

Building Community Capacity: Evidence-informed approaches for supporting family caregivers of persons with SUD

BACKGROUND

Most persons with substance use disorder (SUD) live in a family setting. Indeed, when family members are involved in care for persons with SUD, they are more likely to access services. Most families require coping and communication skills as well as education about SUD to care for their loved one. Families for Addiction Recovery (FAR) is a grassroots organization comprised of over 50 volunteers that support families through peer mentorship and advocacy. The Invitation to Change (ITC) Approach brings together the concepts and skills found in Community Reinforcement and Family Training (CRAFT), Motivational Interviewing (MI) and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and is an evidence-informed skill-building program for families that provides behavioural and motivational strategies for interacting with a relative with SUD. Skills such as the use of positive reinforcement, natural consequences, boundaries and communication strategies are some examples.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

To extend knowledge related to effective family-centred interventions used by a community organization

TESTIMONIALS

“Compassionate, knowledgeable, nonjudgmental mom to mom conversations supported me over one of the bumpiest rides of my life.”

“I just want to thank everyone within the organization for all of the support I received! I’m truly amazed at how helpful this organization has been to me ! I feel like I’m not alone anymore and have true support standing by if I should need it . The people within FAR truly understand.”

“This service provided me with the support I needed during times of devastating hopelessness. When I was so engrossed in the pain of the situation, my P2P would remind me of self-care and plans I had to provide more support for my family. I needed these phone calls to keep me sane and responsible. Thank you, FAR, for providing Peer support just when I needed it.”

INVITATION TO CHANGE APPROACH

CRAFT

Community Reinforcement and Family Training (CRAFT) offers family members supportive skills and non-confrontational techniques to be able to support their loved ones empathetically through their illness and help guide them toward a recovery process. CRAFT also recognizes the value of self-care through their journey.

MI

Motivational Interviewing is a method of non-judgmental communication used to empower the individual through empathy and collaboration.

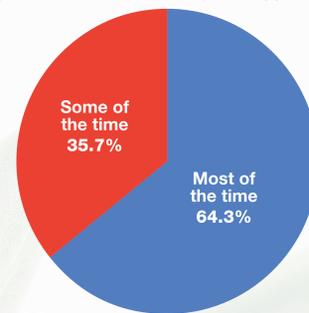
ACT

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy is an approach which allows individuals to receive validation and acceptance for their journeys. Loved ones can accept and acknowledge the challenges of living with a person with a SUD.

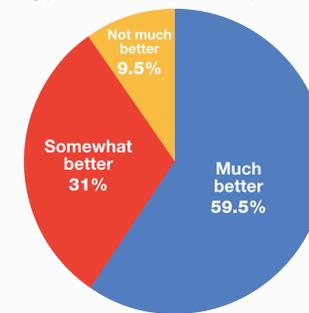


Photo by Külli Kittus on Unsplash

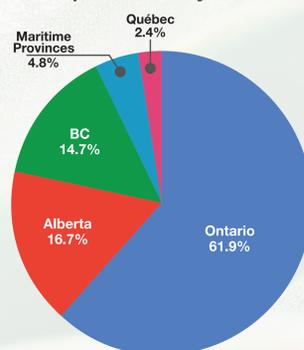
Do you feel better able to cope following your conversations with your supporter?



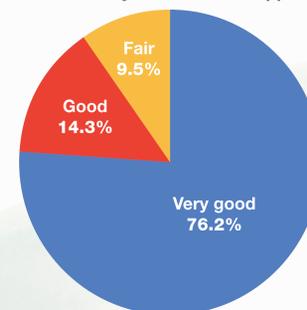
Do you feel you have a better understanding of addiction following your conversations with your supporter?



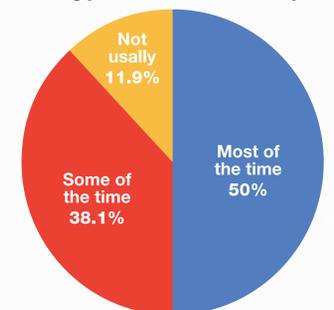
What province do you live in?



Overall how would you rate the support you received from your volunteer supporter?



Did you feel better able to talk about your concerns with your child following your conversations with your supporter?



METHODS

Using a cross-sectional survey design to evaluate the parent-to-parent support, we analyzed data from (n=71) surveys spanning from October 2019 to October 2021.

RESULTS

The results reinforce the ITC Approach as an effective tool for:

- 1) Enhancing ability to cope
- 2) Understanding SUD
- 3) Satisfaction with non-judgmental parent-to-parent peer support
- 4) Enhancing communication with family members with SUD.

CONCLUSION

The ITC Approach is an effective strategy for supporting family members of persons with lived and living experience of SUD. The findings from this study support the need for additional (ongoing) family-centred approaches to address SUD.

SUPPORT

EDUCATE

ADVOCATE