

# Social Return On Investment (SROI)

## Case Study: The Becoming Clubhouse

**Fast FACTS:** The Yorkton Mental Health Drop-In Centre Inc. received funding to develop The Becoming Clubhouse project as part of their overall services for people with mental health problems.

**By the NUMBERS:**

16 individuals attend LGBT (lesbian/gay/bisexual/trans-gender) Social/Support Groups

6 individuals have attended the Young Adult Social Group

19 individuals have received solution-focused counseling services

17 educational and skill building workshops have been delivered internally

9 educational and skill building workshops have been delivered to outside agencies

17 recreational and leisure events have been coordinated and facilitated

12 cultural/art programs have been delivered

43 drop-in services have been provided

56 individuals have received services

**SROI Case Study  
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*“I think this group is desperately needed in Yorkton; all walks of life need connection, community and a place to be and feel normal.”*

*-Becoming Clubhouse member*

**Background:** Our community and its members have identified, on numerous occasions, frustrations about accessing timely mental health services and support. Human services agencies have stated the need for programming that focuses on professional and peer support for individuals experiencing mental health symptoms, in particular youth and young adults. This target group traditionally views current mental health services with a stigma attached to participating in them. Alternative programming that supports the current mental health system and provides services that are not in existence was needed by community members. With the absence of Canadian Mental Health Association, little to no priority has been given to facilitate support groups, mental health awareness, or community inclusion for all. This program was designed to respond to the identified gap in our community for youth and young adults with mental health symptoms. Most common mental health symptoms among this target group are social isolation, low self-esteem, anxiety, poor social skills, and feelings of disconnect from their community. In November of 2011, the Canada Post Foundation for Mental Illness granted the Yorkton Mental Health Drop-In Centre Inc. funds for The Becoming Clubhouse project.

**Participant Overview:**

- Participants between the ages of 17 and 36
- Individuals experiencing mental health issues
- Individuals who experience social isolation
- Individuals who experience barriers to employment
- Individuals seeking community-based support services/groups

**Theory of Change**

If individuals experiencing mental health symptoms have access to support groups, education modules and recreation and leisure activities, they will learn coping strategies, how to implement them into their lives, and will therefore be more likely to be healthy, and contribute positively in their community.

**Starting from a Foundation of Hope:** Through consultation with a partnering community agency, it was determined that having a sense of belonging in one's community would aid in creating improved mental health. By providing community-based social/support groups, individuals have the opportunity to connect, learn strategies, and coping skills that assist in overall well-being and improved mental health. Parents and caregivers expressed feelings of hope knowing there was support available to address their greatest concerns of social isolation and hospitalization.

**Social Value Created for Participants:** The participants of The Becoming Clubhouse were the targeted beneficiaries of the program. Individuals who participated in the Young Adult Social group experienced: decreased isolation, peer support, sense of belonging, self-esteem building, personal growth, role modeling, and community integration. Participants of the LGBT Social Group benefitted from peer support, sense of belonging, having a safe environment to express themselves and discuss issues. Individuals developed friendships that have transferred from the coordinated social/support groups to independent outings. These friendships have provided a sense of belonging, personal empowerment, and overall quality of life. In addition, this group participated in an anti-violence workshop that provided the opportunity to create awareness of the issues faced by LGBT individuals on a day to day basis.

Unintended value was created for self-referred individuals who requested counseling services while they were on wait lists.

Below are two real life stories that demonstrate a typical journey of change for individuals who access The Becoming Clubhouse services.

**Josh**

*Josh is a 35 year old male. Josh first came to the Drop-In Centre seeking support for depression. He had recently relocated to Yorkton from Saskatoon and returned home to live with his family. Josh felt unhappy, lonely, and lost. He was unemployed and was not feeling well enough to seek employment. Josh explained that he was feeling tired all the time and did not feel like socializing or being out in society.*

*Having limited involvement in the community, feeling depressed and like he did not belong, Josh was struggling with where to go and what to do for his overall mental health. He wanted to feel better, feel 'normal'.*

**QUOTE**

*“Yes, it has created a new and different sense of community. There has always been power and support in numbers. Having a place to go, where you know you are supported for who you are, is always good.”*

*At the time, the Drop-In Centre did not have suitable programming to address Josh’s needs. Through The Becoming Clubhouse project, Josh attended one-on-one solution focused counseling. While working with Josh, discussion of goals, past experiences and a solution-focused approach were utilized to empower Josh. Goals included: to obtain employment, become a part of a social group, and have the freedom to be himself.*

*Through The Becoming Clubhouse, the LGBT Social/ Support Group was offered at the Drop-In Centre. This support group was appropriate for Josh’s interests and aided in supporting his need for socialization and peer support. Josh started attending the LGBT Social Group regularly. Initially, he was reluctant to open up and share his feelings and thoughts within the group. However, as he continued to attend it did not take long for him to become an important part of the group’s dynamics. Throughout this process, Josh continued individual counselling services through The Becoming Clubhouse but as he became more comfortable within the group the frequency of individual sessions decreased.*

*Josh’s personal growth was apparent in numerous ways. He made outside connections with the other peers in the group and engaged in activities outside of the group. He opened up and talked freely about himself and his beliefs during writing therapy groups held throughout the winter months. When a LGBT discussion group was held Josh shared his thoughts with the group without hesitation, he was comfortable enough to share without worry.*

*Josh explains that changes he has experienced as a result of The Becoming Clubhouse included: meeting new people, opportunity to express thoughts and feelings, expand personal horizons, and also have a sense of belonging. As well, he expressed that meeting new people and making friends was a component that was very important. Expressing thoughts and feelings helped with Josh’s pent up emotions.*

*Josh now has a fulltime job, has made new friends and enjoys community activities with the new friends he has made. Josh expressed that participating in the program has made life better. "Yes it has created a new and different sense of community. There has always been power and support in numbers. Having a place to go where you know you are supported for who you are is always good."*

*Josh continues to attend the LGBT support group. He notes his own personal growth through the experience of feeling like he belongs and is accepted as a part of the group. Josh plays an important role within the group, as new participants attend, he is open and willing to share his stories, his struggles, and explain how the group has impacted his life overall.*

*Josh was supported by the people in the group, family members, and the program coordinator. Josh has come a long way from feeling lost, depressed and lonely. He now has a support system that works to benefit and empower him with his everyday struggles, leading to an overall increased quality of life.*

**Sarah**

*Sara is a 27 year old female. She is employed at a Day Care in Yorkton and lives with her parents.*

*Sara was referred to The Becoming Clubhouse by Partners in Employment to address social isolation, increased life skills, increased independence, respite for family, and assist with connecting her to meaningful activities in the community. Even though she is employed, Sara did not have friends to hang out with or peers to talk with. The Young Adults Social Group seemed like a perfect fit to address her needs and to fill the lack of social interaction with peers.*

**FACT**

*In Canada, 1 person in 5 will experience some problem with their mental health in the course of a year. One person in three will experience a mental health problem in their lifetime.*

*- Mental Health Commission of Canada*

*When Sara first started attending group she was shy and did not say much. She participated in all activities but did not fully engage with the other group members. However, the dynamics within the group were friendly and open and it did not take Sara long to start engaging in conversations with other group members.*

*Sara enjoys coming to group because she has found a new sense of belonging, especially by having friends to share in activities with. She feels part of a team, as she participates in many activities within the community including: bowling, swimming, art, badminton - which are in a safe, non-threatening environment. Social skills, such as friendship skills, are important for growth and to foster overall well-being. Making new friends has made Sara feel like she is part of a group. She enjoys recreational and educational activities and also the drop-ins at the centre. By participating in the program Sara has become more independent. The program coordinator has observed that Sarah has increased: self-esteem, life skills, assertiveness skills and social skills. She is now able to express her opinion, share ideas and provide feedback when required.*

*Nearing the end of winter, Sara broke her leg and was unable to come to group for several months. The other group members missed her and awaited her arrival back into the group. Staff made time to visit Sara at home to see how she was doing. She was delighted to have company and she said she had missed her friends.*

*Sara is always positive and happy. She always has something nice to say to the others and they return the compliments. Sara expressed, "I am happy to have made best friends like you."*

*Since participating in the Young Adults group, Sara has gained friendships, meaningful community involvement, life skills knowledge, increased independence, and an overall sense of belonging.*

**QUOTE**

*"I am happy to have made best friends like you."*

**Calculating the SROI of the Program (forecast)**

Stakeholder	Outcome	Financial Proxy Value per year (see impact map for calculations)
Youth and young adults experiencing mental health symptoms	Increased awareness of mental health triggers leads to improved coping skills	\$ 5,640 (Value of one individual attending job readiness group which covers: self-esteem, self-confidence, life skills, and social skills training; based on the contract between employment services division and Ministry of Economy)
	Improved relationships with others lead to reduced dependency on mental health system	\$3,097 (Average cost of case management support to one individual with a disability) <i>Ministry of Social Services Annual Report 2010-11.</i>
	Increased peer support leads to better job maintenance	\$11,400 (Assuming that one young adult works 100 hours per month @ minimum wage [\$9.50/hr] in SK, for a 12 month period)
	Increased community inclusion through active participation	\$270 (Cost saving on recreational activities such as walking track, bowling, swimming, lunches, Christmas parties, etc.)
Lesbian/ Gay/ Bisexual Adults	Build positive relationships/friendships with others in the community resulting in reduced risk of victimization	\$1 (This value has yet to be determine and ongoing secondary research is in progress to determine the value of this outcome, therefore, for the time being we assign \$1 to indicate a need for ongoing research)
	Increased sense of acceptance by others reduces depression and hopelessness and need for mental health counseling	\$170 (Cost of mental health services assuming 5 appointments per individual) <i>SAHO/HSAS Collective Agreement.</i>
Parents of young adults experiencing mental health symptoms	Decreased risk of burnout	\$3,600 (Family Caregiver Tax Credit [max. of \$300 per month = \$3,600/yr] provided by the federal government to recognize and support the role of caregivers. - <i>Retrieved on Service Canada government website and tax forms</i> )
	Respite for parents allows them to have an opportunity to complete unattended to tasks/or attend to other family needs	\$84 (\$842 average wage of Community Support Worker that provides respite services. Participants spend 2 hours a week in the program. To calculate value we use 10% of the wages and multiply this by 45 weeks a client would access the program on average. - <i>Based on proxy calculated in the SLYP-Out, Saskatchewan Abilities Council SROI Case Study, 2012</i> )
Self-directed client referrals	Individuals have access to one on one counseling in a timely fashion without waiting extended time to receive services	\$170 (Cost of mental health services assuming 5 appointments per individual) <i>SAHO/HSAS Collective Agreement.</i>

## Social Return on Investment Calculation

SROI forecast analysis predicts how much social value will be created if the activities of the program meet their intended outcomes. Forecast analysis is based on the program's history and benchmarks. The forecast SROI of this program is conservative and takes into account: limited quantity of participants, other agencies that contribute to the program, and the fact that a small number of program beneficiaries would have reached the outcomes without involvement in the program.

Therefore, in order to calculate the projected impact of the program, the financial proxies were multiplied by the quantity of the outcomes minus any attribution, displacement, and deadweight. This calculation has been carried out for each row of the impact map.

In addition, a discount rate of 3.5% was applied to account for the risk that the investor may take by investing in this program and not receiving the forecasted Social Return on Investment.

The forecasted impact of the investment (\$61,572) after one year, which is the period of the activities that will be delivered over a twelve month time frame, is valued at \$138,132. This resulted in the social return on investment of **2.24:1** meaning that **for every dollar invested there will likely be \$2.24 of value created.**

When calculating impact it is important to consider the duration of the outcomes and recognize that some outcomes will last beyond the intervention. For example, learning new coping skills and managing stress is an outcome that participants may have gained for a lifetime. Based on the forecast analysis it is probable that the social value created for participants and society will last between one to three years. When duration is considered in the calculation the overall social value created by the \$61, 572 investment **over a three-year time frame is projected to be \$322,357 resulting in a Social Return on Investment of \$5.24 for every dollar invested.**