the level of assessed criminogenic needs of participants decreased during the course of the program.

In addition, participants of the ISOYW program had significantly higher ratings for reintegration potential after completing the program (pre = 1.65 versus post = 1.90), suggesting that the program is having a positive impact on preparing the participants for successful reintegration into the community. While offenders involved in the program had higher motivation to participate in correctional programming after the ISOYW program (pre = 2.15 versus post = 2.25), pre-post differences were not significant.

Additional analyses were performed to determine whether the performance of participants involved in camp and institution-based programs differed. No significant differences were found between type of program, suggesting that camp and institution-based participants made comparable improvements after involvement in the program.

An examination of institutional incidents was also conducted. Incident data were gathered for a period of one year prior to and one year after the participant's involvement in the ISOYW program. As indicated in Table 7, while differences were not statistically significant, a smaller proportion of participants were perpetrators of an incident after program completion. Up to one year prior to commencement of the ISOYW program, 31% of the participants were perpetrators of at least one incident while in the correctional facility. While not significant, the proportion was reduced to 24% up to one year following the program. Participants were perpetrators in incidents

relating to contraband, causing a disturbance and intelligence⁹. Differences were also non-significant on the various incident categories, with one exception. Findings indicated that a significantly smaller proportion of ISOYW participants were perpetrators of contraband-related incidents after completing the program (pre = 49% versus post = 32%).

Overall, these findings indicate that participants' need for programming decreased in all domains following involvement in the ISOYW program. Furthermore, reintegration potential was assessed more favourably post program.

Outcome - participants versus comparison group

As discussed in the methodology section, a matched comparison group was developed to examine differences between participants who completed the ISOYW program and a group that did not receive the treatment. The comparison group was comprised of offenders matched on gender (male only), Aboriginal status, violent offence (either current or previous offence), aggregate sentence length, year of admission, and level of risk at time of admission to the correctional facility.

An analysis comparing post-program ratings was conducted. As indicated in Table 8, no significant differences were found between participants of the ISOYW program and the comparison group on need for correctional programming, reintegration potential or motivation for intervention. These findings suggest that, although participants of the ISOYW program scored better on a number of outcome variables following involvement in the program, the comparison group (who did not receive the program) also improved.

The final indicator of outcome examined releases from, and re-admissions to, federal custody following release for ISOYW participants and the comparison group.

⁹ Contraband includes possession, receiving or transporting unauthorized items. Disturbance includes disciplinary problems, setting fires, major and minor disturbance. Intelligence includes getting information through other inmates or institutional staff that an assault, disturbance, possession of an unauthorized item/contraband, self harm, or other form of incident has occurred.

As indicated in Table 9, of those who successfully completed the ISOYW program, 83% were released into the community at some point before the end of the study period. This is significantly greater than the proportion of comparison group offenders who were released (47%). In addition, ISOYW participants were significantly more likely to be released on day parole than their counterparts (39% versus 20%) and less likely to be released at warrant expiry (5% versus 16%). These results suggest that the parole board may consider participants of the ISOYW program to be better prepared for day parole release than other violent offenders. Furthermore, the large proportion of participants released on day parole suggests that participants are assessed as ready for reintegration earlier in their sentences than other violent offenders.

No significant differences emerged between ISOYW participants and the comparison group on re-admissions to federal custody after the program. After a one-year follow-up from the date of release, two thirds (67%, 75) of the 112 ISOYW participants released during the study period were still successfully residing in the community. The remaining 37 had been re-admitted to a federal facility during the one-year period. Fifty-nine percent of the re-admissions (22) were for technical violations and 38% (14) were for new offences. If re-admissions for new offences are examined, the one-year re-admission rate for new offences is 13%¹⁰. This is similar to the one-year re-admission rate among the comparison group (11%). However, among those re-admitted for a new offence, a significantly smaller proportion of ISOYW participants than those in the comparison group were re-admitted to a correctional facility for a new violent offence (7% versus 57%). Of those re-admitted, the average length of time in the community before re-admission was similar for ISOYW participants and the comparison group (6 months).

No differences were observed between participants involved in the institution delivered program and the camp delivered program on release, re-admission and re-offence data.

¹⁰ New offences may be under-counted because some new offences may be recorded as technical violations.

Satisfaction

Facilitators, participants and key informants were asked to rate their satisfaction with the ISOYW program.

As indicated in Table 10a, participants interviewed were quite satisfied with those administering the program. Overall, program participants felt that the facilitators had a very good knowledge of treatment approaches (91%), Aboriginal culture (89%), the needs of Aboriginal offenders (89%), and Aboriginal communities (82%). Participants also felt that facilitators were very sensitive to Aboriginal issues (95%), could communicate the program material very effectively (93%), and were able to stimulate their interest (96%). In addition, the majority reported a high degree of satisfaction with the performance of the Elders in the program (91%).

Furthermore, all participants interviewed said that the ISOYW program was somewhat or very beneficial (96% said very; 4% said somewhat). Large proportions indicated that the program met their various needs. Almost all the participants indicated that program addressed their needs relating to self-esteem and culture (98% each). Almost all of the participants felt the program very much met their needs regarding controlling anger (93%), emotional problems (93%), and violent behaviour (89%). Similarly, a large proportion indicated that their negative thought processes were very much addressed by the ISOYW program (78%).

As indicated in Table 11a, similar to the perceptions of participants, a large proportion of the facilitators interviewed said they were greatly satisfied with the ISOYW program (76%). Facilitators generally felt that the program was effective for increasing motivation for intervention (100%), enhancing cultural awareness (94%), and reducing the risk of violence (88%). A large proportion of facilitators also indicated that the program was effective in reducing institutional incidents (82%), preparing offenders for release (67%), and reducing general recidivism (65%). Furthermore, facilitators indicated that the program was effective in meeting some of the participants' key needs.

Almost all felt that the ISOYW program addressed cultural needs (94%), violent behaviour (88%), and self-esteem (88%) to a great extent. Three quarters indicated that needs related to interpersonal skills (76%) and emotional difficulties (71%) were met to a large extent. Smaller proportions felt that the ISOYW program greatly aided participants with impulse control (65%), family problems (63%), and cognitive distortions (53%). Few facilitators thought that the ISOYW program met the needs of participants on educational matters (35%) and substance abuse (24%). However, it is important to note that the ISOYW program is not specifically designed to address all of these needs.

Not only were participants and facilitators satisfied with the benefits reaped from the program, but they were also generally satisfied with the individual components of the program (Tables 10b and 11b). Almost all of the participants interviewed said they were very satisfied with components pertaining to cultural awareness, Aboriginal healing, and self-awareness (98% each). Large proportions were also very satisfied with the components on individual support/counselling (96%), anger awareness (93%), cognitive learning (93%), violence awareness (93%), family of origin (91%), skills development (89%), and group skill development (89%).

Similarly, the majority of facilitators interviewed (94%) felt that the anger, violence, self awareness and cultural awareness components were very useful to participants. A large proportion of facilitators also felt that the skill development (88%), family of origin (81%), group skill development (75%) and cognitive learning (69%) components were very useful in assisting offenders with their needs.

Consistent with other respondents in the study, Elders and other key informants were also very satisfied with the ISOYW program and felt that the program could help participants use less violence in their lives.

Participants felt that many of these positive changes were fostered by various aspects of the program. Approximately one third indicated that the program's use of spirituality (37%) and open communication (30%) were the most beneficial aspects of the program.

A large proportion also indicated that the focus on self-awareness (28%) and Elder contact (15%) was highly beneficial. The emphasis placed on addressing cycles of violence (9%), and anger awareness (7%) was also noted as being very useful by participants.

Similar to participants, a large proportion of the facilitators felt that identifying one's cycle of violence was the most useful component of ISOYW in facilitating successful reintegration (47%). A large proportion also indicated that the cultural components (41%) and the development of self-awareness (24%) were the most helpful aspects of programming.

Summary

In sum, the findings indicate that participants of the ISOYW program had significantly lower need levels in a number of areas (i.e., personal/emotional, marital/family, substance abuse) and higher reintegration potential after participating in the program. These findings suggest that the program may have contributed to reducing offenders' needs for correctional programming and heightening their potential for successful release into the community. However, it is important to note that the post-program ratings of ISOYW participants were not significantly different from ratings of the comparison group. Therefore, factors other than the ISOYW program may be responsible for the improvement in ratings (i.e., completion of other correctional programs).

While a large proportion of program participants were successful in the community one year after release, federal re-admission rates were similar to the comparison group. This suggests that the program had little impact on recidivism in general. However, participants were significantly less likely to be re-incarcerated for a new violent offence, as compared to the comparison group. This finding may indicate that the program had an influence on the participants' propensity to recidivate in a violent manner. Nonetheless, it is important to caution the reader from drawing causal conclusions;

similar to other program evaluations, the current study could not control for all of the potential confounding variables that could have contributed to the results.

Findings highlight a high level of satisfaction with the ISOYW program among participants, facilitators, Elders and key respondents. It is clear that all parties felt the program was contributing to positive changes in the lives of the participants.

Respondents in the study felt that the ISOYW program could help offenders make important behavioural changes in the institution and upon release. Moreover, it appears that the program assisted in addressing key criminogenic needs. Interviews relayed that participants were assisted in areas related to violence and emotional distress. In addition, respondents thought that the individual components of the program were very useful, suggesting a high level of satisfaction with the program's design. Furthermore, participants thought that the facilitators were knowledgeable and sensitive to Aboriginal issues. While participants were quite satisfied with the curriculum in general, it is clear that the ceremonies and spiritual content were crucial to successful programming.

Improvements

While participants and other respondents clearly felt the ISOYW program was well designed and beneficial, they noted several areas of possible improvement.

Participant screening process

As indicated in Table 12, some facilitators indicated that the screening process could be improved by enhancing the role of Elders. Several facilitators noted that the experience and judgment of the Elders could be used to create a better fit between the program and the participants. In addition, some facilitators suggested that the selection process could be more standardized. Suggestions were made for the implementation of a structured assessment process and the development of more specific inclusion/exclusion criteria.

Program staff and training

In general, participants were very satisfied with the performance of the ISOYW facilitators. Participants felt that facilitators demonstrated key competencies which contributed to the success of the program. A large proportion of participants noted that the facilitators freely shared their own life experiences during the program (60%) and demonstrated knowledge of Aboriginal cultures and spirituality (29%). Furthermore, some also reported that the facilitators were caring (22%) and had good communication skills (13%). Nevertheless, participants had suggestions for how facilitators could improve the program. Approximately one fifth (18%) reported that facilitators could enhance their knowledge base (i.e., culture, communities) and further develop their facilitation skills. Smaller proportions suggested that maintenance programs be made available in the community (5%), that the number of male and female facilitators be made equal (5%) and that communication between facilitators and participants could be enhanced (5%). It is important to note that almost five out of ten participants (45%) reported that facilitators did not need to improve.

In addition to being satisfied with facilitators, participants also reported a high degree of satisfaction with the Elders' involvement in the ISOYW program. Participants felt that the Elders possessed several strengths which contributed to the program. Almost one half (43%) indicated the Elders' ability to teach and practice traditional spirituality as a key strength. Large proportions also felt the Elders' life experiences (32%), extensive knowledge (25%), and regard for the participants (25%) were areas of strength. When asked how the performance of Elders could be improved, one third of participants (31%) indicated that no improvements were necessary. However, a large proportion felt that more Elder involvement in the program content would be beneficial (38%). A small proportion also suggested that several Elders be made available throughout the course of the program (13%) in order to capture a range of different experiences and knowledge.

Most facilitators reported receiving training for the ISOYW program (n = 16). However, only one half of the facilitators felt the training was “very good”. As such, facilitators had several suggestions to improve the training for the ISOYW program. Two thirds (65%) thought that training should focus on mastering program materials and further exploring program content. In addition, one quarter (24%) indicated the need for longer training. It was noted that lengthening the duration of the training sessions could provide facilitators with a better understanding of the program and its implementation. Furthermore, some reported a need for further instruction on corrections during the course of training (12%). It was suggested that an understanding of correctional issues and CSC as an organization would better equip facilitators for the delivery of programs to offenders. A small proportion (12%) also suggested that the training process identify those who are most competent for program facilitation. Concerns regarding the appropriate selection of staff were noted during the facilitator interviews. A similar proportion indicated that training could be enhanced by focusing more on the development of facilitation skills (12%).

Program content and reintegration

It is clear from the responses of participants and facilitators that the ISOYW program was viewed as a program that could address a myriad of criminogenic needs. Facilitators, however, felt that the needs of offenders could be better addressed by modifying certain aspects of the program. Suggestions were made to place a greater emphasis on offenders acquiring concrete life skills in order to facilitate successful reintegration. Facilitators also felt that the program should include more content on family violence and healing.

While facilitators reported several positive changes in the participants after completing the ISOYW program, they felt that more could be done to enhance these changes. As indicated in Table 12, almost two thirds (63%) felt that a follow-up program was needed in the institution and community to monitor the success of participants and offer support when needed. One fifth (19%) also indicated a need to increase the involvement of the

community in the treatment process. It was noted that increasing contact with the community would better prepare participants for reintegration. Some suggested that the involvement of communities could be enhanced by simply providing participants with a list of resources in the community or having an Elder readily available at the time of release. Suggestions were also made to enhance Elder involvement in the program as a means of incorporating more cultural content (13%).

Similar to facilitators, participants felt that the program could be improved in many ways so as to better address their needs. Many of the suggestions made by facilitators were also made by the participants. Approximately one quarter (26%) felt the program could be enhanced by removing the program from an institutional setting and having greater contact with the community. These participants felt that the program needed to be delivered in a setting that was more conducive to healing and reintegration. In addition, one fifth (19%) suggested the duration of the program be extended. It was noted that lengthening the program could offer more content. A smaller proportion reported the need for maintenance upon release (14%), emphasizing the importance of monitoring the healing process after program completion. Furthermore, one in ten participants identified the need for skills training (12%) and greater access to Elders (10%).

Findings underscore the need for greater community involvement in the treatment process. Facilitators and participants emphasized the importance of engaging the community in the lives of the offenders and suggested that supports be placed in the community to facilitate reintegration. Furthermore, there was a great deal of emphasis placed on follow-up after participants complete the program. Respondents clearly felt that institutional and community-based programs monitoring change and progress could capitalize on the benefits gained from participating in the ISOYW program.

Support from CSC

Interviews indicated that some program facilitators felt well supported by CSC. These facilitators reported that the institutions championed the implementation of the ISOYW

program and provided the necessary resources needed to operate the program. Others suggested that the institution could offer more support by providing additional funds, hiring more Elders, and circumventing security restrictions that make it difficult to operate the program. Similarly, key respondents noted that CSC, as an organization, could provide more funding to better support the ISOYW program. Emphasis was placed on providing more training to facilitators and hiring support staff. In addition, facilitators suggested that CSC could do more to select appropriate staff and monitor their performance (see Table 12).

Adapting the program

As described earlier in the report, the ISOYW program is delivered in both a camp and institutional setting. While there are advantages and disadvantages to both, a large proportion of facilitators (77%) and Elders felt that the best environment for the program would be a camp setting. Respondents generally felt that the natural setting of a camp was conducive to healing and treatment. In addition, it was noted that the remote settings circumvented issues of security and institutional restrictions. Conversely, potential problems could arise from delivering the program outside the institution. Facilitators indicated that the isolation was inconvenient and expensive. Concerns were also raised about the lack of personal security for the participants and staff.

While a large proportion of facilitators preferred to operate the program in a camp environment, it is clear that they also felt the program could operate successfully in a minimum-security facility. Almost all of the facilitators interviewed (93%) thought that a minimum-security environment was 'very' appropriate for the delivery of the ISOYW program. It was noted that a minimum-security setting would offer more flexibility than higher security institutions, fewer limitations to movement and greater access to ceremonies. However, delivering the ISOYW program in a minimum facility would still have drawbacks. Facilitators felt that a minimum-security setting would place more security restrictions on participants than a camp setting. Furthermore, higher security

offenders could be permitted to enter the program and possibly compromise its success.

A smaller proportion of facilitators (53%) thought a medium-security facility was 'very' appropriate for program delivery. Concerns with operating the program in a medium-security environment were similar to concerns with the program's implementation in a minimum-security environment.

Only one quarter (29%) of the facilitators interviewed felt that the ISOYW program could be adapted to a maximum-security setting, suggesting that facilitators were less likely to endorse the implementation of the ISOYW program in more restrictive environments. It was noted that while certain sections related to understanding the cycle of violence and spirituality could be transferred to a maximum-setting, institutional policies would likely limit the transfer of the full range of modules and activities.

Unlike facilitators, a large proportion of other key respondents felt that the ISOYW program could be delivered in a maximum-security setting (74%). These respondents felt that various aspects of the program could easily be transferred and implemented in an environment that would ensure the safety of staff and participants. A large proportion also indicated that the program could operate successfully in medium and minimum security institutions (69% and 59%, respectively). However, only 39% felt that a camp setting was the best environment for programming.

Findings appear to support the delivery of the ISOYW program in a camp environment. Those delivering the program appear to feel that an environment with fewer security restrictions and physical boundaries was more conducive to the successful delivery of the program. It was noted that higher security facilities could reduce the flexibility required to operate the ISOYW program, thereby impeding treatment. However, it was clear that facilitators and key respondents felt differently about which environment was best suited for the ISOYW program. Larger proportions of other key respondents endorsed the implementation of the program in higher security facilities.

Staff felt that the program was not only transferable to different environments, but it could also be implemented with other offender groups. Approximately one third of facilitators (38%) and key respondents (29%) felt that the program, in its entirety, could be used in treating offenders who do not necessarily meet the requirements for the ISOYW program. In addition, a large proportion (facilitators, 31%; key respondents, 47%) felt that the cultural content could be used in programming for other offender groups. It was also noted that content related to self-awareness and substance abuse could be made applicable.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the “In Search of Your Warrior” (ISOYW) program. While the program has been operating for a number of years, the impact of the program has never been examined. As a result, the present study focused on the measurable performance of participants. In addition, information from participants and staff on their satisfaction with the program and suggestions for improving the program’s effectiveness were also examined.

Program success

Findings from interviews with program participants, facilitators, Elders and other key respondents demonstrate a high level of satisfaction with the ISOYW program. It is clear that all parties felt the program was contributing to positive changes in the lives of the participants. Respondents in the study felt that the ISOYW program addressed key criminogenic need areas, and could help improve the behaviour of offenders in the institution and upon release. Respondents noted that the ceremonies and spiritual content were crucial to successful programming.

In terms of outcome, several positive changes were observed for those who had successfully completed the ISOYW program. After programming, participants demonstrated lower need for intervention targeting personal distress, family issues, substance abuse, community functioning, employment, social interactions and pro-criminal attitudes. Participants also were rated as having greater potential for reintegration post-treatment. These findings suggest that the program had an impact on reducing offenders’ need for correctional programming and improving their potential for successful release into the community. However, as matched non-participants made similar changes over time, the improvements observed among the ISOYW participants cannot be fully attributed to the ISOYW program. A large proportion of participants were successful in the community upon release. Of those released, over two thirds were not re-admitted to a federal institution after being followed for one year.

Furthermore, of those who returned for a new offence, a significantly smaller proportion of ISOYW participants were re-admitted for a new violent offence, as compared to the comparison group (7% versus 57%). This may indicate that the program had an influence on the participants' propensity to recidivate in a violent manner.

Although the pre/post program results for ISOYW participants seem positive, the post-program ratings and re-admission rates of ISOYW participants were not significantly different from the comparison group. Therefore, factors other than the ISOYW program may be responsible for the improvement in ratings for program participants and the comparison group. This is an area that requires additional investigation.

A few recommendations can be made based on the research findings:

- It would be useful to further develop the objectives of the ISOYW program. The objectives of the program should be designed in a manner that is measurable (e.g., participants are less likely to engage in violent behaviour inside the institutions, participants are less likely to be re-admitted for a violent offence than a comparable group of offenders). Developing testable goals could facilitate future evaluations and assist the program facilitators in monitoring the progress of the program.
- The ISOYW program could benefit from developing formalized pre-post testing measures. The development of such measures could tap into constructs that are not addressed by standard correctional assessments. Such tools could measure attitudes endorsing violence, victim empathy, and knowledge of self-management strategies. Standard psychometric tests could also be employed as a means of tapping into various constructs. However, the validity of such measures for Aboriginal offenders would need to be strongly considered. Ultimately, the use of supplementary instruments for pre-post testing could yield positive findings that may have previously gone unnoticed. It may also be helpful to develop a satisfaction questionnaire administered at various points in the program or upon completion. Questionnaires could gauge which areas of programming offenders best respond, and ultimately be used as a tool to modify

program delivery. Recommendations for pre-post testing were also made by Couture (1999). At the time of the writing of this report, the NCSA had developed pre/post-test measures of the ISOYW program. However, no analyses of the results had been published.

Screening process

Further examination of the screening and the selection process is needed for the ISOYW program. There is currently little documentation outlining how potential candidates are identified and subsequently selected as participants. While it is clear that the ISOYW program is primarily designed for male Aboriginal offenders with a history of violent offending, it is unclear whether a thorough case review is conducted or if offenders are appropriately assessed. Furthermore, some facilitators felt the selection process was too subjective. Concerns over the role of professional discretion and personal bias were expressed. Some facilitators also reported that the screening and selection process varied significantly between institutions. While it appears that some sites have a more rigorous selection process than others these specific differences in protocol are unknown.

Several recommendations can be made concerning the screening and selection process of the ISOYW program:

- Developing guidelines that clearly outline the criteria for inclusion and exclusion of program participants is necessary. The existing guidelines are vague and provide limited information on candidate selection. Once the guidelines are developed, it will be important to review the program manual, specifically identify the guidelines for inclusion into the program, and provide a thorough description of the screening and selection process. Appropriate documentation could make the program more transparent and facilitate future evaluations.
- Incorporating assessment measures into the screening process may assist in reducing the level of subjectivity in selecting appropriate candidates for the program. Various psychometric and program-specific instruments could be used

to assess the offenders. For example, tools that flag specific violent behaviours, attitudes and beliefs may ensure that only the most violent offenders are screened in. In addition, developing a structured checklist may help Elders assess the extent to which offenders truly endorse Aboriginal spirituality and are involved in Aboriginal-specific activities. Further thought would eventually need to be given to which tools are best suited for the ISOYW program.

- It may be beneficial to standardize screening and selection procedures in order to reduce the role of subjectivity in identifying candidates. Standardizing the selection process would be facilitated by developing explicit guidelines that can be easily applied across sites. However, while selection guidelines would need to be relatively standard, it may be important to incorporate some flexibility for the selection of candidates at various levels of security.

Program delivery

The ISOYW program was designed to address the needs of male Aboriginal offenders who have a history of violence. Nevertheless, some non-Aboriginal offenders and those who did not have a violent offence on record participated in the ISOYW program. Developed through consultation with stakeholders, the program was also designed to meet the needs of offenders requiring high-intensity intervention, but who were actively involved in Aboriginal spirituality. The development of the program focused on integrating elements of western treatment and traditional Aboriginal healing. More specifically, the program couples knowledge of clinical and counselling techniques with Aboriginal ceremonies and activities (e.g., sweat lodge, smudging, pipe ceremonies etc.). Trevethan et al. (2004) identified this type of program design in other programs offered to federally-incarcerated Aboriginal offenders. A great deal of emphasis is given to the medicine wheel, which drives the delivery of the program. The objective of the wheel is to address the needs of the offenders in each of the main areas: physical, emotional, spiritual and mental.

While the combination of these two approaches has undoubtedly been given much thought, it is not known which aspects of Aboriginal healing and western treatment are most effective for violent Aboriginal offenders. Furthermore, much of what is known about the program is derived from supplementary material and interviews with staff. Information concerning the development of the program and various aspects of its delivery is not well documented in the program manual, presenting a gap in knowledge.

The ISOYW program was originally conceived as a “bush camp”, a program intended for delivery in the wilderness. However, the program was initially piloted in medium-security federal facilities and has since been implemented in minimum-security facilities. Little is known about how camp-style programs differ from those delivered in the institutions or whether differences exist between programs delivered at different security level facilities. Moreover, it is unclear whether the ISOYW program can be appropriately implemented in higher security institutions without compromising the integrity of the program.

Due to the challenges of operating the program in various closed and open environments, a great deal of flexibility is required. Security restrictions of the institutions must be respected and taken into account when delivering the curriculum. As such, facilitators are required to adapt program content and activities according to the respective setting. Nonetheless, it appears that more could be done to standardize the delivery of the program. For example, it was noted that Elders were more integrated into the curriculum at some sites than others. The reasons for this were not specified. The result, however, is that participants did not have the same opportunities for access across sites, potentially creating a gap in service.

Elders represent a crucial link to the heritage and background of Aboriginal peoples. They are used as a resource for spiritual development and are primarily responsible for the healing components of the ISOYW program. Elders typically offer teachings, conduct ceremonies and guide participants down their healing paths (Couture, 1999). While participants and facilitators reported being satisfied with the Elders, a great deal

of emphasis was placed on enhancing their involvement and role within the program. Suggestions were made to hire more Elders and enhance their involvement in the selection process.

The following is recommended to enhance program delivery:

- The program manual should be revised to make it more transparent and user-friendly. This was also recommended in Couture's (1999) review of the program. Revisions to the manual should include adding information on program development, length of treatment and total number of contact hours. Furthermore, the manual should describe the larger program components and include information on the selection process, screening criteria, assessments and measurable goals. In addition to making it more user friendly, modifying the manual will ultimately facilitate future evaluations of the program.
- Given the intent and design of the program, it is important to ensure that only offenders with a violent history be screened into the ISOYW program. A program designed for violent offenders is not appropriate for offenders who have not been incarcerated for a violent offence.
- While the current study found few differences between camp and institutional-based programs, more research is needed to determine the impact of higher security settings on the effectiveness of the ISOYW program. Originally, the program was intended to be operated in an open environment. An open environment was initially thought to be more conducive to learning and healing. However, recent sessions have implemented the program in higher security facilities. Longitudinal follow-up may be required to identify differences in program effectiveness and determine if the program can, indeed, be adapted to various security levels.
- More research is needed to identify those aspects of traditional and western approaches which are most related to program success for violent Aboriginal offenders. The effectiveness of the ISOYW program could be enhanced by adapting the program according to research-based "best practices".

- Site reviews are needed to determine the extent to which sites are implementing the program in a standard fashion. While the ISOYW program requires a degree of flexibility, standardizing various aspects of program delivery (e.g., setting minimum standards of Elder contact, identifying mandatory components and sessions) across sites may ensure that all participants receive the range of treatment and services the ISOYW program has to offer. Similarly, Mason et al's (2001) review of the ISOYW program found inconsistencies in program delivery that also required attention.
- The ISOYW program would likely benefit from greater Elder involvement at various stages of the program. For example, facilitators reported needing greater guidance and input from the Elders during the selection process. While some documentation suggests that Elders are consulted at this stage, greater consideration needs to be given to how Elders could further contribute. More thought should also be given to how the services of Elders could be better used during the course of the program. The importance of Elder involvement in the ISOYW program was also stressed in Couture's (1999) review of the program.
- The variability of Elder availability and the services they provide across sites should be minimized. The inclusion of Elders in the program is crucial. Sporadic involvement could dilute the spiritual and healing components of the program, resulting in reduced effectiveness at particular sites. Once again, the services provided by the ISOYW program should be standardized to ensure that all participants reap the benefits offered by the program. Mason et al. (2001) made similar recommendations in their overview of the program.

Treatment maintenance and community involvement

It is apparent from CSC documentation and interview data that there is no aftercare provided to participants upon completing the ISOYW program. The lack of follow-up and aftercare presents an obvious gap in service that several respondents addressed during the interviews. The implications of not following participants after completing the program are great. Some reports have suggested that the absence of aftercare could

diminish the benefits gained during the course of treatment, thereby impeding the long-term effectiveness of the program (Trevethan et al., 2004). Respondents reported that these unintended consequences could be countered by offering follow-up programs both inside and outside the institutions. In addition, suggestions were made to enhance the role of the community in the treatment and maintenance of offenders upon release.

Research findings point to a few recommendations for the continuum of care:

- Stronger consideration needs to be given to the development of maintenance programs in the institutions and in the community for released offenders to ensure that the benefits reaped from treatment are maintained over time. Mason et al. (2001) also recommended that some form of aftercare be introduced into the scope of the program. At this point, it may be unrealistic to implement an ISOYW maintenance program in each community that receives program participants. The implications for funding would be significant. However, smaller efforts could be considered. For example, it may be more feasible to have staff members (e.g., facilitators, liaison officer, Elders) conduct follow-up interviews at specific periods of time (e.g., 1 month, 3 months, 6 months, 1 year) to gauge the progress of each participant and offer support if needed. At these times, participants could be referred to various services in the institution and community if additional support is needed.
- The long-term success of offenders in the community may also be facilitated by Elder support. Participants may benefit from having access to a local Elder who could provide assistance and guidance when needed. Developing a relationship with an Elder in the community could also help to ease the challenges offenders face when reintegrating back into the community. More thought needs to be given to how Elders can be used to support the ISOYW program after release.
- A directory of support services that offenders can access in their area at the time of release should be developed. This directory could focus specifically on those areas of need the ISOYW program targets and areas of need that are related to violence (e.g., substance abuse). A listing of such services would likely include

information on family counselling, individual counselling, parenting workshops, Alcoholics Anonymous and substance abuse treatment facilities.

Staff selection and training

In general, results suggest that program facilitators are well educated and professional. Staff appear to have extensive experience working with offenders and offer various complementary skill sets to the program. However, despite their backgrounds, some concern was expressed over the selection of appropriate facilitators. Some respondents noted that more could be done to ensure that only the most appropriate candidates are hired.

It is clear that staff undergo extensive training prior to facilitating the ISOYW program. Training involves facilitation skill-building workshops as well as program content orientation. While most facilitators reported receiving training for the ISOYW program, only one half reported being very satisfied with the training process, suggesting that orientation of new staff may need further consideration. Facilitators made several suggestions on how to improve training. Some suggested lengthening the training in order to cover more material and better prepare them for delivering the program. Enhancing the training process could better equip staff in serving their clientele and has considerable implications for improving treatment for participants.

Based on the research findings, the following is recommended:

- It may be beneficial to implement a comprehensive screening process for the selection of program facilitators. It has been suggested that an interview and assessment process be used to ensure that only the most capable and well-adjusted candidates are chosen to facilitate the program. Implementing a facilitator assessment process could also make hiring more objective and counter concerns over the appropriate selection of facilitators. A similar recommendation was made by Mason et al. (2001) and Couture (1999) in their reviews of the ISOYW program.

- The training process should be comprehensively reviewed. Given the concerns expressed by facilitators, it is advised to carefully examine which aspects work and which do not. The limitations, as identified by the facilitators in this report, could be used as a starting point in modifying the training process. Consideration should be given to providing more information on CSC and institutional issues during training. In addition, it may also be helpful to offer more content on program delivery and to place greater emphasis on developing facilitation skills. Similarly, Couture (1999) recommended revisions to the training process.
- The program manual should be modified to cover the sessions in greater depth. Sessional material should provide facilitators with more information on the purpose of each session, objectives, description and content. It would also be helpful to provide facilitators with more suggestions for group questions, exercises and techniques for opening and closing sessions. Modifying the manual may help facilitators conduct sessions with greater ease, thereby improving program delivery.

Limitations

The current study employed quasi-experimental methods, typical of program evaluations, to answer the main research questions. As such, offenders could not be randomly assigned to the treatment (ISOYW program) and non-treatment groups. The absence of random assignment makes it difficult to conclude that rating improvements were not due to pre-existing characteristics of the treatment group. In addition, the current study could not control for the interacting effects of other programs. As a result, it is possible that positive changes in participant ratings could be attributed to other programs or the collective impact of correctional programming.

It should also be noted that the evaluation was limited in its reliance on information gleaned from the Offender Intake Assessment. Participants and non-participants were compared on their dynamic ratings prior to program commencement and after program

completion. Instruments gauging other psychological constructs (e.g., cognitive distortions, anger, views of violence and women) may have identified important differences between participants and non-participants, thereby improving the measurement of program effectiveness.

Summary

Overall, this preliminary evaluation of the ISOYW program shows some promising results. Participants had lower criminogenic needs and higher potential for reintegration after completing the program. However, it is unclear whether the program is producing the observed results, given that similar results were found for the comparison group. Notwithstanding this, qualitative results indicate that there is also a high level of satisfaction with program staff and program content.

The ISOYW program could benefit from the suggestions made by the respondents and the recommendations put forth in this report. In order for the program to become more effective, changes will need to be considered in the areas of participant selection, facilitator screening, facilitator training, program delivery and aftercare. Furthermore, the recommendations in the current report should be viewed as complementary to those presented by Mason et al. (2001) and Couture (1999). A more exhaustive content-based evaluation will eventually be necessary to determine if the program content adheres to treatment principles and sound correctional practices.

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APPENDICES

Table 1: Demographic and Socio-Economic Characteristics of Participants

	Institution		Camp		<i>p</i>	Total	
	#	%	#	%		#	%
Total	119		99			218	
Institution	119	100%	99	100%		218	100%
Bowden Institution	23	19%	0	0%		23	11%
La Macaza Institution	16	13%	0	0%		16	7%
Matsqui Institution	11	9%	0	0%		11	5%
Mission Institution	12	10%	0	0%		12	6%
Pê Sâkâstêw Centre	10	8%	0	0%		10	5%
Saskatchewan Institution	28	24%	0	0%		28	13%
Stan Daniels Healing Centre	8	7%	79	80%		87	40%
Stony Mountain Institution	11	9%	0	0%		11	5%
William Head Institution	0	0%	20	20%		20	9%
Gender	119	100%	99	100%		218	100%
Male	119	100%	99	100%		218	100%
Aboriginal Status	119	100%	99	100%	*	218	100%
Aboriginal	116	97%	90	91%		206	94%
Non-Aboriginal	3	3%	9	9%		12	6%
Marital Status at Admission	119	100%	98	100%	NS	217	100%
Married/Common law	53	45%	44	45%		97	45%
Divorced/Separated	9	8%	5	5%		14	6%
Single	56	47%	46	47%		102	47%
Widow	1	1%	3	3%		4	2%
Education at Admission	98	100%	81	100%	NS	179	100%
No high school diploma	93	95%	71	88%		164	92%
High school diploma	5	5%	10	12%		15	8%
Employment at Arrest	96	100%	81	100%	NS	177	100%
Unemployed	72	75%	53	65%		125	71%
Employed	24	25%	28	35%		52	29%
Mean Age Prior to Program	32.1 yrs		34.8 yrs		*	33.3 yrs	

NS = Not Significant; **p* < .05; ***p* < .01; ****p* < .001
 Source: CSC Offender Management System.

Table 2: Current Most Serious Offence

	Institution		Camp		<i>p</i>	Total	
	#	%	#	%		#	%
Total	119	100%	98	100%	NS	217	100%
Homicide/attempt murder	43	36%	32	33%		75	35%
Sexual assault	15	13%	14	14%		29	13%
Assault	28	24%	21	21%		49	23%
Robbery	22	18%	20	20%		42	19%
Property offences	7	6%	6	6%		13	6%
Drug-related	2	2%	1	1%		3	1%
Other <i>Criminal Code</i> offence	2	2%	4	4%		6	3%
Aggregate Sentence (1)					NS		
Mean (years)		5.5		5.6			5.5
Median (years)		4.3		4.0			4.2

(1) Offenders serving life sentences were removed from analysis.

NS = Not Significant; **p* < .05; ***p* < .01; ****p* < .001

Source: CSC Offender Management System.

Table 3: Criminal History

	Institution		Camp		<i>p</i>	Total	
	#	%	#	%		#	%
Previous Youth Convictions	89	100%	79	100%	NS	168	100%
Yes	56	63%	48	61%		104	62%
No	33	37%	31	39%		64	38%
Previous Adult Convictions	90	100%	80	100%	NS	170	100%
Yes	80	89%	74	93%		154	91%
No	10	11%	6	8%		16	9%
Previous Community Supervision	90	100%	80	100%	NS	170	100%
Yes	74	82%	67	84%		141	83%
No	16	18%	13	16%		29	17%
Previous Provincial Term	90	100%	80	100%	NS	170	100%
Yes	75	83%	68	85%		143	84%
No	15	17%	12	15%		27	16%
Previous Federal Term	90	100%	80	100%	NS	170	100%
Yes	24	27%	27	34%		51	30%
No	66	73%	53	66%		119	70%
Failed – Community Sanction	89	100%	80	100%	NS	169	100%
Yes	61	69%	59	74%		120	71%
No	28	31%	21	26%		49	29%
Failed – Conditional Release	90	100%	79	100%	NS	169	100%
Yes	44	49%	39	49%		83	49%
No	46	51%	40	51%		86	51%
Segregation for Disciplinary Infraction	85	100%	79	100%	NS	164	100%
Yes	25	29%	23	29%		48	29%
No	60	71%	56	71%		116	71%
Escape/Attempt/UAL	90	100%	80	100%	NS	170	100%
Yes	33	37%	32	40%		65	38%
No	57	63%	48	60%		105	62%
Reclassified to Higher Security	88	100%	80	100%	NS	168	100%
Yes	14	16%	22	28%		36	21%
No	74	84%	58	73%		132	79%
< 6 Months Since Last Incarceration	89	100%	79	100%	NS	168	100%
Yes	30	34%	18	23%		48	29%
No	59	66%	61	77%		120	71%

NS = Not Significant; **p* < .05; ***p* < .01; ****p* < .001

Source: CSC Offender Management System.

Table 4: Static and Dynamic Factors - At Intake

	Institution		Camp		p	Total	
	#	%	#	%		#	%
Security Rating at Admission	106	100%	93	100%	*	199	100%
Minimum	6	6%	16	17%		22	11%
Medium	79	75%	61	66%		140	70%
Maximum	21	20%	16	17%		37	19%
Risk to Re-offend	116	100%	96	100%	**	212	100%
Low	0	0%	3	3%		3	1%
Medium	18	16%	30	31%		48	23%
High	98	84%	63	66%		161	76%
Overall Need	116	100%	96	100%	NS	212	100%
Low	1	1%	4	4%		5	2%
Medium	16	14%	17	18%		33	16%
High	99	85%	75	78%		174	82%
Dynamic Factors - some/considerable need (1)	117		96			213	
Marital/family	73	62%	66	69%	NS	139	65%
Substance abuse	108	92%	90	94%	NS	198	93%
Community functioning	46	39%	49	51%	NS	95	45%
Personal/emotional	113	97%	94	98%	NS	207	97%
Attitude	66	56%	54	56%	NS	120	56%
Associates/social interaction	82	70%	71	74%	NS	153	72%
Employment	87	74%	70	73%	NS	157	74%
Motivation for Intervention	69	100%	73	100%	**	142	100%
Low	12	17%	2	3%		14	10%
Medium	45	65%	46	63%		91	64%
High	12	17%	25	34%		37	26%
Reintegration Potential	110	100%	91	100%	NS	201	100%
Low	49	45%	40	44%		89	44%
Medium	32	29%	29	32%		61	30%
High	29	26%	22	24%		51	25%

(1) More than one response was possible. Therefore, total will not equal 100%.

NS = Not Significant; *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

Source: CSC Offender Management System.

Table 5: Other Offender Information

	#	%		#	%
Primary caregiver	46	100%	Experienced violence in community	46	100%
Single parent	12	26%	Yes	40	87%
Both parents	7	15%	No	6	13%
Other immediate family	13	28%	Cultural attachment-childhood	46	100%
Extended family	3	7%	Not at all	24	52%
Non-family	11	24%	Somewhat	9	20%
Stability of home life	46	100%	Very	13	28%
Not at all	20	43%	Traditional activities-childhood	36	100%
Somewhat	12	26%	Yes	27	75%
Very	14	30%	No	9	25%
Alcohol/drug problem in home	43	100%	Cultural attachment-institutions	46	100%
Yes	29	67%	Not at all	0	0%
No	14	33%	Somewhat	6	13%
Experienced abuse in the home	46	100%	Very	40	87%
Yes	37	80%	Traditional activities-current	46	100%
No	9	20%	Yes	44	96%
Types of abuse experienced (1)	37		No	2	4%
Physical violence	33	89%			
Psychological/emotional abuse	29	78%			
Sexual violence	19	51%			

(1) More than one response was possible. Therefore, total will not equal 100%.

Source: Interviews.

Table 6: Need for Programming, Reintegration Potential and Motivation for Intervention

Participant - Pre/Post Program (1)			
	PRE Program Mean	POST Program Mean	p
Overall Need	N = 93 2.75	2.44	***
Dynamic Factors	N = 129		
Marital/family	2.98	2.74	***
Substance abuse	3.53	3.05	***
Community functioning	2.45	2.31	**
Personal/emotional	3.61	3.22	***
Attitude	2.62	2.32	***
Associates/social interaction	2.84	2.53	***
Employment	2.81	2.66	**
Reintegration Potential	N = 93 1.65	1.90	***
Motivation for Intervention	N = 93 2.15	2.25	NS

(1) Based on the number of offenders that had pre and post assessments.
 NS = Not Significant; *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001
 Source: CSC Offender Management System.

Table 7: Incidents

Participant - Pre/Post Program (1)					
	Pre Program		Post Program		p
	#	%	#	%	
Perpetrated an Incident	136	100%	136	100%	NS
No	94	69%	103	76%	
Yes	42	31%	33	24%	
Incidents (2)	43		37		
Violence (3)	8	19%	4	11%	NS
Disturbance (4)	11	26%	12	32%	NS
Intelligence	11	26%	15	41%	NS
Unauthorized Item/Contraband (5)	21	49%	12	32%	**
Self Harm (6)	0	0%	2	5%	NS
Other (7)	19	44%	10	27%	**

(1) Examines incidence for one year pre-program and one year post-program.

(2) These percentages are based on the number of offenders who have committed an incident and will therefore not add up to 100%.

(3) Includes murder, assault on staff, other inmates and fighting.

(4) Includes disciplinary problems, setting fires, major and minor disturbance.

(5) Includes possession, receiving or transporting unauthorized items or contraband.

(6) Includes hunger strikes, self-injury and suicide.

(7) Includes damage to government property, being under the influence and other incidents.

NS = Not Significant; *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

Source: CSC Offender Management System.

Table 8: Need for Programming, Reintegration Potential and Motivation for Intervention

Participants vs. Comparison Group - Most Recent Rating

	Participants Mean	Comparison Mean	p
Overall Need	N = 100 2.43	N = 82 2.44	NS
Dynamic Factors (1)	N = 129	N = 102	
Marital/family	2.74	2.63	NS
Substance abuse	3.05	3.14	NS
Community functioning	2.31	2.34	NS
Personal/emotional	3.22	3.35	NS
Attitude	2.32	2.46	NS
Associates/social interaction	2.52	2.61	NS
Employment	2.66	2.54	NS
Reintegration Potential	N = 100 1.90	N = 82 1.73	NS
Motivation for Intervention	N = 100 2.27	N = 82 2.12	NS

NS = Not Significant; *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001
Source: CSC Offender Management System.

Table 9: Release and Re-admission

Participants vs. Comparison Group					
	Participants		Comparison		p
	#	%	#	%	
Released	135	100%	135	100%	***
No	23	17%	71	53%	
Yes	112	83%	64	47%	
Release Type	112	100%	64	100%	
Day Parole	44	39%	13	20%	**
Full Parole	1	1%	1	2%	NS
Statutory Release	59	53%	39	61%	NS
Warrant Expiry	6	5%	10	16%	*
Other	2	2%	1	2%	NS
Re-admitted to Federal Facility (1)	112	100%	64	100%	
No	75	67%	50	78%	NS
Yes - Technical Violation	22	20%	7	11%	NS
Yes - New Offence	14	13%	7	11%	NS
Yes - Other Reason	1	1%	0	0%	NS
Re-admission - new violent offence	14	100%	7	100%	**
No	13	93%	3	43%	
Yes	1	7%	4	57%	
Length of Time (in months)	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	
To Re-admission	5.9	6.0	6.1	5.8	NS

(1) Based on one year follow-up period from the date of release.

NS = Not Significant; *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

Source: CSC Offender Management System.

Table 10a: Participant Satisfaction

<u>Facilitators' Abilities</u>			<u>Addressing Needs</u>		
	#	%		#	%
Knowledge of Aboriginal culture	44	100%	Program is beneficial	46	100%
Very poor	1	2%	Not at all	0	0%
Average	4	9%	Somewhat	2	4%
Very good	39	89%	Very	44	96%
Knowledge of Aboriginal needs	44	100%	Violent behaviour	45	100%
Very poor	1	2%	Not at all	1	2%
Average	4	9%	Somewhat	4	9%
Very good	39	89%	Very	40	89%
Knowledge of Aboriginal communities	44	100%	Controlling anger	45	100%
Very poor	2	5%	Not at all	1	2%
Average	6	14%	Somewhat	2	4%
Very good	36	82%	Very	42	93%
Effectively communicate material	44	100%	Negative thinking	46	100%
Very poor	1	2%	Not at all	1	2%
Average	2	5%	Somewhat	9	20%
Very good	41	93%	Very	36	78%
Knowledge of treatment approaches	44	100%	Self-esteem/self-acceptance	46	100%
Very poor	1	2%	Not at all	1	2%
Average	3	7%	Somewhat	0	0%
Very good	40	91%	Very	45	98%
Sensitivity to Aboriginal issues	43	100%	Emotional problems	45	100%
Very poor	2	5%	Not at all	2	4%
Average	0	0%	Somewhat	1	2%
Very good	41	95%	Very	42	93%
Stimulate interest	45	100%	Cultural needs	46	100%
Very poor	1	2%	Not at all	1	2%
Average	1	2%	Somewhat	0	0%
Very good	43	96%	Very	45	98%

Source: Interviews.

Table 10b: Participant Satisfaction

<u>Satisfaction with Components</u>					
	#	%		#	%
Anger awareness	45	100%	Group skill development	46	100%
Not at all	0	0%	Not at all	0	0%
Somewhat	3	7%	Somewhat	5	11%
Very	42	93%	Very	41	89%
Violence awareness	46	100%	Cultural awareness	46	100%
Not at all	0	0%	Not at all	0	0%
Somewhat	3	7%	Somewhat	1	2%
Very	43	93%	Very	45	98%
Family of origin	46	100%	Cognitive learning	45	100%
Not at all	1	2%	Not at all	0	0%
Somewhat	3	7%	Somewhat	3	7%
Very	42	91%	Very	42	93%
Self-awareness	46	100%	Individual support/counselling	46	100%
Not at all	0	0%	Not at all	1	2%
Somewhat	1	2%	Somewhat	1	2%
Very	45	98%	Very	44	96%
Skill development	46	100%	Aboriginal healing	46	100%
Not at all	0	0%	Not at all	0	0%
Somewhat	5	11%	Somewhat	1	2%
Very	41	89%	Very	45	98%

Source: Interviews.

Table 11a: Facilitator Satisfaction

<u>Contribution of Program</u>			<u>Meeting Needs</u>		
	#	%		#	%
General satisfaction with program	17	100%	Violent behaviour	17	100%
Not at all	2	12%	Not at all	1	6%
Somewhat	2	12%	Somewhat	1	6%
Great deal	13	76%	Great deal	15	88%
Reducing institutional incidents	17	100%	Substance abuse	17	100%
Not at all	1	6%	Not at all	4	24%
Somewhat	2	12%	Somewhat	9	53%
Great deal	14	82%	Great deal	4	24%
Increasing motivation for intervention	16	100%	Cognitive distortions	17	100%
Not at all	0	0%	Not at all	1	6%
Somewhat	0	0%	Somewhat	7	41%
Great deal	16	100%	Great deal	9	53%
Increasing cultural awareness	16	100%	Impulse control	17	100%
Not at all	1	6%	Not at all	1	6%
Somewhat	0	0%	Somewhat	5	29%
Great deal	15	94%	Great deal	11	65%
Reducing risk of violence	16	100%	Emotional problems	17	100%
Not at all	1	6%	Not at all	1	6%
Somewhat	1	6%	Somewhat	4	24%
Great deal	14	88%	Great deal	12	71%
Reducing general recidivism	17	100%	Self-esteem/self-acceptance	17	100%
Not at all	2	12%	Not at all	1	6%
Somewhat	4	24%	Somewhat	1	6%
Great deal	11	65%	Great deal	15	88%
Preparing offender for release	15	100%	Interpersonal skills	17	100%
Not at all	3	20%	Not at all	3	18%
Somewhat	2	13%	Somewhat	1	6%
Great deal	10	67%	Great deal	13	76%
			Family difficulties	16	100%
			Not at all	3	19%
			Somewhat	3	19%
			Great deal	10	63%
			Education	17	100%
			Not at all	5	29%
			Somewhat	6	35%
			Great deal	6	35%
			Cultural	17	100%
			Not at all	1	6%
			Somewhat	0	0%
			Great deal	16	94%

Source: Interviews.

Table 11b: Facilitator Satisfaction

Satisfaction with Components

	#	%		#	%
Anger awareness	16	100%	Group skill development	16	100%
Not at all	1	6%	Not at all	1	6%
Somewhat	0	0%	Somewhat	3	19%
Very	15	94%	Very	12	75%
Violence awareness	16	100%	Cultural awareness	16	100%
Not at all	1	6%	Not at all	1	6%
Somewhat	0	0%	Somewhat	0	0%
Very	15	94%	Very	15	94%
Family of origin	16	100%	Cognitive learning	16	100%
Not at all	1	6%	Not at all	1	6%
Somewhat	2	13%	Somewhat	4	25%
Very	13	81%	Very	11	69%
Self-awareness	16	100%			
Not at all	1	6%			
Somewhat	0	0%			
Very	15	94%			
Skill development	16	100%			
Not at all	1	6%			
Somewhat	1	6%			
Very	14	88%			

Source: Interviews.

Table 12: Facilitator Interview - Possible Improvements

	#	%		#	%
Most useful aspects at release (1)	16		Better addressing needs (1)	9	
Cultural/spiritual component	5	31%	Include information on family violence	4	44%
Self-esteem/self-awareness	5	31%	More skills programming	3	33%
Violence awareness	4	25%	More healing/cultural emphasis	2	22%
All	2	13%	Other	2	22%
Other	6	38%			
Participant selection (1)	15		How CSC could assist (1)	17	
Greater involvement of Elders	6	40%	More facilitators and support staff	5	29%
More standardized selection process	6	40%	Better training and follow-up with staff	5	29%
Objective tools	4	27%	Better selection for facilitators	4	24%
More staff awareness	1	7%	Greater awareness of the program	4	24%
Other	2	13%	More funding and resources	3	18%
			Nothing	3	18%
			Other	3	18%
General areas of improvement (1)	14				
More facilitator training	5	36%			
Longer program	4	29%			
Better manual content	4	29%			
More Elder training	3	21%			
Better selection of candidates	2	14%			
More Elder involvement	1	7%			
More ceremonies	1	7%			
More skills developed	1	7%			
Enhancing positive changes (1)	16				
Institutional/community maintenance	10	63%			
Greater community involvement	3	19%			
Greater Elder involvement	2	13%			
Selection of facilitators and training	2	13%			
Longer program	1	6%			
Other	4	25%			

(1) More than one response was possible. Therefore, total will not equal 100%.
Source: Interviews.