

participant outcomes evaluation highlights

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Beyond the Blues is a project of the BC Partners for Mental Health and Addictions Information and part of its HeretoHelp brand. The BC Partners are seven non-profit agencies that have come together to provide quality information to help people prevent and manage mental health and substance use problems. For more about BC Partners and HeretoHelp, see www.heretohelp.bc.ca/about-us

To access the complete report, please contact us at beyondtheblues@heretohelp.bc.ca or 604-688-3234

To get a snapshot of what happened at Beyond the Blues 2015 outside of the evaluation findings, see our Final Report at www.heretohelp.bc.ca/beyond-the-blues

introduction/methodology

- The purpose of this project was to evaluate the participant outcomes of the Beyond the Blues (BTB): Screening and Education Days program. Beyond the Blues provides local health and community events with promotional/engagement items, educational/information materials, and screening and support resources.
- In October/November 2015, the Beyond the Blues campaign comprised 70 events across British Columbia and Yukon. Individuals participated in the events by doing one or more of the following: walking by/ stopping at a display, attending a presentation, and/or filling out a screening self-test with debrief interviews afterwards.
- Some participants were invited to do either onsite surveys (mostly youth sites) at an event or agree to fill out a follow up online survey (mostly adult sites). Those who agreed and completed a survey were entered into a draw for an iPad Mini and \$10 Starbucks or iTunes gift cards. Two versions of the survey were used to ensure that the views of youth were included without the project asking them for personal information for the prize draws. The onsite survey was slightly shorter than the follow up version.
- 344 participants from 25 events agreed to do the surveys. In total, 188 participant surveys were actually completed: 133 onsite surveys and 55 follow up surveys from 23 events (representing 33% of all events). Survey respondents were less often walk-by participants and more often presentation or screening participants than all 2015 Beyond the Blues participants.

participant profile

- Survey respondents were often:
 - » Living outside the Lower Mainland or Fraser Valley (83%)*
 - » Female (61%)
 - » 25 or younger (82%)*
 - » Caucasian (58%)
- * these figures are notably higher when compared to all 2015 screening event participants
- Follow up survey respondents mainly attended to get information for themselves (75%). (Onsite survey respondents were not asked this question.)



access to information and supports

- Participants were often drawn to events by someone encouraging them to go, as well as the events' content (presentation topics or speakers, screening). Free food, prizes and giveaways also encouraged participation.
- Onsite survey respondents more often mentioned they had "no choice" e.g., this was a class or school activity they received time off to go to. Follow up survey respondents more often mentioned screening and/or their interest in a specific mental health topic.
- Survey respondents often stayed between half an hour and an hour at an event (38%). About one in four stayed longer (25%) and a similar proportion stayed for a shorter time (28%). On average, follow up survey respondents stayed longer (83 minutes) at events than onsite survey respondents (47 minutes). The median average stay for both groups was 60 minutes.
- 24% of survey respondents completed screenings, mostly follow up survey respondents. 72% of the 46

participants completing screenings found them to be useful. Participants commented on what they liked about the screenings and why they were useful including that they increased their awareness, provided them with information and/or helped confirm for them how they were doing. They also commented on how they could be better or why they were not useful including in the areas of privacy, the information provided or the staff person conducting them.

- 78% of survey respondents had read some of the materials on information tables. Follow up survey respondents (89%) more often recalled reading some of these materials than onsite survey respondents (74%). Forty-four percent of participants remembered reading about specific topics, especially materials about anxiety or depression.
- 17% of survey respondents said they were familiar with the HeretoHelp.bc.ca website before the event. Of those who were not familiar with HeretoHelp, 47% said they would be more likely to visit or recommend the HeretoHelp.bc.ca website as a result of attending the event.

participants ...



24%
completed
screenings



78%
read promo/
info materials



79%
would
recommend
the event



79%
found info
useful



93%
plan to use
info they
learned



"The screenings at the event were completed by members of the mental health community (RPNs), well respected and very well known. The screener I had is the clinical lead (head nurse) of a local mental health service. Very good assessment and helpful tips. Great recommendations for services and resources!" —event participant

satisfaction, learning and use



Overall, between 75% and 80% of survey respondents were satisfied, likely to recommend or found the information presented at the events to be useful.

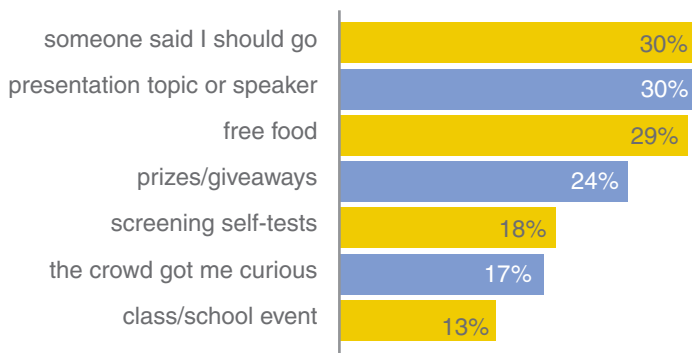
- Survey respondents valued most the event activities especially screening, personal experiences, friendly staff, the information/content provided and what they were able to take away from the events including practical strategies, knowledge of community resources and confidence to support themselves or a loved one.
- 58% of follow up survey respondents felt better informed about where to go for help and support in their community (an additional 9% responded that this question did not apply to them). 31% of the follow up survey respondents felt less stigma as a result of attending (an additional 24% responded that this question did not apply to them).

- 93% of all survey respondents planned to use the information they had learned and 69% of follow up respondents reported they had already used it (onsite survey respondents were not asked about actual use). Examples including seeing a doctor or seek/reconnect with professional care, visiting websites, making lifestyle changes, and helping others with mental health issues.

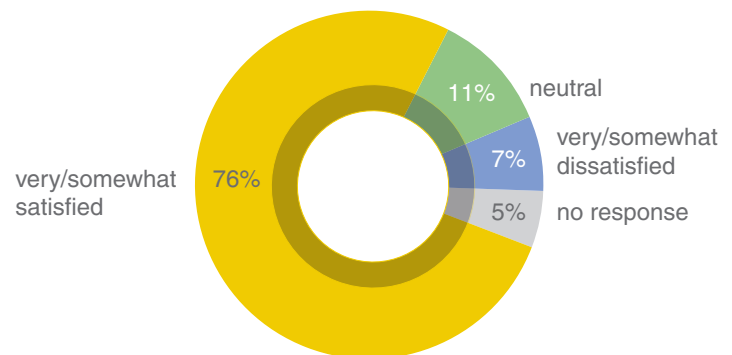
suggested enhancements

- Participants were asked what they would like to see more of, topics they wished there had been more information on or what could have been done better. They mentioned either nothing or more fun and engaging activities (such as games, videos and the like), more or better food, more information on specific topics (from anxiety and mood disorders to schizophrenia and suicide prevention), more personal interaction with staff, more stories of lived experience, and/or increased frequency of events.

what drew you to this event?



overall, how satisfied were you with this event?



“The speaker had a calming voice and presented information that reinforced the direction I am going in my own recovery. The person I was with seemed able to hear what she was saying and was encouraged by all the information that was available. Multiple individual leaflets and papers and having the ability to choose what you want is a good way to allow people to engage and only take what they need.”

—event participant

“I definitely valued [the speaker] expressing her story to us. Being able to hear about her journey and how she was affected by mental health was extremely impactful and showed me how it can effect anyone. It was inspiring to hear how strong she was and I am motivated to help others get the help they deserve now.” —event participant

conclusions and possible actions

The analysis included in this report is exploratory only. There were insufficient survey completions to draw overall conclusions about participant outcomes across all sites. The number of responses was small relative to the number of participants reported as attending the events. As well, some types of participants (e.g., screening participants) more often responded than others (e.g., walk-by participants). Nevertheless, the responses came from participants at a full third (33%) of the 2015 event sites. As well, consistent processes were used to recruit participants for the onsite and follow up surveys.

conclusions

- The responses confirmed that the logic of the Beyond the Blues program is working as intended—for the subset of participants who were surveyed.
- The events met survey respondents' diverse needs.
- Engagement materials started the conversation and for some were the only conversation.
- Personal connections supported success.
- The event's mental health content and topics were relevant.
- Survey respondents used or intended to use what they took away from the events in a wide range of ways.
- Beyond the Blues works with many partners to contribute to these events and their outcomes.

Possible actions informed by this evaluation include:

- Confirm the reliability, accuracy and currency of the information being provided to ensure these assumptions are also supported.
- Continue to provide a mix of activities including screening, presentations, information products and engagement materials. Build on successes with youth and aboriginal groups and/or try to broaden reach e.g., working with other cultural communities.
- More interactive information development to engage and inform participants simultaneously.
- Ensure event staff and volunteers are chosen carefully and emphasize outreach and engagement in training and orientation.
- Continue to provide a variety of topics and screening questionnaires, including on anxiety and depression.
- Review materials/activities with a view to potential use after the event e.g., for more active uses like behaviour change versus more passive uses like knowledge change given the responses provided.
- Review ways to optimize Beyond the Blues' contributions relative to other partners supporting these events.



“This event gave me more tools to help myself and others.”

—event participant

“The most useful information was the one-on-one experience. Being a student gets super stressful, so it was nice to do the little screening and see the bigger picture of what’s going on in my life. Sometimes we forget to take a moment to look at the other factors that may make someone more stressed.”

—event participant

“The most valuable part of the Beyond the Blues event was the screening portion. The high quality assessment by such highly qualified practitioners was very well done. Access to mental health assessments and services is limited in our area. Psychiatric services and referrals have a very long waiting list and acute services are very stigmatising. So public assessments are very helpful in our area.”

—event participant