

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 2016 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. This is the second year of the evaluation.
- In 2016/2017, the Beyond the Blues campaign comprised 70 events across British Columbia. 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.
- For this evaluation, some participants were invited to do either on-site surveys (mostly youth sites) at an event or agree to fill out a follow up online survey (mostly adult sites).*
- 572 participants from 30 events agreed to do the surveys. In total, 392 participant surveys were actually completed: 301 on-site surveys and 91 follow-up surveys from 30 events (representing 43% of all events).
- Across the two years of the evaluation a total of 580 surveys across 53 events were completed.
- This year's evaluation incorporated a number of changes which increased participation rates. As a result of the changes, there was a 66% increase in those who agreed to do the survey and a 109% increase in the number who completed surveys compared to 2015.

* 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 prizes.

participant profile

- 2016 survey respondents were often:
 - » Living in Northern BC (35%)*, Metro Vancouver/Fraser Valley (34%) or the Interior (29%)*
 - » Female (60%)
 - » 25 or younger (81%)*
 - » White (62%)*

* these figures are higher when compared to all 2016 screening event participants

- Follow-up survey respondents mainly attended to get information for themselves (67%).
- 2016 survey respondents were more often walk-by or screening participants than 2015 survey respondents.



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.
- Survey respondents often stayed between half an hour and an hour at an event (27%). About one in three stayed longer (31%) and a similar proportion stayed for a shorter time (30%). In 2016, survey respondents more often stayed five minutes or less; hearing from more walk-by participants was a strategic goal of the survey.
- 43% of survey respondents completed screenings. Participants commented on what they liked about the screenings and why they were useful including the information they received from the screenings and what they had learned, as well as the questions, timing and privacy of the screenings. They also commented on how they could be better or why they were not useful including in the areas of questionnaire length (with preferences expressed for both longer and shorter), the response categories available and the usefulness of the follow-up sessions/information provided.
- 69% of survey respondents had read some of the materials on information tables. At least half of respondents remembered the topics of things they picked up. They remembered a very wide range of topics, but anxiety and depression continued to be the topics most respondents recalled reading about.
- 13% of follow-up survey respondents said they were familiar with the HeretoHelp.bc.ca website before the event. Of those who were or were not familiar with HeretoHelp, 65% said they would be more likely to visit or recommend the HeretoHelp.bc.ca website as a result of attending the event.

participants ...



43%
completed
screenings



69%
read promo/
info materials



69%
would
recommend
the event



76%
found info
useful



88%
plan to use
info they
learned



"I liked that [the event] was so interactive. There was tons of useful, relevant information. I'm glad it was there, as some people often fear going into a specific organization to look for help for fear of identifying themselves. I think this was a great way to provide information in a safe, welcoming environment."

—event participant

satisfaction, learning and use



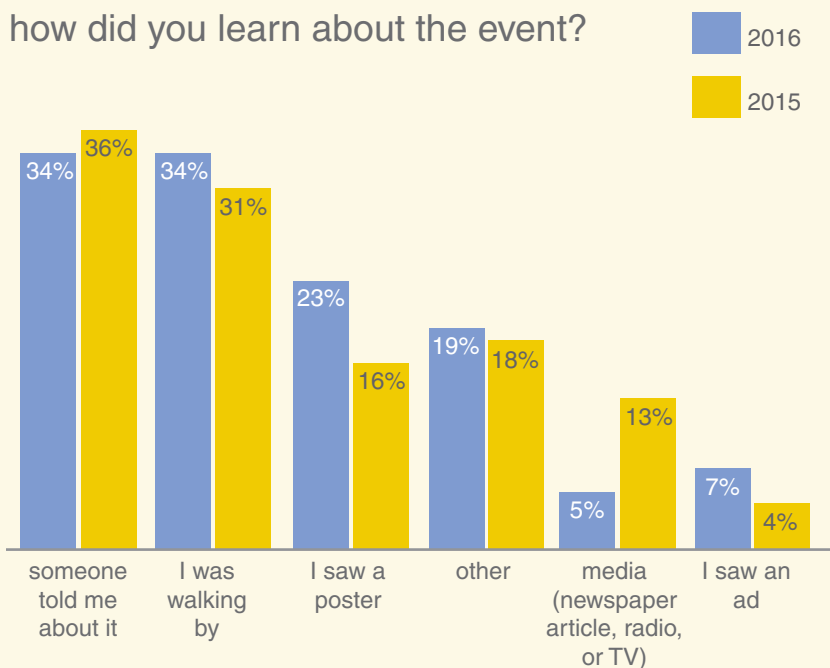
77% of survey respondents were satisfied overall with the event they attended; 2% were dissatisfied*

- 76% found the information presented at the events to be useful overall; 2% disagreed it would be useful*
- 69% would recommend attending their events to others
- Survey respondents valued most the event activities especially screenings, personal experiences, friendly staff, the fun and safe environment, the information/content provided and what they were able to take away from the events including practical strategies, knowledge of community resources, apps/websites, learning they were ok and now feeling able to help a friend or family member.

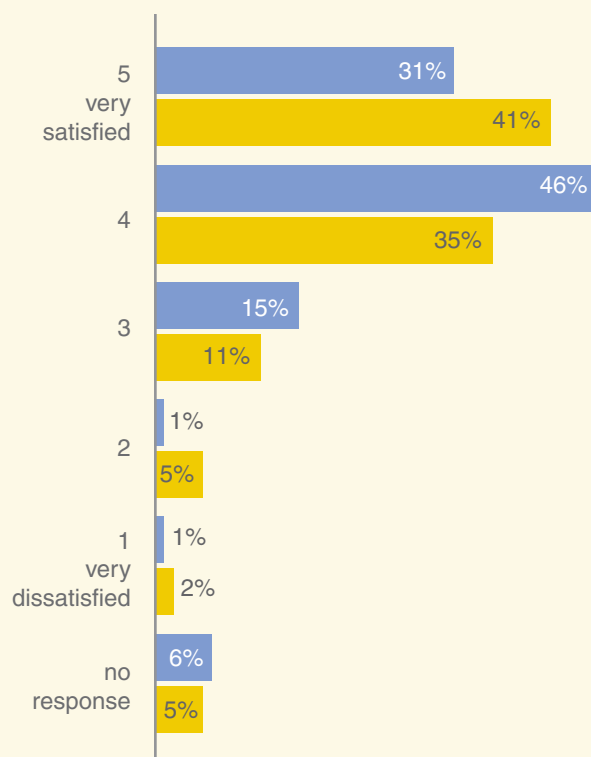
- 73% of follow-up survey respondents felt better informed about where to go for help and support in their community
- 44% of the follow up survey respondents felt less stigma as a result of attending.
- 88% of all survey respondents planned to use the information they had learned and 89% of follow-up respondents reported they had already used it (on-site survey respondents were not asked about actual use). Participants most often reported planning or already using the information to making lifestyle changes. They reported information uses related to helping others next most often. One in ten or more reported information uses related to helping themselves, from visiting a website to trying a new service or program and/or seeking professional help.

* the remainder were neutral or did not answer

how did you learn about the event?



how satisfied were you with the event?



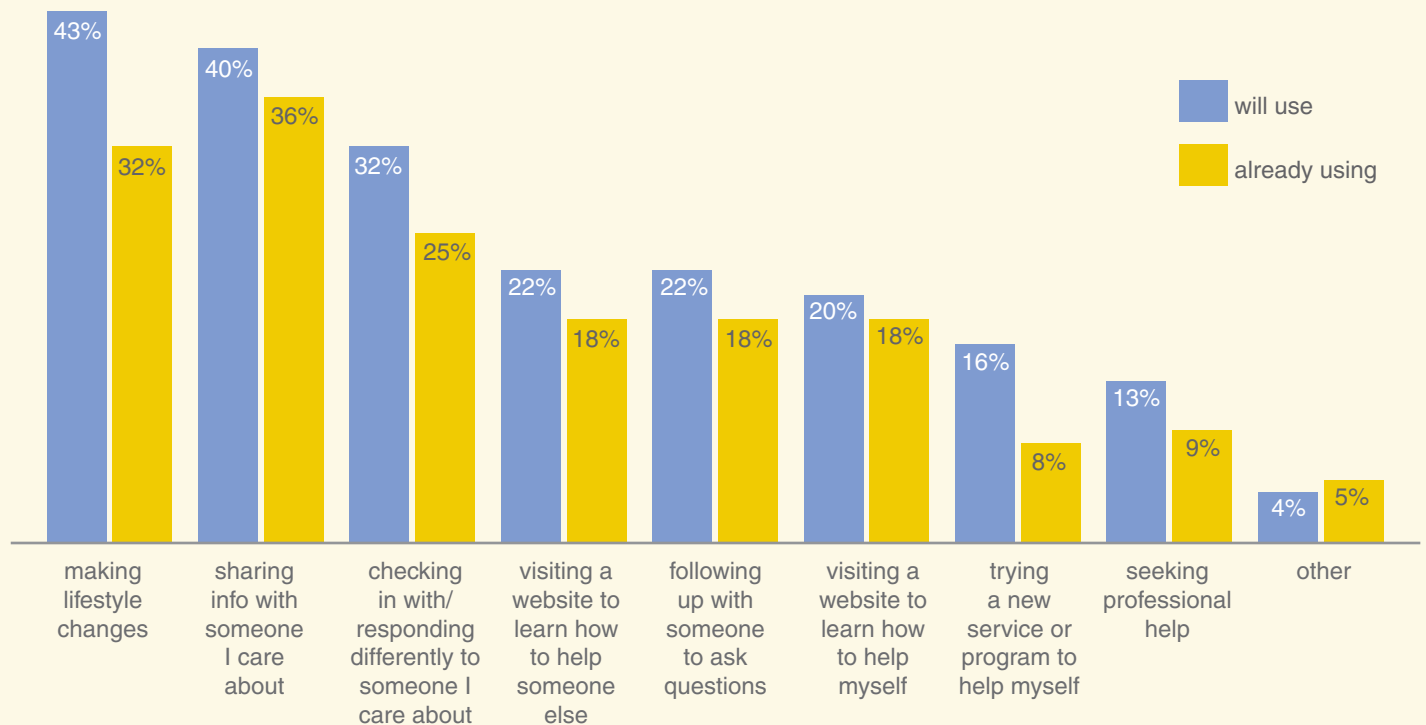
“It was fun, informative and created a great space to learn and socialize. There were snacks, refreshments and the activities were great!” —event participant

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 advertising, more stress release activities,

more fun and engaging activities (such as games, more/better videos), more or better food, more information on specific topics (from anxiety and depression to drinking, drug addiction and coping strategies), more personal interaction with staff, more stories of lived experience, and generally more audience engagement/interaction.

which information that you got at the event will you use, or are already using?



“I felt that the presenter was warm and engaging. She was very comfortable talking about stress and meditation. She interacted with the group very well, listening to comments and answering questions.”

—event participant

“The resiliency talk was focused on both children and adults, which made it applicable to a more diverse population. The personal speaker at the end struck a chord with me and pulled the whole presentation together. I felt the speaker was excellent, well informed and interesting to hear new information from.”

—event participant

“The environment is very welcoming and positive, a stigma-free space full of fun and information. Loved the pamphlets and self-care info!”

—event participant

conclusions and possible actions

The analysis included in this report confirms the results observed in 2015 on key metrics. The number of responses is larger relative to the previous year by design. While screening participants more often responded than others, there was an increase in shorter stay participants who responded (e.g., walk-by participants)—a goal of the survey as this is a growing group of attendees. The responses came from participants at almost half (43%) of the 2016/17 event sites. As well, consistent processes were used to recruit participants for the on-site and follow-up surveys. The analysis supports the conclusions and possible actions informed by the evaluation in 2015.

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 new and existing site planners are aware of the range of interactive materials already available and supported better to offer them.
- 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.



“I enjoyed and appreciated being able to talk to mental health professionals at this event. The atmosphere was very comfortable and welcoming, the event created opportunities to talk openly about mental health concerns, and the activities were fun. I also appreciated the resource information that I could take away to read later and I gave some of the info to others that couldn't make the event. I found my experience of being screened and then being able to talk to someone about my results very interesting.” —event participant

“The event was active, fun, and not intimidating. I think it created a great atmosphere for people to enter and investigate the different booths and information provided.” —event participant