

**Community-Based Programming for Women in Conflict with the Law:
The Perceptions of Staff and Volunteers**

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

There is a marked absence in the Canadian literature about what types of programs and programming characteristics are available to women in conflict with the law when they return to the community after a period of incarceration. There is a need to document the programming options available as well as the characteristics of these programs and their perceived ability to help assist women in conflict with the law find a place in the community. This research is based on a case study conducted with Elizabeth Fry Toronto. The results of this study are based on eight semi-structured interviews that were conducted with the staff and volunteers at this agency.

Drawing on the sociological perspectives of multiple marginalities, pathways to crime, stigma and impression management, this study explores the following: (1) the key program elements that are perceived to assist with women's reintegration back into the community; (2) the ways in which the program elements represent characteristics of successful programs as identified in the literature; and, (3) the challenges Elizabeth Fry Toronto faces in delivering or implementing key program strategies.

Findings provide support for the categories and themes of the three sociological perspectives. Also, the results of this research are consistent with what the existing literature identifies as innovative and effective program responses for female offenders in the community. Finally, this study finds that Elizabeth Fry Toronto faces four challenges in assisting women offenders find a place in the community after a period of incarceration: issues surrounding housing arrangements, fiscal restraints, potential clients are unaware of the services available to them, and the perceptions of society regarding women offenders.

The results from this study can be used to improve policy and practice as well as add a much needed Canadian perspective to the characteristics and programming options available to women in conflict in the law in the community. This study can possibly inform policy makers with the knowledge, perspectives and theories needed to improve the social conditions for women offenders both in prison and in the community. The findings from this case study illustrate successful program elements, from the perspective of those who work with these women, and the challenges faced by clients and the organization for one community-based agency.

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I want to tell you I believe in you; I believe in your mind
And all the dreams, intelligence, and determination within you
Believe in yourself the way I do, and nothing will be beyond your reach

-- Joleen K. Fox

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To my parents and Jeremy, thank you for pushing me to achieve my dreams and believing that I was capable of making them come true. It has been a long road.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my Gramma. Your guidance, encouragement, and unwavering support have all helped to contribute to the woman I am today. Your kind and gentle soul has gone to greener pastures but your memories will live in our hearts forever. I did it Gram!

Olive Beverly Hudson
June 27, 1936 – November 10, 2010

“God’s garden must be beautiful; He only takes the best”

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1.0 Introduction & Literature Review

1.1 Introduction

In Canada, incarcerated adult women will serve their time in either a provincial institution or one of five regional federal institutions located across the country – Truro, Nova Scotia; Joliette, Quebec; Kitchener, Ontario; Maple Creek, Saskatchewan; Abbotsford, British Columbia. Within the last several years, research on women in prison has highlighted the distinct needs of incarcerated women, including programming needs (Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women, 1990), women-centred corrections (Carlen, 2002; Hannah-Moffat, 2006; Pollack, 2005; Shaw, 1993; Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women, 1990), spiritual and cultural issues (Adelberg & Native Women's Association of Canada, 1993; Martel & Brassard, 2008; Monture-Angus, 2000; 2002; Sugar & Fox, 1990; Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women, 1990) as well as the issues surrounding programming ideals and implementation (Hannah-Moffat, 2000; 2001; 2004; Hannah-Moffat & Shaw, 2000; Hayman, 2006; Micucci & Monster, 2004; Parkes & Pate, 2006; Pollack, 2006; 2007; Shaw, 1992). However, there still appears to be an absence in the Canadian literature on the women who have been released from secure provincial and federal correctional facilities back into the community.

Even once released back into the community many women still need programs that assist in the reintegration process of becoming law-abiding citizens. Therefore, it is important that appropriate community-based programs are available to women upon their release. Programs that match the needs of women in conflict with the law not only increase the potential for successful reintegration and reduce the likelihood of recidivism, but also benefit society as a whole (Dauvergne-Latimer, 1995). These benefits include:

the economic benefits associated with lower prison admissions; the children of two-thirds of federally sentenced women who are mothers (Correctional Service of Canada, n.d.); and the benefits associated with helping women in conflict with the law overcome their destructive patterns of behaviour (Dauvergne-Latimer, 1995). As such, it is important that research be conducted which provides insight into the programs and program characteristics designed for women in conflict with the law in community.

1.2 Literature Review

1.2.1 Women in Conflict with the Law in Canada: Facts and Figures

Overall, women constitute a very small percentage of the total offender population in Canada. As of 2005/06, 6 percent of the admissions to federal custody and 11 percent of those sentenced to provincial or territorial correctional institutions, and 6 percent of those remanded into custody were women (Landry & Sinha, 2008). As of January 2006, approximately 450 women serving federal sentences were under community supervision in Canada (O'Brien, 2006). Almost half of these women under community supervision are in Toronto, Montreal, Edmonton, or Vancouver (Auditor General of Canada, 2003). The majority of women in the community are 20-34 years of age (followed by 35-45 years of age), single, Caucasian and found guilty for a Schedule II Offence (a serious drug offence) (Correctional Service of Canada, 1999).

Regardless of the challenges most women face when they return to the community, their motivation for reintegration remains relatively high (Correctional Service of Canada, 2002; Fortin, 2004). According to Offender Management System (OMS) data, women who are released from custody show higher levels motivation and potential for reintegration when compared to their male counterparts. Data from January

2001, find 77 percent of women and 61 percent of men can be classified as ‘highly motivated’ (Correctional Service of Canada, 2002). Similarly, 77 percent of female offenders and only 55 percent of male offenders were classified as having a ‘high reintegration potential’ (Correctional Service of Canada, 2002). Furthermore, women in conflict with the law display a high desire to take charge of their lives, are active participants in their own supervision and open to accepting the resources and services available to them in the community (Correctional Service of Canada, 2002). For those women who do return to custody, the majority (98-99%¹) are apprehended for offences against the administration of justice such as a breach of probation or parole violations (Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Society, 2008; Maidment, 2006). Only 1-2 percent of federally sentenced women are returned to prison for the commission of a new crime within two years after their release from prison (Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry, 2008; Maidment, 2006).

Women are frequently put into contact with community-based agencies as a condition of their release on parole. Specifically, federally sentenced women who are released are given the following conditions: to live in a specified residential facility (75%), participate in counseling services (81%), finance programs (100%), and substance abuse community-based programs (69%) (Hoffman & Law, 1995). Community-based programs where the majority of women voluntarily participate include: educational and vocational training (95%), community skills programs (80%), and violence programs (58%) (Hoffman & Law, 1995).

¹ This statistic is inferred from the fact that only 1-2% of federally sentenced women are returned to closed custody for the commission of a new offence.

1.2.2 Community Services and Resources for Women Offenders

As stated in *Creating Choices* (1990) and mandated by the Correctional and Conditional Release Act (CCRA), the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) has a duty to assist with the successful reintegration of women offenders back into society through programs (e.g., substance abuse programs) and services (e.g., employment services, vocational training) both within correctional institutions and in the community. Programs most often recommended for women in the community target: educational/vocational training, community skills (e.g., financial advising, housing arrangements), and programs for perpetrators and victims of violence and abuse (Hoffman & Law, 1995). Residential facilities in the community also offer a holistic approach to programming, with the majority of services provided by the CSC (Hoffman & Law, 1995). Residential facilities for women in conflict with the law typically offer locally designed programs that address a multitude of needs such as substance abuse programs, social skills programs, and mother-child programs (Fortin, 2004).

Research finds that after a period of incarceration the availability of community resources and a women's ability to access these resources can have a significant impact on whether or not she will successfully reintegrate into the community and not come into conflict with the law again (Wilson & Anderson, 1997). The relatively small number of women offenders in Canada, as well as their geographical dispersion, creates challenges for the delivery of women-centred programs (Correctional Service of Canada, 2002; Fortin, 2004; O'Brien, 2006). Thus, in order to be successful at reintegrating women, programming must be creative and flexible, begin in the institution and continue once released back into the community. According to the Auditor General of Canada (2003),

women offenders' needs are currently not being met by the programs and services available in the community. It is essential that community programming be expanded and made more accessible to those women seeking out these resources both voluntarily or as part of their release condition.

1.2.3 Identifying Promising Programs in the Community

According to the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC), programs and services in the community must adopt a holistic approach that is responsive to women's multi-faceted needs (Correctional Service of Canada, 2002). Some of these needs include childcare, physical needs (e.g., housing), emotional and mental health needs, ongoing social support, assistance with re-establishing relationships and contacts with family, and spirituality. The Community Strategy for Women Offenders (2002) outlines the following criteria as necessary principles for any services or interventions geared toward women in conflict with the law in the community: women-centred approach, reintegration, continuity between institution and community, an individual approach, creativity and flexibility, partnership, and alternatives to readmission to secure custody for offences against the administration of justice (Correctional Service of Canada, 2002).

The women-centred approach is based on the assumption that women have unique experiences – histories of abuse and trauma, mental illness, dysfunctional relationships, addiction, parenting – which are often very distinct from that of men (Correctional Service of Canada, 2002). Therefore, it is essential that programs and supports take these unique experiences into consideration when working in the community with women in conflict with the law. The second principle of reintegration should be an ongoing process that begins with the woman on her first day of incarceration and continues during her

release back into the community. In order to appropriately meet her needs, parole officers must be involved with the woman during her time in custody in order to ensure that the proper programs and services are arranged prior to her release (Correctional Service of Canada, 2002).

Related to the principle of reintegration is the need to establish continuity between the institution and the community to better facilitate the reintegration of women back into the community. This continuity is important so a release plan can be established and linkages made between the programs to be delivered while in secure custody and which programs are needed in the community (Correctional Service of Canada, 2002). It is also important that partnerships be made with halfway houses, child welfare authorities, volunteers, community organizations, and chaplains for the women who require these services as a condition of their release or who seek them out voluntarily.

The fourth principle, an individual approach, is necessary to ensure that the level of supervision and support in the community upon release is tailored to the identified needs of each individual woman (Correctional Service of Canada, 2002). Although faced with many of the same challenges, each offender must develop her own release plan to assist in her successful reintegration back into society. As women in conflict with the law are often geographically dispersed and group interventions can prove difficult as a result, programs and services must be individually tailored (Correctional Service of Canada, 2002).

The fifth principle, creativity and flexibility, are already adopted by various organizations within the community, such as the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies (CAEFS). This principle emphasizes that community-based agencies continue

to be both flexible and creative in their responses to women offenders in the community (Correctional Service of Canada, 2002). CAEFS has members that operate across Canada offering a wide range of services and programs to women and their families at every stage in the criminal justice system (Dauvergne-Latimer, 1995). Even in the face of budget constraints, CAEFS continues to operate and offer the most “extensive and viable” services to all women involved in the criminal justice system (Dauvergne-Latimer, 1995: 15).

Sixth, the partnership principle states that women must become active members within their communities (Correctional Service of Canada, 2002). In practice, women are encouraged to seek out existing women’s groups in order to establish positive contacts in the local community (Correctional Service of Canada, 2002). Beneficial contacts can last well beyond warrant expiry and assist them in becoming responsible citizens (Correctional Service of Canada, 2002).

Lastly, alternatives to readmission must be considered if women in conflict with the law breach one of their parole or probation conditions (Correctional Service of Canada, 2002). With the consideration of public safety, every other option must be explored before women are returned to secure custody. Only when supervision is combined with appropriate and effective programming can we expect an offender to adapt and reintegrate successfully back into the community upon their release thereby reducing the likelihood of a parole violation or committing a new offence.

1.2.4 Identifying Successful Elements of Community-Based Programming

Austin, Bloom and Donahue (1992) are widely cited by many authors engaged in research on community-based programs and the identified needs of women offenders in

the community. *Female Offenders in the Community: An Analysis of Innovative Strategies and Programs* identifies innovative and effective program responses for female offenders in various communities across the United States. The authors believe that the “most promising” programs combine both supervision and services that address the unique needs of female offenders (Austin, Bloom & Donahue, 1992). Successful agencies in their study have stable funding, are highly structured with clearly outlined expectations, rules, sanctions and requirements for program completion, stress accountability in the women, and provide safe environments where women can express themselves (Austin et al., 1992). Furthermore, these programs do not adhere to the medical model of treatment for women offenders. Rather than focusing on “fixing” or “curing” the woman, interventions target a woman’s decision making skills and coping strategies based on a model of empowerment (Austin et al., 1992).

The model of empowerment rests on the assumption that women in conflict with the law need to “gain insight into their situation, identify their strengths, and [be] supported and challenged to take positive action to gain control of their lives” (Correctional Service of Canada, 1994: 3). Research reveals that reduced life choices and inequities faced by women in society, particularly federally sentenced women, leave many with feelings of inadequacy (Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women, 1990). Low self-esteem and the lack of power to direct their own lives can result in these women feeling disempowered and unable to plan for their future (Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women, 1990). Programs for women in conflict with the law need to focus on program elements to increase her self-esteem and confidence so a woman can become empowered to take charge of her life and her future.

During site visits at various agencies and programs across the United States, several program elements became evident as being ‘most promising’ for female offenders. Austin, Bloom and Donahue (1992) point out that their use of the term ‘most promising’ is limited to impressionistic data that has face validity, but the results are not based on rigorous evaluations. At the programming level these elements include: structure, supervision, role modeling, coordination of community resources, and aftercare.

Under structure, women are expected to be accountable for their actions. Promising community programs provide women with a structured and stable atmosphere where positive behaviour and accountability is expected of them (Austin et al., 1992). This environment is created through clearly articulated rules and sanctions, daily organized activities, job visits, and very little unstructured time that is not used for positive leisure activities (Austin et al., 1992).

The second element is employed by programs that adopt reliable, consistent and coordinated modes of supervision that allow women in conflict with the law to be under the least restrictive environment as possible. For example, some programs relied on reporting requirements, home or work visits and/or location checks. This approach to supervision appears to positively influence the outcome of treatment for women in conflict with the law (Austin et al., 1992). Effective programs in the study also have positive role models for the women such as, racially diverse staff and volunteers, ex-offenders, or recovering addicts (Austin et al., 1992). Furthermore, these program designs draw on various resources already available in the community by using a coordinated effort to better ensure successful reintegration. Yet, most importantly, these programs

offer women aftercare. Aftercare provides them with ongoing assistance, even after parole, as they navigate through daily life within society. Without continuous support, many women would not be able to find and maintain their place in the community as law-abiding citizens (Austin et al., 1992).

Promising programs also display good management and administrative functioning. The programs in the study have clearly articulated goals, objectives and mission statements to ensure that available resources are used efficiently and appropriately based on an individual woman's needs (Austin et al., 1992). Before entering the program, women are screened by staff to determine who is eligible to participate in the program. Screening is usually conducted through a series of interviews with the client as well as her history with the criminal justice system (Austin et al., 1992). Effective screening guarantees that the services being offered by the program match the woman's needs (Austin et al., 1992). In addition, evaluations are conducted on a regular basis to determine if program goals and outcomes are meeting their client's needs.

Additional research finds that the majority of promising program models are based on a holistic approach to treatment that targets female offender's multi-faceted needs (Koons, Burrow, Morash & Bynum, 1997; Morash, Bynum & Koons, 1998). Due to the multiple, interlocking inequalities that many women face, programming models must target the intersecting realities that constitute women's lives. When race, class, gender and sexuality intersect simultaneously a unique social location is created for each individual woman (Daly, 1983 as cited in Schulenberg, 2007). Acknowledging the importance of in-group differences, intersectional analysis allows those characteristics that contribute to multiple marginalities to be identified and successfully targeted

(Schulenberg, 2007). For example, Crenshaw (1994) criticizes agencies serving women who are victims of intimate partner violence for failing to address the unique status and location of each individual woman (as cited in Cole, 2009). Women's unique social locations need to be understood if programming models are to successfully address their multiple, intersecting needs.

Furthermore, promising program models provide women in conflict with the law with individualized programming, structured environments, skill building opportunities, as well as a continuum of care (Koons et al., 1997; Morash et al., 1998). Supportive, homey environments employ staff members who are caring and empathic. The majority of program designs adopt a woman-only approach that fosters peer interactions among the women participants. These interactions create an environment where women place pressure on each other to become law abiding citizens, to live up to a certain standard (e.g., to be a good mother), and to be accountable for her behaviour (Koons et al., 1997; Morash et al., 1998).

1.3 Deficiencies in the Literature

Some caution should be exercised in generalizing the previous findings to a Canadian context. It is essential that similar data be collected in Canada so we can identify and target the needs of women in conflict with the law in the community in hopes of reducing their pathways back into crime. There is a marked absence in the Canadian literature about what types of programs and programming characteristics are available to women when they return to the community after a period of incarceration. There is a need to document the programming options available, the characteristics of these programs and their ability to help assist women in conflict with the law find a place in the community

(Morash et al., 1998). While there is an abundance of information on community services available for male offenders, research dedicated to women is quite limited (Dauvergne-Latimer, 1995). The majority of programming literature has focused on women within the institutional setting while little is known about community-based programming (Dauvergne-Latimer, 1995).

Thus, research needs to explore the causes and components related to the successful reintegration of women offenders back into society. Due to the multiple marginalities, unique life experiences and stigma associated with a criminal record, community-based agencies working with women in conflict with the law must adopt a holistic approach to treatment. In order to assist women find a place in the community after a period of incarceration, community-based agencies must address the pathways that bring women into conflict with the law. Programs and services that do not address women offenders unique social location and the underlying causes of her criminal behaviour – addiction, victimization, poverty, mental illness – will be unsuccessful in helping them to find a place in the community and a life free from crime.

1.4 Purpose of the Research

Although most offenders face challenges when they return to the community, women can face unique challenges that men typically do not encounter. Sex and gender has a significant influence on shaping criminality and it must be acknowledged that men and women enter the “criminal justice system via different pathways” (Bloom, Owen, Covington, 2005: 5). Equipped with this knowledge, this research examines how a community-based agency addresses the pathways that bring women into contact with the criminal justice system. Furthermore, this research provides insight into the program

characteristics designed for women in conflict with the law and how they are perceived by staff and volunteers to meet the needs of these women in the community after a period of incarceration.

In the community, women in conflict with the law can confront many unique challenges. Not only do they face the stigma associated with their offender status and prior record, female offenders also face distinct challenges often not faced by men. According to Goffman (1963), stigmatization occurs when a gap exists between what a person ought to be and what that person actually is. For criminalized women, this stigma creates tension, as they must manage the fact that people know of their offending status. Managing her offender status, or impression management, is the process by which she attempts to influence what others think of her. Impression management is crucial in the development of social identities (Schlenker, 1980). Her social identity will determine how she is expected to behave, how she will be treated, how others perceive her, but also, how she will perceive herself (Schlenker, 1980).

Additionally, her life is often characterized by a lower socioeconomic position in comparison to male offenders, single-parent status, a history of abuse and trauma, alienation from children and family, a lack of women-centred services and programs, a history of dysfunctional relationships, and a general lack of support in the community (Bloom et al., 2005). As with male offenders released from provincial or federal correctional institutions, she also faces financial difficulties, a loss of housing arrangements, social isolation, a sense of hopelessness, the effects of institutionalization, and limited marketable skills (Fortin, 2004). The transition from custody to the community can leave many women feeling “disenfranchised and powerless” (Wilson &

Anderson, 1997: 348) as they attempt to navigate through a system which, at times, offers very little support for their reintegration. Thus, community programs and programming elements must reflect the social realities that make up women's lives and understand the pathways that lead them to commit their crime(s).

The purpose of this research is to illuminate the program and programming characteristics for criminalized women in the community. Due to the lack of Canadian literature on programs for women offenders and the ability of these services to meet the needs of these women, this research explores the ways in which one community-based agency assists with the reintegration of women in conflict with the law back into society. This study examines how the Elizabeth Fry Toronto addresses the pathways and multiple marginalities that bring women into conflict with the law. It also looks at the ways in which the agency helps women offenders to re-negotiate a positive self-identity. By targeting the unique life experiences and social locations of many women in conflict with the law, Elizabeth Fry Toronto assists hundreds of women annually through various programs, treatment options, and other essential services. As such, it is likely that these programs and services play a pivotal role in women finding a place in the community after a period of incarceration.

This qualitative case study of one community-based agency will provide insight into policy and practice by identifying programming characteristics designed for criminalized women serving the remainder of their sentence in the community and any associated programmatic challenges. It can be of use to other Canadian community-based agencies in assisting women in conflict with the law in the community by sharing what has been adopted in this particular context. It is essential that we identify the needs of

women in conflict with the law in the community so that we can promote the tools and elements necessary to meet the needs of these women in the community. Thus, this research adds to the current knowledge base by contributing a much needed Canadian perspective, by identifying the programs and services available to women from one community-based agency, and by focusing on community-based programming which has typically been absent in the Canadian literature when compared to programming within secure correctional institutions.

The following section will outline the theoretical significance of this research. This research utilizes the themes and concepts identified by multiple marginalities, pathways to crime, and impression management perspectives. Following the theoretical significance, the study's three main research questions are identified. Chapter Two outlines the research methods including a discussion of the research design, data collections procedures, data analysis, procedures used to ensure validity, and ethical considerations. Chapter Three identifies the program and programming characteristics of Elizabeth Fry Toronto. This chapter also examines the extent to which the programming characteristics are consistent with what has previously been identified in the literature. Chapter Four explores the way Elizabeth Fry Toronto assists with the reintegration of women in conflict with the law back into society. By focusing on the pathways to crime, multiple marginalities and impression management, this chapter highlights the agency's ability to meet the needs of women in conflict with the law in the community. Additionally, this chapter identifies the challenges Elizabeth Fry Toronto faces to deliver or implement key program strategies. Finally, Chapter Five consists of a summary of the findings, limitations to the research, sociological significance and a brief conclusion.

1.5 Theoretical Significance

1.5.1 Multiple Marginalities and Female Offenders

In order to understand gender and crime, an intersectional theoretical framework is adopted to examine how various inequalities contribute to criminal behaviour. The various inequalities of class, gender, race, and sexuality construct interlocking levels of oppression and subordination, which is referred to as the “matrix of domination” (Collins, 1990 as cited in Anderson & Collins, 2004; Baca Zinn & Thornton Dill, 1996). This approach posits that several systems work together to shape the experiences of people in society (Anderson & Collins, 2007). Depending on one’s social location, race, class, gender, and sexuality people are situated within society’s various opportunity structures (Baca Zinn & Thornton Dill, 1996). Due to the fact that some social locations are more marginalized than others, an intersectional framework allows for the identification of the “social characteristics that contribute to multiple marginalities” (Schulenberg, 2007: 29). These multiple inequalities put some women significantly more at risk of engaging in lawbreaking behaviour.

According to Gilfus (1992: 86), “criminalization is connected to women’s subordinate position in society where victimization by violence coupled with economic marginality related to race, class, and gender all often blur the boundaries between victims and offenders.” When victimization is coupled with multiple marginalities many women have few opportunities available to them through legal avenues (Gilfus, 1992). An intersectional theoretical framework helps to illustrate the ways in which multiple inequalities function simultaneously to produce criminal behaviour. This framework allows those working with women in conflict with the law to understand the causes of

human behaviour and to appreciate the multiple paths that lead women to the same or similar outcomes (Cole, 2009).

1.5.2 Understanding Female Pathways to Crime

Similar to the intersectional framework, the pathways to crime perspective suggests that women have unique life experiences – uncharacteristic of men – which are associated with the nature and extent of contacts with the criminal justice system. Among these experiences are lifelong abusive situations, mental illness, addiction, poverty, little social support, dysfunctional relationships and inappropriate coping mechanisms (Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009). Pathway theorists argue that women's involvement in crime is linked to their histories of victimization both in childhood and adulthood (Daly, 1992; De Hart, 2008; Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009). As such, it is important that theories on female criminality appreciate the unique life histories that are characteristic of many women offenders. Although such life contexts cannot be used to excuse female criminality (Daly, 1992), acknowledging the importance of gender differences can improve the chances for successful reintegration (Spjeldnes & Goodkind, 2009).

Histories of abuse and victimization play a primary role in the pathways to crime perspective (Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009). Beginning in childhood, many female offenders have been victims of physical and sexual abuse (Daly, 1992; DeHart, 2008; Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009; Simpson, Yahner & Dugan, 2008; Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women, 1990). Additionally, women offenders are likely to have witnessed violence either against their siblings or mother and also likely to have been neglected by their mother or female caregiver (Daly, 1992). Furthermore, pathways research reveals that many women involved in crime are not raised by both biological

parents (Daly, 1992; Simpson et al., 2008); have close friends or family members convicted of a crime or previously incarcerated (Daly, 1992; Simpson et al., 2008; Spjeldnes & Goodkind, 2009); either one or both parent are addicted to drugs and/or alcohol (Daly, 1992); and whose family's economic situation is often unstable (Daly, 1992).

Moreover, many adult women's lives are characterized by the same victimization and trauma they experienced as children and teens. A significant number of women in conflict with the law are, or have been, in unhealthy intimate relationships (Daly, 1992; DeHart, 2008; Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009; Spjeldnes & Goodkind, 2009; Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women, 1990). These relationships are often characterized by physical and sexual abuse, addiction, anxiety and depression, and little personal control over their lives. DeHart (2008) reveals that physical and sexual abuse in adulthood leave the majority of the women in her sample with severe injuries, including broken bones, scars, chronic pain, and permanent disabilities as well as unplanned pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV. Women offenders often find themselves in dysfunctional relationships in which they lack any kind of control over themselves, their finances or life choices (Spjeldnes & Goodkind, 2009). Such unhealthy adult relationships create a group of women who are depressed, anxious, lack self-efficacy and self-confidence, and are unable to cope without the use of drugs and/or alcohol (Salisbury & Van Voorhis).

Simpson, Yahner and Dugan (2008) find that virtually all the women in their sample (95%) had either used or dealt drugs at some point during the past year. Similarly, Daly (1992) finds that two-thirds of the women in her sample are addicted to drugs, alcohol or both. For many women in conflict with the law, alcohol and drugs are often

used as a coping method to alleviate their suffering from past and/or current victimization. The women in DeHart's (2008: 1368) study discuss using drugs and alcohol "as a way to 'numb' themselves, either in anticipation of abuse or in dealing with its ongoing stress and aftermath." Compared to men, female substance users are more likely to be diagnosed with psychological disorders including eating disorders, depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, and anxiety (Spjeldnes & Goodkind, 2009). Daly (1992) finds that half (50%) of the female offenders could be described as having some sort of psychological disorder. Furthermore, many women offenders have had suicidal thoughts (Daly, 1992; DeHart, 2008), and of those women, 15 percent actually tried to kill themselves (Daly, 1992).

In addition to abuse, addiction and mental illness, many women in conflict with the law come from disadvantaged and poverty-stricken backgrounds. Compared to male offenders, female offenders are more likely to lack the necessary resources and skills needed to find and maintain stable, short or long term employment (Daly, 1992; Spjeldnes & Goodkind, 2009). Daly (1992) states only one-third of the women in her sample completed high school or received a General Education Diploma (GED). With restricted resources and no clear means of financial support many women in conflict with the law rely on the welfare system (Daly, 1992). Consequently, some women resort to crime due to financial need (Bryne & Trew, 2008). For some, turning to illegal means is the only way possible to fulfill the responsibilities of motherhood (Bryne & Trew, 2008). Wanting to provide for their children and offer them a certain standard of living often justified their involvement in crime (Bryne & Trew, 2008).

When understanding how women come into conflict with the law "the boundaries

between victim and offender are often blurred” (Daly, 1992: 47). Childhood traumas, mental health problems, addictive behaviours, and economic disadvantage cannot be ignored when attempting to understand how women choose a pathway involving crime (Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009). It is important that these life contexts be understood so that interventions can successfully help women choose a pathway that no longer involves crime.

Overall, the pathways model provides support for the notion that some female offenders follow very distinct pathways into crime. These pathways have not typically been observed with male offenders. It is essential that correctional treatments and community-based programs identify the pathways and multiple marginalities and provide women offenders with holistic treatment approaches and target the needs of the individual woman. Intersectionality illustrates how gender, race, class, and sexuality work simultaneously to create a unique social location for each individual offender. This social location affects the perceptions, experiences, and opportunities available to each woman (Cole, 2009). In order to be successful, programming must be holistic, in that, it addresses the multiple marginalities of women offenders in combination with each other. To focus on only a single dimension of her marginality fails to acknowledge how “social categories depend on each other for meaning” and how they work together to shape the outcomes of human behaviour (Cole, 2009: 179).

1.5.3 Stigma & Impression Management: Managing an Offender Status

According to Goffman (1963), three different forms of stigma exist. For the offender, it is the blemish of one’s character that can make them “tainted, discounted” and of the “less desirable kind” (Goffman, 1963: 3, 4). Due to an offender status we

discriminate against them and inevitably reduce their life choices (Goffman, 1963).

Unable to make contact with them on “equal grounds” results in the offender experiencing both strain and shame as a result of their status (Goffman, 1963: 7). They will inevitably begin to internalize their failings and, if only temporarily, believe they do not belong within mainstream society (Goffman, 1963). Thus, because the stigma of an offender status can minimize the opportunities available to reintegrate successfully back into society, the offender may attempt to conceal or hide their status.

Impression management is the process by which an actor attempts to influence the perceptions another person may have of him or her (Schneider, 1981). When people employ impression management techniques they are often seeking to gain approval from an audience while simultaneously avoiding disapproval (Jellison, 1981). By avoiding disapproval, the actor is trying to reduce the actions and behaviours from other people that are in accordance with beliefs that define the stigma. How other people view the actor impacts how both the actor perceives him- or herself and their social relationships with others. As a result, people consciously attempt to control, manipulate or influence how others view their social identity. The stigmatized person attempts to manage the information about his failing, “to display or not to display, to tell or not to tell, to let on or not to let on, to lie or not to lie; and in each case, to whom, how, when, and where” (Goffman, 1963: 42).

A person has two social identities, a virtual social identity and an actual social identity. The virtual social identity is formed by the assumptions that audiences make about that person regarding what that person ought to be (Ritzer & Goodman, 2004). Audiences assume that the actor is just like everyone else, they behave as they are

expected to behave, and they know their place (Schneider, 1981). The actual social identity, on the other hand, is what that person actually is (Ritzer & Goodman, 2004). People employ impression management techniques when there is a mismatch between their virtual and actual social identities. People are typically not concerned with all the attributes that make them less desirable, but only the attributes that are at odds with what that person ought to be (Goffman, 1963).

In any social relationship, self-relevant information is used by an audience in order to categorize and evaluate each individual (Schlenker, 1980). Uncertainty arises when the stigmatized individual, or the offender, is unsure about how he or she is going to be received and in which category the audience will place them (Goffman, 1963). He or she fears that the audience will only be able to define them in terms of their offender status. According to Goffman (1963: 14),

I always feel this with street people – that whenever they’re being nice to me, pleasant to me, all the time really, underneath their only assessing me as a criminal and nothing else. It’s too late for me to be any different now to what I am, but I still feel this keenly, that that’s their only approach, and they’re quite incapable of accepting me as anything else.

Thus, some offenders may go to great lengths to “maintain face” (Schlenker, 1980: 132), improve their social attractiveness and avoid or lessen the negative impression others may have about them (Tedeschi & Riess, 1981). These strategies often include making excuses, giving reasons, apologizing, and denying (Bromley, 1993).

Geiger and Fischer (2005) found that when compared to male offenders, women offenders were less likely to resist stigmatizing labels and construct a favourable identity. The stigmatizing label of offender can have profound effects on the way in which women

come to perceive and define themselves (Geiger & Fischer, 2005). In order to account for the offender status, the majority of both male and female participants in Geiger and Fischer's (2005) study provided excuses for their deviant and criminal behaviour. Although people are likely to publically take credit for their successes, they are also likely to publically blame their failures on circumstances outside of their control (Schlenker, 1980). When placed in the predicament where a person must somehow account for, or explain, their spoiled identity they often have the tendency to offer explanations and excuses that justify their behaviour given the particular circumstances (Scott & Lyman, 1968 as cited in Tedeschi & Reiss, 1981). Geiger and Fischer (2005) conclude that, the participants in their sample often excused their deviant behaviour by providing biographical information related to childhood trauma, histories of abuse, violence and addiction, and poverty. All of which were circumstances out of the offenders' control.

It is essential, therefore, that programming efforts not only address the pathways and multiple marginalities that bring women into contact with the criminal justice system, but also focus on how they negotiate and manage their offender status. How one views him or her self is central to any theory of impression management (Schlenker, 1980). One's self-concept and behaviour influences both the type of social relationships and social interactions they are likely to have. Thus, these theoretical perspectives suggest that programming should focus on improving women offenders' self-concept and self-esteem. By reducing the discrepancy between women offenders' virtual and actual social identity we can increase the likelihood that she will not consider herself "falling short" of what she ought to be (Goffman, 1963: 7)

1.6 Research Questions

This qualitative case study will address the following research questions from the perspective of the community-based agency staff and volunteers:

1. In what ways does a community-based agency assist in the reintegration of women back into the community?
 - A. How does the programming address the pathways and multiple marginalities that bring women into contact with the criminal justice system?
 - B. How does the programming assist women in managing their offender status upon reintegration?
 - C. How does the programming assist women in negotiating a positive identity upon reintegration?
2. What are the key program elements that assist with women's reintegration back into the community?
3. In what ways do the program elements represent characteristics of successful programs as identified in the literature?
4. What challenges do they face to deliver or implement key program strategies?

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Qualitative Case Study Research

Case study research is a common research design used in qualitative inquiry (Stake, 2003). Case studies are ideal for exploratory research that seeks to understand, in some detail, the realities of a particular case. Data from case study research is typically obtained from multiple sources, including interviews, observations, documents, and reports. When conducting a case study, the researcher must decide whether a single case or multiple cases are going to be examined (Creswell, 2007). Due to the time constraints of a Masters thesis, one community-based agency was used to gain understanding and insight from the perspective of the staff and volunteers into how the agency meets the needs of female offenders in the community. Furthermore, only one agency was chosen due to the exploratory nature of this research. Whereas multiple-case designs follow replication logic (Tellis, 1997), single-case designs are more concerned with an in-depth understanding. A single-case design is appropriate for this research because understanding program design and program characteristics requires a thorough examination of one case rather than the replication of results across multiple cases.

Although examining multiple cases allows for transferability across other similar cases, the examination of a single case allows for an in-depth analysis that is not diluted by the information obtained from other cases (Creswell, 2007). Like other qualitative methods, case study research is often organized around a group of research questions (Stake, 2003). From these research questions, case study researchers seek to identify themes and interpret patterns in order to make assertions about the phenomenon under investigation (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Stake, 1995).

Furthermore, case study researchers must make decisions about research design as well as which type of case to examine. This case study employed an instrumental research design. With this approach, the researcher's goal is to better understand a particular question or problem through a detailed examination of a particular case (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). When using this approach, the issue or problem is of greater importance to the researcher than the case itself (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Stake, 1995). Here the case plays a supportive role in facilitating the researcher's understanding of his or her research questions (Stake, 2003). When choosing the case, decisions are made based on advancing the knowledge of the role one community-based agency plays in meeting the needs of female offenders the community after a period of incarceration. The case is typical of other cases. It is chosen based on the assumption that it is considered to have a typical set of values and/or characteristics that makes it representative of other similar cases (Gerring, 2007). In choosing the case, case study researchers need to consider the cases that will maximize what could be learned (Creswell, 2007; Stake, 1995).

Like other research methods, case studies have both advantages and disadvantages. Although case studies are generally not strong in transferability to larger populations, they still offer an in-depth and valuable understanding of a particular case (Creswell, 2007; Gerring, 2007). Gerring (2007) argues that sometimes case studies, or individual examples, can offer a greater understanding than the knowledge obtained from larger sample sizes. In fact, one of the primary virtues of case study research is the "thick" description and in-depth analysis this research design offers (Gerring, 2007: 49). Additionally, case study research allows researchers to explore partial associations that

are typically impossible with research that uses large samples (Gerring, 2007). Lastly, case study research has been used to inform policies, refine theory, reflect on human experience, and make suggestions for future research (Gerring, 2007; Stake, 2003).

As previously stated, case study research has been criticized due to the fact that results are often not transferable across similar cases or populations (Creswell, 2007; Gerring, 2007; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Stake, 1995; Stake, 2003). As this research approach does not employ random sampling, it is unlikely that one case will be a strong representation of others in the target population of all community-based agencies serving women in Canada (Stake, 1995). As a result, due to problems of representativeness, case study research is weak when it comes to external validity (Gerring, 2007). Other criticisms include the effects of biased case selection, informal research methods (e.g., non-experimental), subjective assertions and conclusions, and nonreplicability (Gerring, 2007).

Case study research is the preferred research design for this study because case studies are a form of exploratory research which offers answers to “how” and “why” types of research questions (Yin, 2003: 6). For example, this research asks, among other questions, how does a community-based agency assist with the successful reintegration of women back into the community? Exploratory research provides researchers with a deeper understanding of a social phenomenon. Rather than focusing on ‘how often’ or ‘how many,’ case study research can explore ‘how’ and ‘why’ a program may or may not work (Yin, 2003). Case study research designs can provide insight and understanding into the program characteristics that are designed for women in conflict with the law who have been released back into the community. For this research, understanding the nature,

extent and design of the programming models and characteristics requires an in-depth analysis of a particular agency rather than a display of frequencies or incidences across several agencies.

2.2 Grounded Theory

Grounded theory is the process by which researchers generate theory, hypotheses and concepts that have been identified in the data throughout the research process (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). One of the defining components of grounded theory research is the concurring process of data collection and data analysis (Charmaz, 2006). Unlike other forms of research, grounded theory researchers do not separate the data collection process from the data analysis. Rather than completing data collection and then conducting the analysis, grounded theorists are simultaneously involved in the collection and the analysis of the data. Through this process the researcher can determine what data to collect next. This process is known as theoretical sampling.

During theoretical sampling the objective of the researcher is to gather data, analyze the data, and gather more data until each category has been theoretically saturated (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). By allowing data analysis to guide data collection, the basis for theoretical sampling is the emergence and development of concepts and categories (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). According to grounded theorists, concepts are the basic unit of analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). The raw data is analyzed and given conceptual labels. Put simply, concepts are words that represent ideas that have emerged from the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Categories, on the other hand, refer to the concepts that have been grouped together which explain the same phenomenon (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Categories are often referred to as themes. Properties refer to a

particular aspect or element of a category (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) (See Appendix A for a list of categories and properties identified in the research). By purposefully collecting pertinent data the researcher is able to elaborate relevant concepts that help in theory formation. Because theoretical sampling is concept driven – and not person driven – it is often unlikely that researcher is able to determine in advance which persons or groups are going to be contacted for participation (which is often a requirement for research proposals and research committees).

As such, Corbin and Strauss (2008) have identified variations on theoretical sampling. For beginner researchers, they have suggested that, researchers accept whatever data they can obtain and collect (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). This type of data is collected very systematically, usually by contacting people on a list or by convenience sampling. Although the researcher cannot determine whom or where to collect data next, as suggested by the research, conceptual comparisons are still completed as the data is obtained (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Also, member-checking and follow-up interviews can be used to gather more data to help further develop categories and to fill in gaps in the research (Charmaz, 2006).

Grounded theory was chosen as the preferred research model because it is grounded in the experiences of the participants. According to Corbin and Strauss (2008), one goal of grounded theory is to see the world from the participant's perspective. Similarly, the goal of this research is to explore – from the perspectives of staff and volunteers – the ability of one community-based agency to assist with the reintegration of women in conflict with the law back into the community after a period of incarceration. Furthermore, grounded theory can be used in the discovery of the theoretical and social

processes (Speziale & Carpenter, 2011). Adopting a grounded theory approach allows this research to explore the social and theoretical processes of reintegration from the perspectives of those directly involved in the reintegration process.

2.3 Data Collection Procedures

Utilizing typical case sampling, Elizabeth Fry Toronto was chosen based on the general understanding that this case is typical given some set of values or characteristics (Gerring, 2007). When typical cases are chosen for analysis, they are chosen precisely because they are in no way atypical, extreme or deviant (Patton, 2002). The goal of studying a typical case is to “describe” and “illustrate” a particular case (Patton, 2002: 236; Stake, 1995: 4). Case study research is not sampling research. The researcher is not concerned with sampling from the general population in order to be representative of that population. The goal, rather, is a rich description of the case itself and not representativeness.

The Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo granted ethics approval on June 11, 2010. On June 14, 2010, an email was sent to the Executive Director, Michelle Coombs, at Elizabeth Fry Toronto. Attached to the email was an invitation for the agency to consider participating in the research project at hand (See Appendix B). This letter outlined the goals of the study, the reason for choosing the agency, research questions, theoretical perspectives, and the significance of the research. Additionally, the invitation letter outlined the data collection procedures involved in the research as well as how confidentiality and anonymity was going to be guaranteed to both the agency and the participants.

After Michelle Coombs met and discussed the research with the Board of

Directors, she contacted me via email and agreed to participate in the research. A face-to-face meeting was arranged for July 8, 2010. During this meeting details of the research project were discussed. Some of these details included the goals of the research, confidentiality and anonymity, times to conduct the interviews, limitations related to client's confidentiality, and participant recruitment within the agency. At this time I was also given brochures and pamphlets that contained information about the agency. An Internet search on the agency was also conducted. Most of the information obtained from the Internet was from the agency's website. This data was used to supplement and verify many of the interview questions, specifically questions relating to programming.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted from July 19, 2010 to August 31, 2010. The interviews ranged in length from 30 minutes to an hour and a half. Seven of the eight participants gave permission to tape-record the interview. Handwritten notes were taken during the interview that was not tape-recorded. Participants provided well detailed answers to the interview questions.

The interview schedule was designed based on the research questions for this study. Research question one – in what ways does a community-based agency assist in the reintegration of women back into the community? – is addressed by asking questions such as: What programs and services does your agency offer to women who are returning to the community after a period of incarceration? Are education and employment placements offered? Are life-skills training offered? How are addictions to drugs and alcohol addressed and overcome? How are women's mental health needs being addressed?

The sub-questions address the theoretical perspectives that bring women into

contact with the criminal justice system. These questions are addressed through interview questions such as: How does the agency address histories of abuse and victimization? Does the agency encourage women to address their dysfunctional relationships? Does the agency encourage a positive self-concept? In what ways does the agency help women to build their self-esteem? How are addictions to drug and alcohol addressed and overcome? How are women's mental and physical health needs being met?

Research question two – what are the key program elements that assist with women's reintegration back into the community? – allows the participants to identify program elements that have yet to be identified in the literature. Interview questions to address this research question will include: In your opinion, what needs must be met if women offenders are going to successfully reintegrate back into the community after a period of incarceration? What criminogenic factors must be addressed if women in conflict with the law are going to successfully reintegrate back into the community? In your opinion, what program characteristics are essential for the successful reintegration of women back into the community after a period of incarceration?

Research question three – in what way do the program elements represent characteristics of successful programs as identified in the literature? – is addressed through interview questions such as: Does the agency have a stable funding base? Does the agency maintain a highly structured environment with clearly articulated rules and expectations? Does the agency provide a safe and homey environment where the women can feel free to express themselves? Does the agency employ a model of empowerment? Does the agency conduct regular program evaluations to ensure all objectives are being met effectively? Lastly, research question four – what challenges do they face to deliver

or implement key program strategies – is be explored by asking the agency to identify the challenges that prevent them from delivering necessary programs and program characteristics.

For the project at hand, the staff and volunteers at Elizabeth Fry Toronto were chosen as the “authority” to speak on behalf of the women participating in the programs and services offered through the agency. The staff and volunteers were selected as an authority for two main reasons. First, aligned with Collins (2000: viii), many theories developed by the “academic elite” can often only be appreciated by those working in elite educations. Those who do not speak the same language as “academic elites” often times cannot read or understand the theory or results presented (Collins, 2000: viii). Given the multiple theoretical perspectives used in the thesis, it is unlikely that the majority of female offenders would be able to interpret the meanings or interpretation of the findings attached to the theoretical explanations.

Second, the staff and volunteers were chosen as the authority for this research due to the focus of some of the research questions. Put simply, women in conflict with the law utilizing the programs and services at Elizabeth Fry Toronto would not be able to answer research questions two, three and four. For example, these research questions focus on the administrative functioning of the agency as well as the challenges in delivering and implementing key program strategies. Given the focus of these questions, only the staff and volunteers would be able to provide detailed answers to the research questions and were thus chosen as an authority.

2.3.1 Recruitment Methods

The Executive Director, Michelle Coombs, or the volunteer co-coordinator

contacted all staff and volunteers via email (approximately 40 staff members and 75 active volunteers). Attached to the email was an invitation to participate in a semi-structured interview approximately one hour in length (Appendix C). This letter contained all the necessary information needed by the participants to make an informed decision about their involvement in the research at hand. The invitation to participate includes information pertaining to the research design, participant requirements, issues surrounding confidentiality, as well as the goals and significance of the research. Additionally, the letter states that participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw from the study at any time without any negative repercussions.

By asking all staff and volunteers to participate, I employed total sampling. Gilgun (1994) refers to this form of sampling when all relevant participants are invited to participate. All staff and active volunteers were invited to participate in this research study. Identifying participants who are not only convenient, consent to participate, but are also informative is crucial. Total sampling helps to ensure that all those individuals who have the necessary information to address the research questions under study are interviewed.

Any staff member or volunteer who was interested in participating contacted me directly either by phone or by email. During this time, a mutually agreed upon, date, time and location was discussed to complete the interview. Due to the fact that I was given permission to conduct the interviews during regular office hours at the agency, five of the eight interviews were conducted at this location. One interview was conducted over the phone. The two interviews with volunteers were conducted at a convenient public location (coffee shop and park) due to the fact that they did not have designated office

space at the agency.

2.4 The Interview Process

A total of eight interviews were conducted: all participants were female, two were volunteers and six were staff members, one participant was from the Residential Program, two were from Prison and Court Services, one participant was from Community Programs, three participants were from Homelessness and Outreach, and one participant did not belong to any particular program or service. All interviews began with an informal introduction that followed with a review of the informed consent form (See Appendix D). The letter of information addresses issues surrounding confidentiality and anonymity, and the goals of the research project. In this letter all participants are reminded that their participation is voluntary and that they can refuse to answer any question or withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. Permission to tape record the interview was also requested at this time. All participants were given the opportunity to receive copies of the interview transcript via email. This letter also asks if they would like to receive an executive summary of the research findings and/or a copy of the thesis once it has been successfully defended. If the participant had no further questions the interview began (See Appendix E for the interview schedule).

2.4.1 Role of the Researcher

I chose this topic because I have always had an interest in women and the law. Volunteering at the local federal institution for women and seeing the programs and services available to them made me wonder what resources are available to them upon their release. Also, having informal conversations with friends employed by the Correctional Service of Canada and hearing stories of offenders leave and return to

secure custody over and over again made me consider if society is meeting the needs of these offenders upon release into the community. After beginning a review of the literature on community programming for women in conflict with the law and realizing the lack of Canadian research in this area, my goal was to contribute to a much needed Canadian perspective on the programs and services available to women in the community after a period of incarceration. I also wanted to explore the ways in which a community-based agency could meet the needs of women in conflict with the law in the community and assist with their successful reintegration.

Forming a positive rapport with the participants seemed relatively easy as we share a common interest, women in conflict with the law. All spoke very highly of the agency and the agency's ability to meet the needs of their clients. Additionally, most of the participants aligned with the pathways to crime perspective, which made answering the interview questions appear fairly simple. Many participants spoke openly about their experiences working with women offenders in the community. Thus, with an interest in how participants experience and perceive events, grounded theory allows for the exploration of the meaning and process of offender reintegration. It is due to the ability of grounded theorists to integrate subjective experience with social conditions (Charmaz, 2005) (e.g., multiple marginalities and pathways to crime) that grounded theory is the preferred research design.

2.5 Data Analysis

All interviews and documents were transcribed manually into Microsoft Word 2007. At this time, the five participants that requested a copy of their interview transcript were emailed the transcript along with a feedback letter (See Appendix F). The other

three participants were emailed just the feedback letter. The feedback letter thanks the participants for their participation in the study. This letter also reiterates the purpose of the study, how the data from the study will be used, issues surrounding confidentiality and anonymity, researcher contact information, as well as the option to receive an executive summary of the results if they changed their mind since the interview.

The data is analyzed using an inductive approach to qualitative research. The goal of the research is to identify themes and categories that are grounded in the data. Theories may also be developed although this may not necessarily be the outcome (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The inductive method that is employed is grounded theory.

Data collection continued until theoretical saturation had been achieved. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967: 61), theoretical saturation means, “that no additional data are being found ... as he sees similar instances over and over again he researcher becomes empirically confident that the category is saturated.” Put simply, saturation has occurred when no new information appears to be emerging and collecting new evidence would seem counterproductive (Corbin & Strauss, 1996).

Although total sampling is adopted rather than theoretical sampling, theoretical saturation was still achieved. As theoretical sampling is concept driven and not person driven, Corbin and Strauss (2008) identify variations of theoretical sampling. They argue that saturation and conceptual comparisons can still be achieved even if the researcher employs different sampling methods (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). As such, member-checking and clarification with the participants and key stakeholders were used to gather more data, further develop categories, fill in gaps in the research and, thus, achieve theoretical saturation.

Once all the data had been transcribed the information was coded to identify case-based themes. Through this strategy, each piece of evidence was examined with the research questions in mind (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). The identification of common patterns and themes resulted in the data being grouped together under particular categories. This process continued until all the relevant information had been coded into categories and theoretical saturation had been achieved whereby no additional conceptual dimensions or categorical attributes were found. Conclusions were then drawn from themes which support tentative answers to the research questions (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006).

The coding process was completed manually with the assistance of Microsoft Word 2007 software. Each Microsoft Word document was given a conceptual label. Paragraphs, sentences or words were cut and copied from each transcript and grouped together according to their similarities. This process continued until all the relevant information had been grouped together to form categories and properties.

Throughout the data analysis, categories were created using the constant comparative method. This method entails comparing each incident in the data with other incidents for similarities and differences (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). All incidents found to be similar were then grouped together under the same conceptual label (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Each new incident coded under that conceptual label adds different theoretical properties and dimensions to that code, which helps the emerging theory to explain the social phenomenon under investigation (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). In grounded theory this is referred to as open coding.

During the constant comparative method, memos recorded ideas about the data.

Memo-writing is a process by which the researcher stops the data analysis and coding to record and reflect on their initial ideas about the codes and theoretical notions contained in the data (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This reflection on the data and the emerging codes allows the researcher to think about the comparisons between the data and to elaborate on their ideas. Once all incidents had been compared with each other for similarities and differences and coded under a conceptual label, comparisons were then made between incident and properties of that particular category – or, axial coding (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Thus, each incident under that category contributes to a unified knowledge and each property begins to form an integrated whole (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). According to Glaser and Strauss (1967), when different categories and their properties are integrated the researcher is able to identify the theoretical significance of each comparison.

Although the data guides the research, all researchers bring with them background assumptions and theoretical perspectives. These background assumptions and theoretical perspectives can provide grounded theorists with a place to start the research process. Blumer (1969) introduces the notion of sensitizing concepts, which has been applied to grounded theory (as cited in Charmaz, 2006). Charmaz (2006) argues that sensitizing concepts provide grounded theorists with initial ideas and research questions to pursue. Background assumptions and disciplinary perspectives are used to help form interview schedules, provide a general set of concepts to investigate, and to provide a way to think about the data (Charmaz, 2006). Although sensitizing concepts and background assumptions can help to develop the research process, as grounded theorists we must remember to stay as open as possible to what emerges from the data. Any prior

assumptions and sensitizing concepts that prove to be irrelevant to the emerging research were removed. Due to the inductive nature of grounded theory, preconceived notions can never be forced onto the data (Charmaz, 2006).

2.5.1 Procedures for Ensuring Validity

Case study research employs internal validity techniques. Internal validity is achieved through the assistance of those who are under study (Gerring, 2007). Member-checking is one such way that researchers can ensure that what is portrayed in the research report represents reality. Through this process, participants are asked to examine transcripts, rough drafts, and interpretations where their words and/or actions are being used (Stake, 1995). During the review of the material, participants are asked to assess the accuracy of the interpretations and conclusions drawn by the researcher. The participants may also be asked to provide alternative language or interpretations, although no guarantee is made that their suggestions will be incorporated into the final report (Stake, 1995). According to Hancock and Algozzine (2006), member-checking is one of the most effective strategies to ensure the validity of the conclusions. Participants are asked whether they would like to participate in the member-checking process on the letter of information and informed consent.

Only one participant and the Executive Director used the opportunity to review and make comments on the draft report before it was published. The material was sent to both individuals. The feedback that is incorporated into this research mostly involves issues surrounding the use of language. For example, where appropriate, the term ‘women offender’ has been changed to ‘women in conflict with the law.’

Additionally, case study research utilizes what has been referred to in qualitative

research as triangulation (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Stake, 1995; Stake, 2003) or process-tracing (Gerring, 2007). With this approach the researcher uses the information obtained from multiple sources in order to increase confidence in their interpretations and conclusions (Stake, 1995). In other words, multiple data sources are used for the verification of a single inference (Gerring, 2007). Similar to detective work, the researcher collects and interprets adjacent pieces of evidence in order to strengthen support for the central argument (Gerring, 2007). For the current research, qualitative interviews, website information, pamphlets (2008-2010) and agency newsletters (2005-2010) are all used to strengthen the conclusions drawn from the data. The information gathered from the agency website, pamphlets, and agency newsletters are used mainly to answer, in collaboration with the participant interviews, research questions one and two. Analyzing these other sources of information also served as a form of validation for the information retrieved from participant interviews.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

For case study research some ethical considerations need to be considered both prior to and upon completion of the research project. First, permission for access to the community-based agency and respondents was obtained from the Executive Director of Elizabeth Fry Toronto before any sort of data collection commenced. In order to obtain this permission, I provided the Executive Director with a brief description outlining the research project as well as why the agency was chosen. Limits to access – documents, participants, observational guidelines – were addressed during a face-to-face meeting prior to the research project being carried out. Additionally, researchers are obliged to cause as little interruption as possible to daily procedures and operations (Stake, 1995).

Thus, all information and interviews were obtained as discretely as possible with little or no interruption to daily procedures.

Similar to other research designs, two other ethical considerations need to be addressed. First is providing informed consent and, second, measures to present anonymity and confidentiality. Informed consent was obtained through signed documentation in-person, email or fax prior to beginning the interview process. Informed consent is considered essential to any research project for three main reasons. According to Diener and Crandall (1978), informed consent notifies the participants that their participation is voluntary, identifies the purpose of the research and informs respondents about any of the aspects of the research which may or may not influence their decision to participate and finally, that they are free to withdraw at any time before, during, or after data collection.

Next ethical considerations are issues of anonymity and confidentiality. These ethical considerations require that the individual's identity remain separate from the responses they provide during the research process (Diener & Crandall, 1978). Issues of confidentiality were addressed in my letter of consent. Individual's names were attached to their transcripts for my personal reference only. Names were also attached to the transcript in order to ensure those wishing to receive a copy received the right transcript. Most participants did not appear to have concerns regarding anonymity as the majority of the interviews were conducted at the agency. Despite this, no names appear in the thesis with the exception of the Executive Director.

At first it was believed that the agency would be given a pseudonym. This was to protect against possible loss of funding if the results of this study did not depict the

agency in a positive way. After meeting with the Executive Director, she did not have any concerns surrounding anonymity and gave permission to use the agency's name in the thesis.

The letters of informed consent are stored separately from any data that may or may not identify the respondents. Upon completion of the research the information was be deleted off the computer and is only stored on a password protected memory stick. All data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet at the researcher's home and destroyed after ten years

3.0 Programming & Programming Characteristics

As previously noted, there is a marked absence in the Canadian literature on the types of programs and programming characteristics available to women when they return to the community after a period of incarceration. As such, it is essential to document the programming options available in the community for women in conflict with the law. Additionally, research should explore the characteristics of these programs and their ability to help women reintegrate back into society (Morash et al., 1998).

Focusing on research questions two and three, this chapter explores and documents the programming and programming characteristics that have been developed at Elizabeth Fry Toronto. The first section of this chapter will outline the programming options available to women in conflict with the law through Elizabeth Fry Toronto. The second part of this section will identify key programming characteristics that assist with women's reintegration back into society and the extent to which these characteristics are representative of those previously identified in the literature.

3.1 Elizabeth Fry Toronto: The Agency

Elizabeth Fry Toronto was officially established on May 13, 1952. Inspired by a talk on prison reform by Agnes Macphail, in 1951, a group of nine women from the First Unitarian Church met to discuss the need for community-based agency that would address and serve the needs of women both within prison and those released back into the community after a period of incarceration (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, n.d., a; Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2010b). The first office was established on Jarvis Street in Toronto. In 1955, the agency moved to Yorkville Avenue, Toronto, where they opened their first residency program for incarcerated women returning to the community (Elizabeth Fry Toronto,

n.d., a).

Currently, the Elizabeth Fry office is located in the Church and Wellesley area of Toronto. The newly renovated building is made up of three levels. Upstairs houses the agency's Residential Program, the main floor consists of administration and offices, and the lower level is where Community Programs are held. At this time, Elizabeth Fry is the only social agency in Toronto with a specific mandate to serve the needs of women who are in conflict with the law (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, n.d., a).

The agency's mission statement is to support women who are, have been, or are at risk of being in conflict with the law (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, n.d., b). In addition to their mission statement, Elizabeth Fry Toronto's vision is a society that ensures all women have the dignity and capacity to make informed choices about their lives and avoid conflict with the law (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, n.d., b). Strategically, the agency's goals are advocacy, collaboration, prevention, organizational capacity, and financial strength. From an advocacy perspective, Elizabeth Fry strives to increase awareness about women in conflict with the law and the associated issues and challenges many of these women face (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, n.d., b). While attempting to increase awareness about women in conflict with the law, Elizabeth Fry Toronto works collaboratively with other agencies and service providers to address the issues, needs, and conditions that affect many women both within prison and in the community.

The agency adopts a preventive model that attempts to reduce the number of women who have contact with the criminal justice system while addressing the systemic conditions that put women in contact with criminal justice system in the first place (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, n.d., b). Another goal of the agency is to increase its

organizational capacity and financial strength. Elizabeth Fry's objective is to strengthen operational systems and financial viability so that they can continue to respond to the emerging needs of women offenders both in prison and in the community. As outlined in Appendix G, the majority of the funding Elizabeth Fry Toronto receives comes from the federal and provincial government as well as the United Way. Over one-third of this funding is directed towards the Residential Program. Community Programs and Homelessness and Outreach total nearly half of Elizabeth Fry Toronto's revenues. The volunteer program, resource development and administration consume the remainder of the agency's expenses (Elizabeth Fry Toronto: Revenues & Expenses- See Appendix G).

3.1.1 Who is Elizabeth Fry?

Elizabeth Fry was born into a wealthy family of Quakers in England in 1780. In 1812, Elizabeth Fry began visiting women who were incarcerated at London's Newgate Prison. Due to her Quaker belief that women should be considered equal to men, Elizabeth Fry began advocating for prison reform (CAEFS, n.d.). She was appalled by the squalid conditions that incarcerated women and their children were forced to live in while in prison (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2010b). As such, Elizabeth Fry began to run services within the prison for the women and children. She started a school as well as work projects so that the women could earn money for their release (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2010b). She also advocated for female guards, better living conditions, and the humane treatment of women prisoners and their children. She offered advice to Ireland, Europe, America, Russia and Australia where she advocated for real change for women in prison. She died in 1845. Today, Elizabeth Fry is still considered by many to be the leading expert in prison reform for women around the world (CAEFS, n.d.).

3.1.2 Who do they Serve?

According to the Elizabeth Fry Toronto website, most of the clients serve are between the ages of 18 and 39, poor, unemployed, poorly trained for the job market, and lacking even grade 12 education. Additionally, most of the clients are sentenced for poverty related offences or substance abuse related crimes such as theft and fraud or drug possession. Like pathway theorists suggest, most of the women Elizabeth Fry Toronto serve have long histories of physical abuse, sexual abuse, family breakdown and suffer from addictions to drugs, alcohol or both. According to the agency and participants in this study, they are often the most traumatized women of society.

This women-centred agency offers community-based programming that addresses the causes of their criminal behaviour. The goal of the programming is to help women break the cycle of poverty and address their addictions to drugs and alcohol, which can be related to their involvement in the criminal justice system. This marginalized group of women frequently find themselves trapped in the same cycle that continually leads them back into conflict with the law (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, n.d., a). It is the goal of Elizabeth Fry to help these women break this painful cycle of crime and incarceration. The agency assists approximately 1,000 women annually (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, n.d., a)

3.2 What Programs do they Offer?

The programs at Elizabeth Toronto can be divided into four departments: Community Programs, Homeless and Outreach Services, Residential Program and Prison and Court Services.

3.2.1 Community Programs

3.2.1.1 Substance Abuse Assessment & Treatment Program

This program provides group and individual counseling for women with substance abuse issues. Based on a harm reduction model, this program helps participants to explore the issues that prompted their substance use, and helps them to understand the triggers associated with their use. The program also provides self-care, referrals to other services as well as other related practical assistance (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, n.d., a). This program is open to women in the community, those who have been referred from probation or parole, and those mandated through the court system. In 2009, a total of 75 women received drug and alcohol counseling and support at Elizabeth Fry Toronto (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2009a).

Recently a new program has been introduced to the Substance Abuse Assessment and Treatment Program called Traumas and Addictions. Due to the fact that trauma and addictions are so closely related the agency believes that it is essential that a specific program be created to address these issues simultaneously. This concurrent disorders program was designed as a one-year pilot project at the agency. This program started planning and development in July 2010 and implemented one cycle of community programs at the agency and one cycle at the Vanier Centre for women in Milton. It is offered both in the community and at the Vanier Centre for Women in Milton. At this time, the agency is still evaluating the efficacy of this pilot program and will start programming mainly at Vanier starting April 2011.

3.2.1.2 Parenting Program – Mothers Who Care

The agency's Mothers Who Care program was started in March 1998 and consists

of individual and group counseling which runs twice a year. This program is offered at the Vanier Centre for Women in Milton and to women in the community. Mothers Who Care focuses on a variety of issues concerning mothers who are in conflict with the law: parenting while in prison, understanding the incarceration experience from your child's perspective, reintegrating back into your family after your release, effective communication with children, disciplining with love, and the effects of your childhood experiences on your own parenting style (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, n.d., a). Overall, the goal of the program is to assist women in rebuilding relationships with their children once they have returned to the community after a period of incarceration. The agency believes that building effective parenting skills and communication can help to rebuild families after period of separation due to incarceration. Rebuilding the mother-child relationship can be critical in helping women offenders to break the cycle of crime and incarceration (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2005). Elizabeth Fry Toronto served a total of 264 mothers, both at Vanier and out of their Toronto office, last year alone (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2009a).

3.2.1.3 Theft & Fraud Program

Recently opened up to both women in the community and those on probation or parole, the Theft and Fraud Program provides counseling and support to women and helps them to gain insight into their shoplifting and fraudulent behaviours. The one-day workshop which runs several times throughout the year helps women offenders in the community with coping mechanisms, prevention mechanisms, life skills, and issues surrounding isolation and shame (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, n.d., a). One-on-one counseling is also available. This program is unique to Toronto and in high demand (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2005). There were a total of 67 women who received counseling from the Theft

and Fraud Program in 2009 (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2009a).

3.2.1.4 Anger Management Program

Designed for women with anger issues, this program focuses on helping women to become more aware of their current behaviour, learning alternatives to aggressive behaviour, and developing effective communication and life skills (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2007). This program offers both group and individual counseling. The Anger Management Program includes an intake assessment, counseling sessions, and outcome evaluations. Elizabeth Fry Toronto estimates that this program will serve approximately 40 women each year in the community (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2007).

3.2.1.5 Healing from Abuse

The Healing from Abuse program offers women with histories of trauma and abuse individual and group counseling. This program gives women in conflict with the law the opportunity to speak about their histories of abuse and victimization and the impact it has had on their lives. Pathways to crime research reveals that abuse and victimization play a primary role in women's involvement in crime (Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009). Many women in conflict with the law have grown up in violent households, been victims of physical and sexual abuse both in childhood and adulthood and are often involved in unhealthy adult relationships. The Healing from Abuse program offers women the support and skills required to overcome the challenges and obstacles they face as a result of their victimization. One of the goals of the program is to encourage the women to participate constructively in society, which in turn reduces the likelihood of them coming into conflict with the law again and re-victimization (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, n.d., a). In 2009, The Healing from Abuse program assisted 74

women in the community (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2009a).

3.2.1.6 Partner Intervention Program (PIP)

Launched in 2002, this program is designed for women in heterosexual relationships who plead guilty to a charge of domestic violence. The PIP provides women with insight into her violent behaviour. Understanding that most women have long histories of childhood abuse and abusive adult relationships, this program assists women to understand their emotions, the history that has led up to her charge, to increase awareness about their own personal safety, and to understand boundaries and healthy relationships (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2005). This program assisted 120 women in 2009 alone (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2009a).

3.2.1.7 General Counseling

Offered to women whose needs cannot be met by any other programs and services offered through Elizabeth Fry Toronto. The majority of the women come from referrals made by other agencies, lawyers, service providers or other professional bodies (e.g., doctors, life coaches). Last year, 68 women participated in general counseling at Elizabeth Fry Toronto (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2009a).

3.2.2 Homelessness & Outreach Services

The Homelessness and Outreach department at Elizabeth Fry Toronto offers several different programs and services to women in conflict with the law. These programs and services include: the pre-employment program, housing program, Project OWN, the newcomer program, work safe program, and peer leadership program. In the last two years, Homelessness and Outreach Services at Elizabeth Fry Toronto has helped 540 women in prison and in the community (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2009a).

3.2.2.1 Pre-Employment Program – B.E.S.T (Believing in Employment Success Training)

This pre-employment training program assists homeless women who are in conflict with the law explore their skills and job readiness. Women who have spent time in prison often face multiple barriers as they try to return to the work force. These barriers can include the stigma of a criminal record, mental health issues, low levels of educational/vocational training, homelessness and little or no employment history (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2008). The B.E.S.T program helps women to regain their self-confidence and self-esteem and helps them to explore pathways to employment. The workshops include lessons on communication skills, managing stress, increasing current abilities, career exploration, and resume writing (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2009c). This program is offered to women in the community and at the Vanier Centre for Women in Milton.

3.2.2.2 Post Incarceration Housing Program

Started in 2006, the counselors in this program visit the Vanier Centre for Women twice a week where they help women to complete housing applications as part of their release plans (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2009b). The Post-Incarceration Program assists women who are 90-days post-incarceration find secure and stable housing arrangements. If housing has yet to be arranged upon her release into the community, the housing worker continues to work with the woman finding her emergency shelters, temporary housing arrangements, and eventually permanent housing accommodations. The housing worker also assists the women returning to the community with driver's license and health card applications, welfare/disability applications, and apartment/room for rent

applications (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2008). The worker will also go with the women to meet landlords, help them negotiate rent, view potential living spaces, show them around their new community, and arrange for a follow-up worker (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2008). The follow-up worker helps to ensure that the women remained housed (e.g., paying rent and bills on time).

In 2009, the Post-Incarceration Program provided support for 350 women and found secure housing arrangements for 21 of those women (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2009a). Unfortunately, due to the lack of subsidized housing and extremely long waiting lists, many women are unable to find stable and affordable housing arrangements. When returning to the community after a period of incarceration, most women end up in homeless shelters or at friend's houses. Often times they find themselves back in the same situations and surrounded by the same people that led them into trouble in the first place.

3.2.2.3 Project OWN (Opportunities for Women Now), Newcomer Program & Work Safe Program

Started in the summer of 2008, Project OWN is a preventive program that seeks to educate marginalized women about the Canadian criminal justice system and the impact it can have on their lives. The main objective of this outreach program is to prevent women's criminalization and the associated barriers it brings (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2008). This program is also geared towards educating the public on the issues and conditions related to women's involvement in crime.

The newcomer liaison assists women who are sixteen years of age and older and who are new Canada. The program provides education about the Canadian legal system.

The program also offers counseling, education and referrals to other programs and services that may be helpful to the woman.

The Work Safe Program is geared towards women and transgendered women engaged in sex work in the Toronto area. The objective of the program is to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C, and other sexually transmitted infections. Based on a harm reduction approach, the Work Safe Program offers women educational materials and resources related to their health as well as informing them of their rights. In conjunction with other agencies and service providers, this program provides sex workers with individual and group support, workshops, informal counseling, and safe sex materials (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2009c).

Project OWN, the Newcomer Program and the Work Safe Program all target various groups of marginalized women within society. By educating these women on the Canadian legal system and their rights as well as the issues surrounding their involvement in crime, these programs acknowledge the unique social location of many marginalized women in society. Including newcomers to Canada, sex workers, economically disadvantaged and traumatized women, these programs bring awareness to how various inequalities can contribute to crime. Through education and awareness Elizabeth Fry Toronto is attempting to change the perceptions, experiences and opportunities available to each of these women.

3.2.2.4 Peer Leadership Program

This group-based program offers women in conflict with the law a chance to work with other women who have moved to more positive experiences, that is, are no longer involved the criminal justice system. As experts on their own lives, these women

facilitate 11-week training sessions which cover topics such as public speaking, leadership skills, criminal courts, the probation and parole process, healing through story telling, the pardons process, basic computer skills, community resources, and the impact crime has on people's lives (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2009c). Not only do the participants in this program learn new skills to assist with their reintegration but they can also see first hand that a life without involvement in the criminal justice system is possible.

3.2.3 Residential Program

Operating for 39 years now, the residential program at Elizabeth Fry Toronto provides a transitional residence for women released on parole from the Vanier Centre for Women in Milton and the Grand Valley Institute in Kitchener. The residency helps women to work towards individual goals, lifestyle changes, assist with the transition back into the community, and support them in completing their release plan. Elizabeth Fry Toronto believes that the transitional housing offered through the residential program can help break the cycle of poverty, isolation, and crime (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, n.d., a). The supportive and structured environment helps many women address their histories of abuse and victimization, family breakdown, addiction, and acquire new skills while helping to rebuild their lives after a period of incarceration.

The residency offers 14 transitional beds: 5 provincial beds and 9 federal beds. Operating 365 days a year, the residency program will serve the needs of approximately 111 women annually at a cost of \$34,462.00 per women (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, n.d., a). In 2009, the agency reported that 98% of the clients in the residency program were able to secure employment, housing, and access to educational programs (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2009a).

3.2.4 Prison & Court Services

3.2.4.1 Prison Services & Court Support Program

Elizabeth Fry Toronto offers support and services at the Vanier Centre for Women in Milton, the Grand Valley Institute in Kitchener, and the Central East Correctional Centre in Lindsay. Some of the services include housing support, newcomer liaison, parenting groups, counseling, and social recreational programs run by volunteers. Elizabeth Fry Toronto workers also work with the women to form a discharge plan for those ready to be released back into the community or into the agency's transitional residence.

The Court Support Program, one of the agency's longest running volunteer programs, offers practical and emotional support to women who are going through the court process (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2005). The volunteers also provide the women with information on community resources and services. The program is run out of the College Park Court House in Toronto. In 2009, 12 volunteers approached and assisted 1,716 women at this location (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2009a). Of those women, 520 were referred to various programs and services run out of the Elizabeth Fry Toronto office (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2009a).

3.2.4.2 Direct Accountability Program

Elizabeth Fry Toronto runs a Direct Accountability Program out of the College Park Court House in Toronto. This is the only program that is open to both men and women. The program is offered as a diversion program for those individuals charged with minor, non-violent offences such as minor theft. In conjunction with the Crown Attorney, Duty Counsel, and community justice worker the client takes responsibility for their

actions and makes amends for their crime. The client usually makes amends in one of following the ways: community service, letter of apology, financial compensation, and/or attending a counseling program (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, n.d., a). Once the client has successfully completed their amends to the satisfaction of all parties involved the charges are then dropped which can avoid the stigma associated with a criminal record (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2010a). The program served 759 individuals at the College Park Court in 2009 (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2009a).

3.3 Identifying Key Program Characteristics

The following section identifies the key program elements that assist with the reintegration of women back into the community after a period of secure custody. Additionally, this data will illustrate the ways in which the program elements are representative of successful programs as identified in the literature.

3.3.1 Women-Centred Approach

According to the Correctional Service of Canada (2002) and other studies conducted in the United States (Koons et al., 1997; Morash et al., 1998), for programs and services for women in the community to be successful they must adopt a women-centred approach. Pathway theorists argue that many women who come into contact with the criminal justice system have unique life experiences that are often different from those of men. These life experiences often include long histories of abuse and victimization, poverty, mental illness, little social support, dysfunctional relationships, and inappropriate coping mechanisms (Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009). As such, programming for women offenders must appreciate the unique life experiences that characterize many of these women's lives.

Of the eight participants, seven of the participants believe that a women-only approach is essential in addressing why women come into contact with the criminal justice system². With the exception of court services, all of the programs offered through Elizabeth Fry Toronto are for women and transgendered women only. Aligned with the pathways perspective, many participants cite the differences between men and women as reasons why they come into conflict with the law and, thus, why a women-centred approach is essential. These participants believe there are issues that affect women which often do not affect men and indirectly contribute to their offending behaviour.

I think there are specific issues that affect women that don't necessarily affect men. Not giving either more importance but there are certainly [different] issues.

The way women break the law and the way men break the law is very different. That difference needs to be acknowledged and the programs need to be focused differently.

And there is a lot of stuff that affects women that doesn't affect men as deeply. There is trauma and abuse with men but the percentages are much higher with women.

In addition to citing the differences between men and women and how they come into contact with the criminal justice system, the participants cite other benefits to the women-only approach that Elizabeth Fry Toronto adopts. One of these benefits is that women are more likely to open up and relate better to other women rather than men.

I find that women generally just open up more when it is just women-on-women. A lot of the women we work with have a lot of issues with men, a lot of them have been sexually assaulted, domestic violence, so I think they like to come to a place that is women-centred.

² The question pertaining to a 'women-centred approach' was not applicable for one participant given her role and experience in the agency. This participant volunteered with the Court Services Program which involves both men and women offenders.

Some women just don't like dealing with men or some women want a woman around because they feel like they can relate to them, as in parenting or sexuality or whatever it is.

I think having a women-centred organization creates that sort of safe haven for women to come to who may have a history of abuse. We'll be able to serve them better when they come to the agency and they know that they aren't going to be in a group with men and they aren't going to be sharing their stories with men.

Another benefit to the women-only approach identified by some of the respondents is the need to have women offenders' unique needs acknowledged in a male dominated society.

One respondent said, "You can find anywhere for men to go but for women it is very hard." Two other respondents provide similar remarks,

[The women-centred approach] draws attention to the fact that [women] are important too. Women were undermined for years and now we are trying to say that it is not all about men, women are important too.

I think CSC is such a male focused organization and there are three men's facilities right there on Sherbourne like this for men and they get everything. There are so few women agencies for women who are in conflict with the law that I think it is absolutely necessary that it focus only on women.

Thus, the common theme that emerges is that a women-centred approach is necessary when dealing with women who have come into conflict with the law. Seven of the eight participants believe that Elizabeth Fry Toronto adopts a women-only approach. This is also demonstrated by the fact that all but one of the programs and services are available only to women. The reasons for adopting this approach, as cited by the participants, includes the need to acknowledge that men and women come into conflict with the law via different pathways, women open up and relate better to other women, and that women's unique experiences need to be acknowledged in a male dominated

society.

3.3.2 Empowerment

In addition to adopting a women-centred approach, research finds that programs and services for women in the community should be based on a model of empowerment. According to the Correctional Service of Canada (1994), many women offenders face reduced life choices and, as a result, feel that they have little control over their lives. Thus, community-based programs must help women to gain insight into their lives and to increase her self-confidence so she can be empowered to take charge of her future. Seven of the participants in the study believe that Elizabeth Fry Toronto is based on a model of empowerment. The one dissenting respondent states that the agency only in part empowers women to take charge of their lives and still has some work to do. She notes that the agency still adopts an internal maternalistic approach to dealing with the women that they serve by adopting the idea that women offenders need to be rescued. She mentions that there is a fine line between helping and rescuing women and this agency still struggles with this distinction.

As for the other seven participants, one emerging theme similar to what the literature suggests is that many of the women they serve often face reduced life choices. Through various programs and services Elizabeth Fry Toronto helps give women the confidence to regain control over their lives. The participants point out that although society may be inequitable, women offenders must be willing to accept the support and resources Elizabeth Fry Toronto offers if they want to take control of their future.

Yes, we understand what is happening in society, you know, women have it rough, all that kind of stuff, in that we are saying this doesn't condone what you have done and you can't change the world but you can change your place

in the world. Empowerment and accountability; show up for your appointments, show up on time, do what you need to do to take care of yourself. Yes, you got the shitty end of the deal, but you know what, you did it, this is it, these are suggestions to make sure that it doesn't happen again and you can get back on your feet.

So for women, our agency supports them a lot, even though you have been kicked down and knocked out, it is not the end. We are women, we are strong, we stand up for what we believe in and our agency will support you in doing that. If that means you ended up with nothing, you lost everything; we'll help you and support you to get it all back. You just have to be willing to do that or willing to just gain our help to help you take that step.

We are helping you so that you can take control of the system and you don't have to be stuck in this forever, sort of thing. Or you can just regain whatever you had or you make something for yourself that you never had. I feel like that is what [Elizabeth Fry Toronto] is going after. Like women working for women.

A theme that emerges is that even though many women offenders face challenges in society, they must be willing to regain control over their lives. Elizabeth Fry Toronto offers women in conflict with the law the tools and resources to assist with their reintegration if they are willing to accept the help available to them.

In addition, two of the participants also note that in order to empower the clients the staff must also be empowered. These two participants cite an empowered staff as the reason the agency can empower other women who are in conflict with the law.

The empowerment comes from the additional staff that gives you the confidence to go back and help your client. On top of that, when we're confident, the client sees that and then it gives them confidence. The empowerment comes right down from the level of staff from the management to the co-workers and then the co-worker to co-worker and then from co-worker to client. You can see it; you can see it right across the agency.

Like the peer counselors that come in, I think that is a great example of looking to the women that we serve and empowering them by offering them the opportunity to give back and to do what maybe some of our work has done for them. I think it is just the passion of the workers here, you know, we want to see the women that we are working with do well and continue to do well.

As the literature proposes, community-based agencies that serve women who are in conflict with the law must be based on a model of empowerment to better assist with reintegration and reduce recidivism. According to almost all of the participants in this study, Elizabeth Fry Toronto empowers the women that they serve to start taking the necessary steps in order to start a life that no longer involves the criminal justice system. The participants acknowledge that they cannot change the barriers and reduced life choices that many women in conflict with the law face as they navigate through life in the community but they can support and encourage them as they find a place in the community after a period of incarceration. Additionally, an empowered staff can be considered role models for many of the women they work with. The confidence the staff has in themselves and the women they work with creates an environment where the clients can begin to have confidence in themselves to change their situation.

3.3.3 Structured Environments

Another key program element that has been identified in the literature is structured environments, with clearly articulated rules and regulations for both participants and employees to follow (Austin et al., 1992; Koons et al., 1997; Morash et al., 1998). Although many of the participants describe Elizabeth Fry Toronto as “laid back,” there are still rules and regulations that the employees are expected to follow. Five of the six of the staff members who participated in this study cite confidentiality as

probably the most important rule they are expected to follow. The only way that staff members at Elizabeth Fry Toronto are permitted to release information about one of the clients at the agency is if the client has signed a 'Consent of Release.' Confidentiality policies apply to anyone contacting the agency in regards to a possible client they may be serving (e.g., doctors, lawyers, pharmacists, Children's Aid Society, parole officers, friends, family members). Additional policies and guidelines for the staff include a Code of Conduct, anti-violence policies, anti-harassment policies, anti-racism policies, administrative requirements (e.g., time of work, calling in sick, vacation time, breaks, lunch), staff-client relationship policies, Health and Safety Procedure Manual, Residential Guideline Manual, Human Resources Booklet, and Employment-Employer Relations (e.g., dress code, boundaries, fire codes, grievances).

As for the clients at Elizabeth Fry Toronto, many of the same rules apply to them as well. All clients are expected to abide by anti-racism, anti-violence, anti-oppression, and anti-harassment policies. Staff members are never expected to tolerate any client who breaks any of the previously mentioned policies simply because they are a client. Clients are also expected to follow certain guidelines when participating in groups or workshops at the agency. Some of these guidelines include respecting other participants, being on time for the workshop or group, returning on time from breaks, respecting boundaries, no violence, and no substance use. Aligned with Austin, Bloom and Donahue's (1992) notion that structured environments are created through clearly articulated rules and sanctions, one participant from Community Programs commented that, "Any good facilitator is going to have guidelines. You need to set boundaries so that the women get something from the workshop."

The Residential Program, although following all of the above mentioned policies and guidelines, also has their own Residential Guideline Manual. This manual covers concerns such as visitors in the residence, what is expected of them in terms of programming, participating in house meetings and life skills training, rules of respect, respecting boundaries, chores, curfews, and fire alarm procedures. Many of these rules and regulations are set both by the agency and the Correctional Service of Canada. Also, different rules apply to federally and provincially sentenced women, which are set by the Correctional Service of Canada. For example, federal women released to the Elizabeth Fry Toronto residential facility are not allowed to go beyond certain boundaries in the City of Toronto. Federal women need a travel permit or similar documentation if they want to leave these boundaries, whereas provincial women can move freely across the province (although the agency keeps their own documentation on where the women are traveling). The Correctional Service of Canada, specifically by the women's parole officer, also sets a curfew. A curfew varies for each woman and is set on a case-by-case basis.

Additionally, all women who participate in the Residential Program are expected to have a strong discharge plan. That is, she is expected to have goals and plans while in the community, participate in programs, and take responsibility for her charge(s). A strong discharge plan can also be linked to the program element of structured environments. According to the literature, promising community programs provide women with a structured and stable atmosphere where positive behaviour and accountability is expected of them (Austin et al., 1992). This environment is created through daily organized activities, job visits, and very little unstructured time that is not

used for positive leisure activities. When the women come to the residential facility they are expected to have a concrete plan of what they plan to accomplish while in the community. They are also expected to complete their goals in a timely fashion. Progress reports are written every month that outline what a woman has achieved. One respondent from the Residential Program provides an example of what goals they expect the women to set for themselves on a monthly basis.

This is what I am doing this week. I'm going to focus on my debt counseling and I am going to contact this bank and I have meetings with these people, which is my first week. The next week I am going to kind of get to know the city learn to use the TTC. The next week after that, I recognized in my discharge plan that I wanted to get some parenting counseling, so I booked an appointment with [the counselor] downstairs and she is going to refer me to some other agencies. The following week I am going to spend some time with my kids.

Although the women are expected to complete their goals in a timely fashion, the Residential Program understands that many of the women will be a part of the program for some time. They do not expect the women to cram everything into the first couple of months and potentially overwhelm or burn themselves out, ultimately, setting them up for failure. Having this type of monthly structure and organized activities reduces the unstructured time for many of the women clients. Structured programs and timetables create a stable atmosphere where women in conflict with the law can make positive behavioural changes (Austin et al., 1992).

3.3.4 Unrestricted Supervision

Related to issues surrounding travel and curfew is the notion of supervision. According to Austin, Bloom and Donahue (1992), community-based agencies need to adopt reliable, consistent, and unrestrictive modes of supervision. Unfortunately, due to

the fact that the Correctional Service of Canada sets different standards for federal and provincial women, Elizabeth Fry Toronto is unable to maintain consistent modes of supervision at the residential facility. Federal women have travel restrictions whereas provincial women can move more freely. If a federal woman is late for curfew, the Duty Officer is notified and a warrant can be issued for her arrest. When a provincial woman is late for curfew, there is no Duty Officer to issue an arrest warrant. Despite the differences among provincial and federal women, one participant from the Residential Program states that,

[We try to keep] it consistent across the board regardless of the charge, we treat everybody the same, with the same respect. I have to call the manager, I have to write an incident report, you have to get a curfew roll back, and it is across the board so that [the women] don't see that special treatment.

Regardless of the different supervision levels for federal and provincially sentenced women, Elizabeth Fry Toronto does employ reliable and unrestrictive modes of supervision when their clients leave the residential facility for the day. All women are expected to sign-out in the logbook, state where they are going and when they are expected to arrive. They are expected to call when they reach their destination. The agency subscribes to call-display in order to verify the woman's location. The women are permitted to call the residential facility collect. They are then expected to call and check-in every time they change locations and when they are on their way back to the residence. When the women leave on a weekend pass, they need to check in at the end of the night for curfew on a landline, where the agency then calls back to confirm their location. Similar to the programs discussed by Austin, Bloom and Donahue (1992), Elizabeth Fry Toronto adopts reporting requirements and location checks which allow the women to be

in the least restrictive environment as possible. The authors believe that this approach to supervision is related to positive outcomes for women offenders (Austin et al., 1992: 22). From the data, it can be implied that unrestrictive supervision strategies can create a level of trust amongst the clients and the agency, which in turn can contribute to increasing women's self-esteem.

3.3.5 Program Environment

Research also suggests that the environments in which programs and services are conducted must be safe, homey, and supportive, where women feel free to express themselves (Austin et al., 1992; Koons et al., 1997; Morash et al., 1998). Of the participants who were able to answer the interview question relating to program environment³, supportive, laidback, and safe are the main themes that emerge from the data. For example, when asked about program environment, one participant said, "Safe. I would say that this is a safe place. For the most part our agency is looked at positively from the client's point of view." Other participants note laid-back and supportive program environments.

Our relationship [with the clients] is so down to earth and so laid back. I believe that that the [environment] is very laid back. [The clients] feel like they can call this person, they are my friend, they really do care for me, and the agency is there to help me.

It is very casual, it has its high peak moments but the team is so supportive that it maintains that stability. Everybody really pulls together and is supportive of each other; they are supportive of the women.

A similar theme to emerge from the data unidentified in previous literature is the notion of positive co-workers and supervisors helping to stimulate a positive environment

³ This question was not applicable to some of the participants given their role and experience within the agency.

for both staff and clients. Some of the participants saw great managers and an open and communicative staff as contributing to a positive environment around the agency.

Respondents believe that supportive staff are better equipped to support their clients.

These participants believe that the staff members are very respectful of each other and open to constructive criticism. They also believe that the staff are there for the right reasons and always make everybody – staff and clients – feel like they belong.

We have a great manager. We are very lucky. She's a great manager and very supportive. All my co-workers are very supportive, we have a real open communication and if anyone ever has a problem or concern we just kind of close the door and we talk about it, all the staff.

[The staff] is able to recognize other people's points of view, and they feel confident and comfortable to bring their viewpoints to the table. They are very respectful of each other and [engage in] active listening.

I think our staff are wonderful women who are a part of the agency because of the mission statement, you know. That is their goal; they are there for the right reasons.

Although the concept of positive staff and co-workers has yet to be identified in the literature, the data suggest this is a key program characteristic that should be representative of successful community-based agencies. The participants believe that a team must be supportive and open to helping each other if they are going to be supportive of women offenders in their journey to find a place back in the community after a period of incarceration.

3.3.6 Positive Role Models

Not only should the agency employ staff members who create a positive environment for other staff and clients, the agency should also employ women who are positive role models for their clients. Research finds that effective programming models

often employ staff and volunteers who are racially diverse, ex-offenders or recovering addicts (Austin et al., 1992). According to all of the participants in this study, Elizabeth Fry Toronto's staff and volunteers are positive role models for all of the clients that they serve. From the perspective of the participants and aligned with previous research, positive role models are seen as diverse, professional, and have a history with the criminal justice system. Most of the participants cite having been in conflict with the law as one the most important criteria when identifying positive role models. Not only can role models who are ex-offenders show other women that a life without the criminal justice system is possible, they are also able to empathize with how they might be feeling. For example, one participant explains,

It is hard sitting with someone saying, 'I know how you feel, I know how you felt when you were raped,' and you where never raped but all you did was read it in a book, these are the emotions that people feel when they go through this type of trauma.

In fact, Elizabeth Fry Toronto's Peer Support Program is designed with role modeling in mind. This group-based program not only offers women in conflict with the law a chance to learn new skills that can assist with their reintegration but it also demonstrates, by example, that they have an opportunity to be better than what they are at this particular moment in time. The Peer Support Program shows women that there are people who can relate to where they are, while encouraging them to believe that 'if she can do it then so can I.' Many peer workers have gone on to be hired within various programs throughout the agency.

3.3.7 Positive Relationships

Also consistent with the literature, some of the participants cite the positive

relationships that are formed amongst the staff at the Elizabeth Fry Toronto and their clients. According to the Correctional Service of Canada (2002), women are encouraged to establish positive relationships and contacts within the community. It is believed that these positive contacts can last well beyond warrant expiry and help assist women to avoid contact with the criminal justice system (Correctional Service of Canada, 2002). The data suggest that positive relationships developed during the client's time at Elizabeth Fry Toronto creates a level of trust that allows them to come back to various workers when they need assistance with something after they have left the agency.

The staff is very committed and has a good sense of how to build good relationships with clients. Relationships, interesting enough, I have maintained and people keep on coming back.

They know that we support them, having that relationship with them that you can build. I get cards from clients, from people who have been discharged almost two years ago.

I will [support] them until I feel that the client no longer needs me or that the client thinks or tells me that she is fine. Other than that, I will forever support her.

As the literature suggests, it is this ongoing support and long lasting relationships that many women in conflict with the law need if they are going to successfully find a place in the community after a period of incarceration.

3.3.8 After-Care

The data reveals that even though Elizabeth Fry Toronto does not offer an actual after-care program, many of the participants indicate their relationships and support do not end once the clients have completed their programs or services. Whether it was referrals to other agencies or programs, writing reference letters or letters of support, or just being there if the client needs them, most of the staff participants agreed whole

heartily that they would assist the women in whatever way possible. This is partially consistent with what Austin, Bloom and Donahue (1992) find in their study on community-based agencies. The staff at Elizabeth Fry Toronto adopts an informal after-care program and is contingent entirely upon the initiative of the women themselves. Promising community-based agencies in Austin, Bloom and Donahue's (1992) study offer the program participants aftercare upon completion of their programs. The authors believe that without continuous support in the community many women may not be able to find and maintain their place in the community as law-abiding citizens (Austin et al., 1992).

3.3.9 Coordinated Efforts & Partnerships

In assisting and supporting many of the women clients, most of the staff cite calling on other resources and networks in the community. Previous research finds similar results when examining community-based agencies for women offenders (Austin et al., 1992). Like Elizabeth Fry Toronto, promising program models often draw on resources already available in the community in order to better assist with the reintegration of women offenders back into society. The housing, educational and mental health programs all draw on resources already available in the community. For example, the housing program has many connections with various services in the Toronto area. Informal partnerships have been made with Homes for Society, emergency shelters, the YWCA, the City of Toronto, and many private landlords. Additionally, the agency draws on the services of Street to Homes, where a follow-up worker is assigned to each woman who receives housing. For one year, this worker helps to ensure that rent and bills are paid as well as negotiate any issues the woman may have with the accommodations and

landlords.

An informal partnership has also been made with George Brown College. The school offers a program called Re-Direction through Education. It is a life skills, back to school program that offers college level courses. This year long program is free of charge, including textbooks. According to one of the participants in the study, many of the women at Elizabeth Fry Toronto have enrolled in this program. She believes it helps give the women self-confidence when they apply to college because they have successfully completed some college level courses.

As Elizabeth Fry Toronto does not directly deal with mental health issues, many services have been outsourced in the community. Many times the women who come to Elizabeth Fry Toronto are already working with a psychiatrist. If a woman is suffering from a mental health issue, all staff participants cite that an outside a referral is made. One participant when commenting on the referrals that are made in mental health cases states that, “we all know somebody informally from somewhere.” Similarly, another participant explains that, “we have alliances with people where this is their expertise, we don’t feel the need to be experts in everything.”

3.3.10 Individualized Approach: Individual versus Group Counseling

The counseling that is available at Elizabeth Fry Toronto is conducted in both individual and group settings. Programs and services for women in conflict with the law must be individually tailored in order to meet the needs of each individual woman (Correctional Service of Canada, 2002; Koons et al., 1997; Morash et al., 1998). Yet, the majority of the participants in this study suggest that there really is no preferred approach to group or individual counseling. They note that the type of counseling should be

determined by what the woman is comfortable engaging in as well as the goal of the program. Despite what the literature has identified, these participants mention benefits to group counseling that often are not achieved during individual counseling sessions.

For the OWN⁴ program it is obviously much more efficient to do education in groups. If you really want to get out there and do the best work that you can do to educate people about the law and to educate people about what's happening to women in prison, it is better to that in groups then to try and do that one-on-one group.

I love group counseling! I think it is great, but I think it is good for certain things. When it is a cooking class or like we are teaching life-skills or whatever, then yeah, it's great.

I really like group, I think workshops and groups I am a fan because you learn from other women. I hear a lot from women, 'I feel so alone,' there is a lot of shame going through the system. They see [that] their backgrounds are similar. They get a lot from other people.

According to the respondents, efficiency, group interaction, and support from other program participants appear to be the main benefits associated with group counseling. However, the main theme that emerges in regards to group versus individual counseling is that the woman has to be willing and comfortable to engage in group or workshop counseling. Respondents explain that some women are not comfortable discussing their issues in front of other people. In which case, individual counseling would be best.

Another related theme is funding. Elizabeth Fry Toronto is only given the funding for five hours of counseling for each woman. One participant from Community Programs clarifies the funding situation by saying, "I think all workers would love to do a workshop and then do three months of counseling but there is such limited funding. I mean five hours per woman, what are you going to do with that? We do what we can."

⁴ Opportunities for Women Now

3.3.11 Screening Process

Lastly, from an administrative perspective, promising programs for women in conflict with the law in the community are to screen all participants who enter the program(s), as well as conduct evaluations to determine if program goals are meeting the clients' needs. Screening each client helps to ensure that the services and programs being offered through the agency match the client's individual needs (Austin et al., 1992). According to the data, the Residential Program and Community Programs have some type of screening process. Homelessness and Outreach simply follows the agency's mission statement – women who are or are at risk of coming into the conflict with the law – as their screening tool.

The Residential Program has two different screening processes for provincial and federal women. For provincially sentenced women, a member of the Residential Program goes into the Vanier Centre for Women and meets with interested women. Almost all of the women come from Unit Three. The women in this unit have displayed positive behaviour while in custody, are employed, participate in programs, and have no incidents of misconduct. During the meeting, an intake procedure is conducted. During the intake procedure the woman creates her discharge plan. During this procedure the woman describes her goals, what her plans are while in the community, which programs she plans to participate in, and ensures that she has taken responsibility for her charge(s). Ultimately, she needs to have a strong discharge plan in order to be accepted into the Residential Program at Elizabeth Fry Toronto. Women who do not acknowledge their addiction issues, minimize their charge(s), appear to have a real sense of entitlement or have very few goals for themselves once released back into the community are usually

encouraged to work on some of these issues before applying to the residential facility at Elizabeth Fry Toronto.

After the intake procedure, a letter of support is written to the Institutional Liaison Officer (ILO) at Vanier. The ILO then sends the Level of Service Inventory- Ontario Revision (LSIOR) and other important documentation pertaining to the woman to the agency. The LSIOR is a standardized instrument used to measure the risk of recidivism, the need for correctional programs to reduce recidivism, and responsivity factors that impact on case plan goals (Department of Justice, 2008). The LSIOR also assists in making the decision to allow a woman into the program because it contains information related to the charge, case notes, discharge summaries, client issues, prison experience, client needs, her criminal record, and any other information the woman might not reveal. Once the agency has received all of the necessary documentation, the Residential Manager makes a decision as to whether Elizabeth Fry Toronto would be a good fit for that woman upon release from secure custody⁵.

In Community Programs, an intake assessment is completed for each woman, including information on current group participation, mental health issues, and whether Elizabeth Fry Toronto can offer them the most appropriate services. This questionnaire is then inputted into the computer. In most cases, the only women who are ineligible to participate in Community Programs are those women with severe mental health issues. Although most of the women Elizabeth Fry Toronto serve do have some type of mental illness, usually depression or Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), the agency does not typically have the capacity to serve women with more complex diagnosis, such as,

⁵ After attempts for clarification with stakeholders, I was unable to find the process for female federal offenders wanting to attend to the Residential Program at Elizabeth Fry Toronto.

schizophrenia. Women have been turned away on the assumption that their needs could be better served elsewhere. In these cases referrals are made to other agencies or to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH).

3.3.12 Program Evaluations

Some programs conduct evaluations related to the clients' perception of the program or to satisfy funding requirements. For instance, Homelessness and Outreach programs conduct evaluation reports to submit to funders that present quantitative data on the number of women served, housed, and how many women participated in the various programs offered. One participant from Homelessness and Outreach voiced her concern about this type of quantitative data that funders look for by asking, "Can I tell you whether giving a woman a smile on the street affects her day? How do I quantify that for you? That's a much different question, right, which no one is really asking."

In the Residential Program, each woman upon discharge completes a discharge evaluation. This questionnaire addresses typical issues such as how was your stay here, was your primary worker effective, did you find the counseling effective, and did you get what you needed from here. Yet, one participant from the Residential Program said that the evaluation was not a good tool to evaluate program success. She notes that, "they just circle it, no one ever leaves comments. It is just like 5, 5, 5, 5." Similar to the participant from Homelessness and Outreach, she is also concerned with the use of quantitative data. "Success isn't measured by paperwork, it is impossible; I mean there are fields that success is gauged by paperwork and this definitely is not one of them."

Community Programs also conducts an evaluation with the woman at the end of every group or workshop. It asks various questions about the facilitator, the information

that was provided, and was the facilitator knowledgeable. However, this questionnaire is not completed after one-to-one counseling. Similar to concerns raised by other respondents, a participant from Community Programs also expresses concern over the use of quantitative data. When asked how program success should be measured, she replies, “I would have to say qualitatively, we can’t do it quantitatively.”

In addition to their own evaluations, the United Way has recently come to the agency and held an information and training session on outcome and evaluation tools. The United Way has provided them with all the templates and forms so they can conduct quantitative evaluations on their programs. According to the respondents, they have yet to go any further with the tools. One participant comments, “It’s hard. Outcomes and evaluations are relatively new in the last ten years. It can be tricky to understand and learn but we are just starting right now.”

Thus, it appears that Elizabeth Fry Toronto does have a screening process for allowing women into their programs, with the exception of Homeless and Outreach. Yet, considering the programs that are offered through Homeless and Outreach, many of the programs do not necessarily require a screening process. Each of these programs targets a different group of women (e.g., homeless, sex workers, new comers to Canada). Being a member of one of these groups makes you eligible by definition to participate in the program. The programs that are in need of a screening process, those that need to ensure that the program can meet each individual woman’s needs, do have a screening process in place, such as, the Residential Program. Furthermore, it appears that Elizabeth Fry Toronto has to some extent an evaluation process in place. Yet, what emerges from the data is that many of the participants do not believe that these evaluations can effectively

measure program success. Many of the participants feel the quantitative data collected cannot effectively capture the work of Elizabeth Fry Toronto. Consequently, this theme suggests future evaluations should conduct qualitative exit interviews with the women who have or are currently participating in programs at Elizabeth Fry Toronto to determine whether these women consider the programs offered to be a part of their successful reintegration back into the community.

In conclusion, one goal of this research is to identify the key program elements that assist with women's reintegration back into the community after a period of incarceration and to identify the ways in which the program elements represent the characteristics of successful programs as identified in the literature. Based on the data, it appears that the key program elements at Elizabeth Fry Toronto are consistent with the American literature. Elizabeth Fry Toronto is a women-centred agency that is based on a model of empowerment. The agency maintains a structured environment with clearly articulated rules and regulations that both employees and clients are expected to follow. The staff and volunteers are considered to be positive role models for the clients they serve. Positive relationships have been formed between staff and clients, relationships that will last well beyond the woman's warrant expiry. Great staff and managers create a positive moral around the agency that contributes to a safe and homey program environment for the Elizabeth Fry clients.

Moreover, unrestrictive supervision at the Residential Program allows the women freedom to participate in activities outside the agency. Partnerships and coordinated efforts between other programs and services in the community allow Elizabeth Fry Toronto to ensure that a client's needs are being effectively met in the community.

Although groups and workshops appear to be the main counseling approach – mostly due to funding restrictions – no woman is forced into group counseling if they are not group-ready. Thereby, this allows for an individualized approach that suits each woman’s individual needs. While the agency does not have an actual after-care program, most of the participants cite long-term support and relationships even after the client has completed her programs and services at Elizabeth Fry Toronto. Lastly, both the Residential Program and Community Programs complete a screening process before allowing women to participate in their services. Many of the programs have some form of evaluation to gauge program success or to satisfy funding requirements; although many of the participants express concerns surrounding the validity and efficacy of this quantitative data.

4.0 Theoretical Significance & Challenges

One research objective is to examine the ways in which Elizabeth Fry Toronto assists with the reintegration of women back into society after a period of incarceration. In order to assist with their reintegration, programming must be geared towards the pathways and multiple marginalities that bring women into conflict with the law. It must also assist women in managing their offender status and help them to renegotiate a positive identity. In many cases, the successful reintegration of women in conflict with the law is contingent on the availability of community resources and programming and on a women's ability to access these resources (Wilson & Anderson, 1997). According to Elizabeth Fry Toronto, the goal of their programming is to help address the causes of their criminal behaviour. Programming is geared towards breaking the cycle of poverty and addressing addictions to drugs and alcohol, which is often related to women's involvement in the criminal justice system.

This chapter will address research questions one and four. The first part of this section will address the ways in which the programming at Elizabeth Fry Toronto addresses the pathways and multiple marginalities that bring women into contact with the criminal justice system, how programming assists women in managing their offender status as well as renegotiating a positive self-identity. The last part of this chapter will outline the challenges Elizabeth Fry Toronto faces to deliver and implement key program strategies.

4.1 Histories of Abuse & Victimization

Research reveals that, beginning in childhood, many women in conflict with the law have been victims of physical and/or sexual abuse (Daly, 1992; DeHart, 2008;

Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009; Simpson et al., 2008; Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women, 1990). Almost all of the respondents in this study recognize that abuse and victimization play a significant role in the lives of many women that they serve. Yet, most of them also believe that the woman has to be ready and willing to deal with the trauma. Only two of the participants mention that the clients should be asked about their histories of abuse and victimization and encouraged to participate in trauma and abuse counseling.

One of the things that just astonishes me and I will drill it into anybody, is that you have to ask women about violence in their lives. That is an ongoing issue here because a lot of times women are not asked, and I think that it should be something that is asked.

Because we have all of the documentation, we can address it with them prior to them getting out, 'I've read in your report that you have had some prior abuse do you want to address that as well?' If they say no, they don't want to deal with it; I would ask them again when they got here, but usually because they want to get out of jail they will say 'yes' to whatever you say.

Whether or not the women are actually encouraged to address their histories of abuse and victimization, the agency does offer the Healing from Abuse program to those women who are ready to deal with their histories of abuse and trauma. This group is a first stage trauma therapy workshop. First stage therapy helps clients create effective strategies for coping with the effects of trauma. This process does not involve dealing with past experiences of abuse but rather on having the client acknowledge the trauma and abuse (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2010). First stage therapy also helps the client to understand how the past affects the present, including how they think, feel, and act (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2010). The goals of first stage therapy are

safety, education, and managing responses to trauma (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2010).

Understanding the history of a woman's abuse and victimization is often done in stage two therapy sessions. During stage two, clients are asked to discuss their past experiences of trauma and abuse (Centre for Addition and Mental Health, 2010). This stage explores the effects that the trauma has had on your life and how it continues to affect your life (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2010). The goal is to have the client face her past painful experiences. Third stage trauma therapy helps clients to reconnect with the world and their relationships with others. If a woman wishes to continue with stage two and three trauma therapy, referrals are made to other agencies that have the expertise and experience in dealing with higher stages of trauma and abuse counseling.

Related to abuse in childhood, many female offenders experience unhealthy and abusive relationships as adults (Daly, 1992; DeHart, 2008; Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009; Simpson et al., 2008; Spjeldnes & Goodkind, 2009; Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women, 1990). Two of the participants did mention that dealing with histories of abuse and victimization is an ongoing process and that women can carry around this victimization for many years. Even though many women think they have forgotten about the trauma, past trauma and abuse it can be linked to future violence and other crimes. One participant from Community Programs notes that in many cases of domestic violence, "most of the women who have been charged have suffered abusive relationships before." Understanding that a woman's current use of violence can often be linked to past violence in childhood or other adult relationships, the Partner Intervention

Program (PIP) is designed for women who have plead guilty to domestic violence. The program is designed to provide women with insight into their violent behaviour and helps them to understand how violence begets violence.

4.2 Addiction

Not only does research show that many women offenders have histories of abuse and victimization, many women also suffer from addictions to drugs and alcohol. One study finds that 95% of the women offenders had either used or dealt drugs at some point in the past year (Daly, 1992; Simpson et al., 2008). Half of the respondents in this study cite addiction as a major concern for women in conflict with the law. They recognize that many women end up in jail on theft and fraud related charges because they were trying to support their habit. One participant comments that, “You are either stealing to eat or stealing to feed your addiction.” Similarly, another participant from Homelessness and Outreach said, “That tends to be why a lot of the women end up in jail, shoplifting to support a habit or dealing small amounts of drugs.”

In order to address their substance abuse addictions Elizabeth Fry Toronto offers a Substance Abuse Assessment and Treatment Program. Offering individual and group counseling, this six week program helps women in conflict with the law understand the reasons behind their addictions. Based on a harm reduction model (which focuses on reducing the harm associated with drug use rather than reducing consumption), women are asked questions such as: How can you reduce your usage? When you use how does it affect your life? What happens when you use? What are the things you lose? What things could you gain if you lived a more sober life?

Elizabeth Fry Toronto has also started a new program called Trauma and

Addictions. Believing that substance abuse and histories of trauma and victimization are often closely related, the agency felt it necessary to design a program that dealt specifically with these issues simultaneously. Research supports this approach. DeHart (2008:1368) reveals that many women in conflict with the law use drugs and alcohol “as a way to ‘numb’ themselves, either in anticipation of abuse or in dealing with its ongoing stress and aftermath.” Salisbury and Van Voorhis (2009) also find women use drugs and alcohol as a coping mechanism to alleviate current and past victimizations. Additionally, they find that a woman’s current and past victimizations can contribute to a lack of self-confidence and self-efficacy, depression and anxiety that are also associated with female offending.

According to the multiple marginality and intersectional theoretical framework, several systems work together to shape the experiences of people in society (Anderson & Collins, 2007). These multiple inequalities function simultaneously and put some women significantly at risk of engaging in criminal behaviour. Consistent with this framework, the Trauma and Addictions program adopts a holistic approach treatment. If community-based programming is going to be effective in helping women offenders find a place in the community after a period of incarceration, they must address the multiple marginalities of women offenders in combination with each other. According to Cole (2009: 179), to focus on only a single dimension of her marginality (e.g., only addiction or only victimization) fails to acknowledge how “social categories depend on each other for meaning.”

4.3 Mental Health

Mental health is an issue for many women who come into conflict with the law.

Anxiety, depression, eating disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder are often common mental illnesses reported in women offenders (Salisbury & Van Voorhis, 2009; Spjeldnes & Goodkind, 2009). Many women also report suicidal ideations (Daly, 1992; DeHart 2008). Only three respondents in this study report mental health as an important factor affecting women in conflict with the law. Two of those respondents also note the lack of services and resources available to women in the community who suffer from various forms of mental illness, “the mental health component is huge! Working at the courts daily, it is something that I think lacks a lot of resources.” Similarly, “they are very stigmatized, women with mental health are very stigmatized, and there are not enough services in this city for women.”

Currently, Elizabeth Fry Toronto does not offer an in-house service that addresses many of the mental health concerns that women in conflict with the law possess. In many cases, referrals are made to other agencies and programs within the community or the woman has come to the agency already working with a psychiatrist. Almost all of the staff participants state that mental health is not the agency’s area of expertise and that women’s mental health can be better served by other resources in the community. One participant did state, however, that the agency does deal with a lot of women with some form of mental health issue and that the agency is considering adding a mental health component or, at least, educating the staff more on mental health issues for women in conflict with law.

4.4 Stigma & Self-Identity

Many women in conflict with the law suffer from low self-esteem, lack self-confidence and self-efficacy. Many women also suffer from the stigmatization associated

with an offender status. Someone with an offender status can be referred to as a discreditable person. A discreditable person is someone whose differentness is not immediately apparent or known beforehand (e.g., criminal record) (Goffman, 1963). The discreditable person often worries that his life may be found out by normals and manages the information about his failings (Goffman, 1963). According to Goffman (1963: 3, 4), the stigma associated with an offender status often makes the offender feel “tainted, discounted” and of the “less desirable kind.” This often leads to feelings of shame and feelings of not belonging in mainstream society and, therefore, different approaches to impression management.

The stigma associated with the offender status can have profound effects on the way in which women in conflict with the law come to perceive themselves (Geiger & Fischer, 2005). According to the data, some of the effects an offender status has on women offenders include a lack of self-confidence and self-worth. Accordingly, “we need to help the women to re-wire their thinking [about themselves] if we are going to help in the recovery process. We need to raise self-confidence and self-esteem.” Helping women to overcoming feeling of self-worth and self-confidence appear to emerge as a challenge for many of the workers at Elizabeth Fry Toronto.

The biggest challenge, I think, a lot of the times is the women themselves. They have to overcome feelings of self-worth, not having self-worth and really believing that they can do it and battling that first beats anything you’re up against out there (in the community).

I think that if you don’t care much for yourself then you don’t care if you’re doing well for yourself or contributing. When you see that you are worth something, you can also see that you can contribute.

Additionally, many women in conflict with the law perceive themselves as

unlikely to obtain employment due to their offender status. One respondent states, “I see a lot of women in Vanier when they mention the B.E.S.T.⁶ Program, ‘who would hire me?’” According to another respondent, an offender status has prevented many women from even applying to jobs.

So I am always looking for places that don’t [do a criminal record check] so that our women have the confidence to apply. A lot of times they are like, ‘I am not applying anywhere because they are going to do a criminal record check and I am not going to get the job anyway.’

Similar to what Geiger and Fischer (2005) find, the participants in this study reveal the effect an offender status can have on a women’s sense of self-worth. Almost all of the respondents in the study believe that improving a woman’s self-confidence and self-esteem can contribute to her successful reintegration back into society after a period of incarceration.

Although the agency does not offer an actual ‘self-esteem program,’ almost all of the staff participants refer to various elements within some of the programming that contributes to raising women’s self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-worth. As one respondent states, “A lot of the clients we get, their self-esteem is not high and their ambitions are not there. I think that that is what our services help them with.” In order to help raise their client’s self-esteem the respondents believe in raising self-awareness. Not only should the clients become aware of who they are but they also need to become aware of the abilities and strengths that others see in them.

Their self-esteem is so low and through [the B.E.S.T. Program] and referrals to this program, they realize, ‘hey I can do some of this.’ They get help with a resume. People say, ‘you do have skills, you may not think you do, but you have been doing this for ten years.’ It is very encouraging

⁶ Believing in Employment Success Training

for women to be in that program.

It is as little as, they get \$200.00 a week for food for the house, they sign for it, they go to the grocery store, and they buy groceries for the house and they come back. They are responsible for the receipt, the change, providing food for the house. It is the little things, 'I am a convicted criminal but they just gave me \$200.00.' So it is the little things I think, when you show your clients that you trust them or trust the abilities that they have.

Most of our workshops and groups and one-to-one counseling have a component on self-esteem and self-awareness and what is self-awareness. I think a lot of women don't really know who they are. So becoming self-aware and knowing what you need, what makes you tick, you know that all ties into self-esteem.

The theme that appears to emerge is that a positive self-esteem, self-concept and feelings of self-worth are essential programming goals at Elizabeth Fry Toronto. As one participant put it quite nicely, "Giving them the confidence to let them know that they can go out there and make it without having to resort to crime or criminal activities. We are trying to teach them as many things as possible." By giving women feelings of self-worth and the confidence that they can, in fact, live a life that no longer involves the criminal justice system, Elizabeth Fry Toronto is helping women to bridge the gap between their "virtual" and "social" identity. Thus, increasing the likelihood that she will not consider herself "falling short" of what she ought to be (Goffman, 1963: 7).

4.5 Poverty: Education, Employment & Housing

Many women in conflict with the law come from disadvantaged and poverty-stricken backgrounds. They lack education, job skills or training, stable housing arrangements, and financial security (Bryne & Trew, 2008; Daly, 1992; Spjeldnes & Goodkind, 2009). Research shows that many women in conflict with the law resort to

crime due to financial need (Bryne & Trew, 2008). Accordingly, five of the eight respondents name poverty as a contributing factor to women's involvement in crime. When asked about the criminogenic factors that contribute to women coming into conflict with the law, one respondent replied, "Poverty and addiction are huge." Women in conflict with the law often find themselves unable to escape from the cycle of poverty and the multiple marginalities that contribute to their offending behaviour.

Well I think some of the biggest issues that you see are under the big umbrella of poverty. I think we see it as such a cycle. People offend because of their situation. When you lack opportunity and you lack things in life that are not really giving you a reason to stay out of conflict [with the law], then there isn't much reason to. We see people coming in and out of the system, losing their home, back in the system, in the shelter. I mean it is a complete cycle.

If you grew up in poverty or you grew up in a household with addictions or with abuse and that is all you know. You are going to follow that, right. You are going to work the streets because that is the only family that you have. You don't know anything else.

We see poor, uneducated, extremely marginalized women you know. Mostly women of colour, aboriginal women, that is what we see. We don't see the educated women who come out and have a job waiting for them or a family or savings in the bank to pool from. We don't normally see those folks at all. If we could get rid of poverty, that would be good.

According to these responses, if Elizabeth Fry Toronto is going to help women successfully reintegrate back into society after a period of incarceration they need to help women to break the cycle of poverty. Programming must be geared towards acknowledging the multiple marginalities that bring women into conflict with the law. Services need to help women find and secure educational or vocational placements, safe and stable housing arrangements, and assisting them in managing the daily

responsibilities associated with life outside of prison.

4.5.1 Education & Employment

Women in conflict with the law are less likely to have the necessary resources and skills to find and secure stable employment when compared to their male counterparts (Daly, 1992; Spjeldnes & Goodkind, 2009). One study finds that only one-third of the women offenders in the sample had completed high school or received a General Education Diploma (GED) (Daly, 1992). Similar to what Daly (1992) finds, one respondent from the Residential Program reports that, “I think about the women that I work with in the institution or [at the agency], I see a lot of grade eight education or reading level.” With limited resources and few legal options for income, many women turn to crime as a means of financial support. If women are going to find a place in the community after a period of incarceration, programming must help them to secure job placements, vocational training or educational opportunities.

When asked if the respondents believe that educational and employment placements are essential for the successful reintegration of women back into society one participant said, “Absolutely, and for their self-esteem.” Three other participants in this study cite employment and educational placements as an important element in helping women to find a place in the community after a period of closed custody.

It is absolutely critical. Yeah, absolutely critical, I don't know how people survive without it. A woman can say that I want to go to work, but you just have grade eight, you haven't worked a “normal” job in 20 years. Plus you have a conviction, which is a huge barrier. All of that certainly makes a difference in terms of whether and how quickly, and if women can reintegrate back into society.

I think the two most pressing issues for women getting back into the community are housing and

education/employment. Education and employment and housing are like number one, two, I don't even feel like I can rank them one, two, three because education/employment and housing are just so ... they have to make sure they have the education to get the employment and they need the money to get the housing and it is just like, oh god!

Pre-employment, I definitely think is an asset for women who really feel they want it and need it. Definitely! Yes. It gives them structure, right. It puts them on a path to ... I don't want to say "normality."

Although half of the participants name education and employment placements as important to the reintegration of women offenders back into society, another theme that emerges from their responses is the concept of 'readiness.' One respondent from Homelessness and Outreach comments that the program not only prepares women for the workforce or educational training but also ensures that they are ready to return. "That is part of our focus, what we attempt to do, an assessment around readiness." Assessing the proper order of treatment also helps to ensure a client's best chance at reintegration.

For some women, if they feel like they have done their healing, they may want to get back to work and that keeps them out of trouble. Some women just jump back into a regular routine or they get stressed out over working. You need to start at the base, moving up from there when they are ready.

So I think that if the woman has bigger issues, like if they come out with a severe addiction issue and they kind of put that on the back burner and focus on getting a job, it is in the wrong order. So the job and the employment, whatever is going to rebuild their confidence first and is the most [important] thing they need to focus on. If somebody needs to focus on addictions first and then worry about getting a job or somebody needs to go to school first because they don't know how to read, like you know.

Once women are ready to begin education or job searching, Elizabeth Fry Toronto

offers the Believing in Employment Success Training (B.E.S.T.) program. This program, according to the respondents, is in incredibly high demand. The program does not necessarily find them jobs but rather focuses on strengthening their skills to re-enter the job market. Some of these skills include effective communication, time management, managing stress, career exploration and resume writing. The program also assists women in searching for jobs or volunteer placements with a criminal record. Most of the respondents comment on the stigma associated with a criminal record when applying for employment. They also note how difficult it can be for women with a criminal record to find a job or volunteer opportunity that does not require a Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) check. Referrals are also made to other employment agencies within the city that focus more on formally linking women up with jobs.

The pre-employment counselor also works with women who are looking to return to school. Although the counselor does not formally link the women up with schools or vocational training, she does provide them with the necessary information. If a woman chooses to complete her GED, enroll in postsecondary courses or a vocational program, the B.E.S.T. worker will provide the woman with the information she requires to get the process started.

Understanding that many of their clients come from disadvantaged and poverty-stricken backgrounds, offering employment and educational resources can help many women to break the cycle of poverty. By offering these services Elizabeth Fry Toronto is helping women to acquire the necessary skills and training needed to find and maintain stable employment. By helping women increase their marketable skills, fewer women will have to resort to crime due to financial need.

4.5.2 Housing Arrangements

According to Elizabeth Fry Toronto (2009b), many women who are in conflict with the law are homeless. In 2009, 25 percent of the 350 women serving time at the Vanier Centre for Women were homeless (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2009b). Although many women still have connections in the community that they can return to once they leave prison, many of these connections are unhealthy and most women require a fresh start (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2009b). Finding women safe and stable housing is often one of the first steps on her path to reintegration. Seven of the eight participants consider housing to be of critical importance if women are going to find a place in the community after a period of secure custody. The respondents also indicate housing is important because many of the women they serve are homeless. Having a permanent address is often required for mailing identification documents (e.g., passport, driver's license, health card), starting the process of getting children back from child services, finding a job, and regaining some sense of independence and self-confidence.

Housing, I think that that is huge! I mean that is the first step for everything. They can't participate in programs if they don't know where they are going to sleep tonight. They can't have their ID. They can't have anything without it getting lost or stolen. They need a safe place to go or else they can't move forward. Housing is huge!

Under that umbrella are housing issues, which is a huge one, which people often lose their housing when they go into custody. When you lose your housing, you lose your family, you lose your job. It is a real domino effect.

Housing is a big thing when it comes to the clients we deal with because a lot of them are homeless. A lot of these people are coming out of prison and they don't have anywhere to go. If they do have somewhere to go, they are staying with someone, and at the end of the day they need a roof over their head.

I think the two most pressing issues for women getting back into the community are housing and educational/employment. Those are biggest because housing here is lacking. Housing, education and employment are the three main areas that we need to focus on and help rebuild self-confidence.

Although almost all of the participants cite housing as a major concern, two participants voice concerns about the type of housing women offenders are offered. One participant from Homeless and Outreach said, “If we are going to put them in a place that they can afford, they are usually in areas that have easy access to drugs and alcohol. It is a complex issue.” Another participant from Homeless and Outreach has similar concerns.

Safe? I wouldn't say that. It is not like they go to Richmond Hill. It is the housing in general or warehousing in general that is unsafe because of the lifestyle these people live. It is low-income families living in subsidized housing; there are people who can't live off of that. They live in these places that are filled with cockroaches or are not being cared for properly. I don't think it is safe. Definitely don't think it is safe but housing is being provided.

The housing process often begins while the woman is still in prison. Visiting the Vanier Centre for Women in Milton twice a week, the housing worker meets with interested women and assists them in completing housing applications. This ensures that her name is on housing waiting lists before she is released from prison. During these meetings the worker assesses what the women's housing needs are and whether or not she will qualify for subsidized housing, which most women do. In order to qualify for subsidized housing, a woman would have to be at least sixteen years of age, a Canadian citizen or refugee with no removal orders against them, do not owe any money to another social housing provider in Ontario, and no member of the household has any convictions for rent-gear-to-income fraud or misrepresentations (Housing Connection, 2010).

Additionally, the woman must show proof of income at or below \$30,500.00 for a bachelor apartment⁷ (Housing Connection, 2010).

Women are also made aware of the long waiting lists for subsidized housing. Other options are usually discussed, such as supportive housing, subsidized rooms, and other rental options. Although it has been the experience of one worker that, “Women are generally fussier about their accommodations. Most of the women are unwilling to be in shared accommodations.” If the woman is released and housing has still not been arranged, the agency continues to work with the woman assisting her to find an emergency shelter or transitional housing and, hopefully, more permanent housing.

4.6 Life Skills

Life skills programs not only teach women in conflict with the law how to manage the responsibilities associated with day-to-day life but they also teach the necessary skills to promote personal growth and change. According to the Correctional Service of Canada (2007) many women offenders have important needs with respect to interpersonal, social, daily living, and self-care skills. The Correctional Service of Canada (2007) believes that without the ability to function in the community with some level of independence many women will re-offend and return to secure custody. All of the staff participants believe that life skills programs are helpful for women offenders trying to find a place a community after a period of incarceration. To address women’s interpersonal, social, and daily living skills, the agency offers an Anger Management Program and Mothers who Care Program. The Residential Program also offers a life skills session once a week to the residents.

⁷ \$36,000.00 for a one-bedroom; \$42,000.00 for a two-bedroom; \$50,500.00 for a three-bedroom; \$61,000.00 for a four- or five-bedroom apartment.

Currently, however, there is no official program in place that addresses financial literacy. According to the Correctional Service of Canada (2004) many federal offenders have difficulties managing money. Two of the participants have similar responses in regards to women in conflict with the law and their ability to manage money.

A lot of women do not even know how to do groceries. They get money and they don't even know how to shop and they want to go to the store and buy expensive things. We have a lot of women who literally get out of jail, go downtown to Winners and shoplift, get arrested and go back in.

This is something you do every day. It is just the way of living. I am use to spending \$300.00 worth of groceries a month, but this month I ended up spending \$400.00. If every month you fall back then all of sudden you don't know where all your money went. I think budgeting is a big aspect of life.

If women offenders are going to successfully reintegrate back into society after a period of incarceration they have to be able to effectively manage their money. Financial literacy can help to ensure that a woman balances her spending so that there is money available to pay rent, pay bills, and buy groceries.

One participant from Homelessness and Outreach did mention that the agency was in the process of implementing a new phase of life skills called financial literacy. Some of the participants believe that being unable to balance a budget can lead some women back into conflict with the law. They will either steal to make ends meet or simply become overwhelmed and stressed out, which could act as trigger for re-offending. One participant comments that financial literacy can allow women to set financial goals. Setting and achieving goals can have a positive impact on her self-confidence and self-worth, thus, contributing to her successfully reintegration.

In short, the Healing from Abuse program, Substance Abuse Assessment Treatment Program and Trauma and Addictions program allows many women in conflict with the law to address their histories of abuse and victimization and their addictions to drugs and alcohol. These programs also provide women with insight into how past and current victimizations can be related to current drug and alcohol addictions. In addition to addictions, many women in conflict with the law also suffer from some form of mental health issue as well as low self-esteem, self-confidence and self-efficacy. Due to the stigma associated with an offender status, many women need help renegotiating a positive self-identity. Currently, the agency does not have a specific program that targets women's low self-worth, although various programming elements are cited as helping women with their self-confidence and self-esteem.

Understanding that the majority of women in conflict with the law are often the most disadvantaged members of society, Elizabeth Fry Toronto offers their clients assistance with employment and educational needs, housing arrangements, and various life skills counseling. Breaking the cycle of poverty – through employment, education and eventually housing – can also break the cycle of crime and incarceration. Due to the fact that most women in conflict with the law lack education and job skills, and often resort to crime as a result of financial need, educational and employment counseling can prepare women for earning an income through legal avenues. Furthermore, learning the skills to navigate through everyday life (e.g., budgeting, paying bills, grocery shopping) can also help to ensure that women in conflict with the law are given the chance to find their place in the community.

The data suggests Elizabeth Fry Toronto offers women in conflict with the law a

holistic approach to treatment. The data also suggests that programming is geared towards her unique and multifaceted needs that have often contributed to her pathway to crime. Acknowledging women's unique social locations, Elizabeth Fry Toronto offers various programs and services that target her multiple marginalities. Prior to working with Elizabeth Fry Toronto, many women in conflict with the law have few legal opportunities available to them. According to the data, the agency offers these women the tools and resources they need in order to find a place in the community after a period of incarceration. By focusing on the pathways and multiple marginalities that bring women into conflict with the law – lack of housing, employment, and life-skills and addiction – Elizabeth Fry Toronto creates opportunities for women which can have a significant impact on her successful reintegration.

4.7 Challenges with Program Delivery & Implementation

The final research question hopes to identify any challenges associated with the delivery or implementation of key program strategies from the perspective of those directly involved with the reintegration process. The data show that two major themes appear to be of concern for the staff and volunteers at Elizabeth Fry Toronto. The two major challenges as identified by the respondents are housing and funding. Related to funding are concerns surrounding long waiting lists for various programs and services. Two less pronounced challenges are potential clients being unaware of the programs and services offered at Elizabeth Fry Toronto and the perceptions of society.

4.7.1 Housing

According to the agency, women returning to the community after a period of incarceration face many challenges related to housing arrangements. They are often

discriminated against because of their criminal record. As a discredited person whose actual social identity (e.g., a criminal record revealed through a criminal record check) is known beforehand, many potential landlords may look at the woman as nothing more than a criminal, expecting to encounter further criminal behaviour. This type of recognition can have a profound effect on a woman's ability to secure housing arrangements.

Other challenges include a lack of safe and affordable housing and many women lack a secure income. Similar concerns are raised by many of the staff and volunteers who participated in this study. According to the participants, the type of housing, lack of affordable housing and discrimination are the major challenges the agency faces when attempting to find housing arrangements for women returning to the community after a period of secure custody.

The type of housing becomes a challenge for those assisting women with housing arrangements because, as previously mentioned, women are generally "fussier" about their accommodations. One participant comments that, when compared to men, women are more likely to check bathrooms, showers, and kitchens. Women are also less likely to agree to shared accommodations. Concerns are also raised surrounding the environment of affordable housing. Two participants did not necessarily consider affordable housing options to be in safe, drug-free neighbourhoods. As one participant put it, "It is difficult because a lot of women we serve want housing, but it is the type of housing that becomes problematic."

Another challenge the agency faces in delivering housing arrangements for their clients is the lack of affordable housing available in the City of Toronto. Rent in Toronto

is often unaffordable to women leaving prison and waiting lists for subsidized housing are extensive. According to one participant, “The housing list for a one-bedroom apartment is a ten year wait. If you want a three-bedroom apartment, it could be up to twenty-five years. Nobody leaves.” Women often get out of jail and have no choice but to go to an emergency shelter or a friend’s house, which could lead them back into trouble.

One of the final challenges is the discrimination many women face as they attempt to find secure housing arrangements in the community. It has been the experience of one worker that not only do her clients face discrimination due to their criminal record; they are also discriminated against because of their sex. She expresses the challenges associated with trying to find landlords who are willing to accept female tenants. Many landlords find women tenants more difficult than men. Although they are not supposed to discriminate on the basis of sex, this worker is often asked, “You’re not sending me any women are you? We’ve got a nice house for men, we don’t want any women.” Although, many participants consider housing to be an important element in the reintegration of women offenders back into society after a period of incarceration, currently, very limited housing options are available to these women.

4.7.2 Funding Restrictions & Long Waiting Lists

Six of the eight participants consider funding restrictions to be a major challenge in the delivery and implementation of key program strategies. Four of those respondents refer to long waiting lists for programs and services due to the lack of money and resources. Throughout the interviewing process, many of the participants talk about expanding programs and services to better meet the needs of the women they serve. Participants from Community Programs mention the benefit of providing all women with

group and individual counseling. Others want to develop a program that can better meet the needs of women with mental health issues. Homeless and Outreach respondents want to expand their housing program to include more women (currently the mandate only allows them to serve homeless women), develop a program on financial literacy, and consider new and innovative programs which focus on developing self-worth and self-esteem. The Residential Program would like more beds for provincially sentenced women. Yet, a lack of funding and resources has limited what the agency can do. Governmental cutbacks have left the agency to do the best they can with whatever funding and private donations they receive. According to one participant from Community Programs, when the government needs to cut back, “social problems are usually the first to go.”

Funding restrictions and lack of resources has also led to long waiting lists for many of the services and programs offered through Elizabeth Fry Toronto⁸. It can be the case that a woman is in need of a program but there is currently no space available and that program may not be starting up again for several months. If they are enrolled in the Residential Program they may leave the residency before any openings in a particular program are available. One respondent from Homelessness and Outreach refers to long waiting lists as a vicious cycle. She believes many women can end up back in jail because they are unable to access programs and services when they need them.

4.7.3 Potential Clients Unaware of Services Available to Them

On the flip side to long waiting lists, some of the participants believe that potential clients may not be aware of the programs and services available to them in the community. Due to the agency’s clientele, many of these women are alone, isolated, and

⁸ According to the Elizabeth Fry Toronto website, the wait time for Community Programs is 2-4 months.

stigmatized. Unless they have been referred to Elizabeth Fry Toronto through the courts, probation and parole or another agency, many potential clients may be unaware of programs and services offered through the agency. One participant from Homeless and Outreach believes that raising awareness about the agency and its programs is necessary if they are going to be able to reach as many women who need their help as possible. Creating a strong network within the community and with potential clients could raise more awareness about Elizabeth Fry Toronto and its services. In this way they argue that Elizabeth Fry Toronto can assist more women in successfully finding a place in the community after a period of incarceration.

4.7.4 Perceptions of Society

One final challenge identified by some of the respondents is the perceptions society has about women in conflict with the law and their right to reintegrate back into society. These respondents believe that society needs to understand the pathways that bring many women into conflict with the law. They also believe that society needs to understand that in many cases jail is not the appropriate response for women in conflict with the law.

Aligned with Goffman (1963), one participant voices the challenges society places on women who are trying to reintegrate. She says that many people cannot view the woman as anything more than a criminal, undeserving of reintegration or a second chance. This response is similar to what Goffman (1963: 14) found, “It is too late for me to be any different now to what I am ... they’re quite incapable of accepting me as anything else [but criminal].” As a result of the offender status, society discriminates against them and, as a consequence, reduces their life choices. Unable to make contact

with them on equal grounds results in the offender experiencing both strain and shame as a result of their status (Goffman, 1963).

Although society often forms the same perceptions about male offenders, female offenders also struggle with gender stereotypes that many people in society still embrace. Gender stereotypes influence the beliefs and assumptions people have about what roles are appropriate for men and women in society (Covington, 2002). Many still consider a woman's role to be that of a mother, nurturer, and caregiver. When a woman deviates from these expected gender roles, society often forms a negative attitude towards the woman who has chosen a different path (Covington, 2002). According to Covington (2002), gender stereotypes also influence the attitudes people form about those who are in conflict with the law, these attitudes can have a profound and differential impact on female offenders. For example, many people will automatically label women in conflict with the law "as a bad mother simply because she has violated the law. However, a male offender is not automatically labeled a bad father" (Covington, 2002: 2).

Yet, as one participant comments, "People have the right to make bad decisions." Although not everyone may understand or support these decisions, people have that fundamental right. Elizabeth Fry Toronto is there for the women who have chosen a different pathway or have made decisions in the context of life's circumstances. The agency is there to offer support and services to those women, so that they can have the skills and resources needed in order to have a better chance of successful reintegration and thus, reducing the likelihood of coming into conflict with the law again.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 Summary of Findings

Currently, there is very little Canadian research on programming for women in conflict with the law who are returning to the community after a period of incarceration. In light of this, the purpose of this study is to provide some insight into the programming elements and programming that is available to women in the community. This case study, which is based on the information retrieved from qualitative interviews, Internet searches, pamphlets and newsletters, provides a rich description of the programs and services available at Elizabeth Fry Toronto. The research also helps to identify the programming characteristics that assist in meeting women offender's needs. Although the results of this study cannot be generalized to other community-based agencies serving women in conflict with the law, this research can be used as a model by other agencies in formulating programs and services for women offenders in Canada.

One goal of this research is to examine the ways in which a community-based agency assists in the reintegration of women back into the community after a period of secure custody. Programming must address the pathways and multiple marginalities that bring women into contact with the criminal justice system. Additionally, if women are going to successfully find a place in the community, programming should focus on assisting women renegotiate a positive self-identity and manage her offender status. The findings suggest that the programs and services offered through Elizabeth Fry Toronto target many of the pathways and multiple marginalities that bring women into conflict with the law. By focusing on each woman's unique social location, Elizabeth Fry Toronto employs a holistic approach to treatment that targets each woman's multi-faceted needs.

Services and programs focus on histories of abuse and victimization, addictions, mental health, renegotiating positive self-identify, poverty, and life skills. By targeting the pathways that bring women into conflict with the law, Elizabeth Fry Toronto addresses the causes of their criminal behaviour. Additionally, the agency addresses the barriers to successful reintegration and provides women offenders with the skills and resources needed to assist with their reintegration back into the community. Thus, programming at the agency helps to break the cycle of crime and incarceration that many women find themselves unable to break free from.

This study also identifies the key program elements that assist with the reintegration of women back into society after a period of secure custody. The findings illuminate the ways in which the programming elements at Elizabeth Fry Toronto are representative of successful programs as identified in the literature. Based on the data, it appears that the key program elements at Elizabeth Fry Toronto are consistent with the American literature. Furthermore, the agency demonstrates excellent administrative functioning such as a clearly stated mission statement, client screening, and program evaluations. Based on the findings and those from prior research, Elizabeth Fry Toronto could be considered a promising program model to follow for other Canadian community-based agencies serving women offenders.

Lastly, this research reveals the challenges Elizabeth Fry Toronto faces with program delivery and implementation. One of the major challenges as identified by the respondents is housing. Many of the participants voice concerns about the availability of safe and affordable housing in the City of Toronto. Concerns are also raised surrounding the discrimination that women offenders face due to their sex and the stigma associated

with a criminal record when attempting to find housing after a period of incarceration. As a discredited person, many women offenders face the challenge of finding landlords who are willing to accept them as tenants with a criminal record. As previously stated, many potential landlords may expect nothing more from these women than further criminal behaviour. Thus, the stigma of an offender status can minimize the opportunities available to reintegrate successfully back into society.

Another pressing concern raised by the staff and volunteers is funding. Related to issues surrounding funding constraints are concerns about long waiting lists for various programs and services. Two less pronounced challenges are potential clients being unaware of the services offered through Elizabeth Fry Toronto and the perceptions of society. Some of the respondents believe that society needs to understand the pathways that bring women into conflict with the law and those women are deserving of reintegration.

5.2 Sociological Significance

The sociological contribution that this study makes is its critical examination of the existing literature, theoretical perspectives and the associated categories, themes, and concepts. As such, this research provides support for the multiple marginalities, pathways to crime and impression management theoretical perspectives. Although grounded theory may be used for the development of theory from data, Corbin and Strauss (2008: 55) note that, “not everyone wants to develop theory.” Various categories and themes are borrowed from the three theoretical perspectives as well as the existing literature to help answer research questions one and two. Glaser and Strauss (1967) contend that, in grounded theory, categories may be borrowed from existing theory as long as the

researcher ensures that the categories fit the data.

These a priori categories and themes provided me with a place to start the research process. Charmaz (2006) argues that sensitizing concepts provide those utilizing a grounded theory approach with initial ideas and research questions to pursue. As such, the themes and concepts previously identified in the literature are used to help form the research questions, the interview schedule, to provide a general set of concepts to investigate, and a way to think about the data. Although these sensitizing concepts were used in order to help develop the research process, I remained as open as possible to what emerged from the data. These previously identified categories and themes are examined for relevance in the study at hand.

Research question one focuses on the ways in which a community-based agency assists with the reintegration of women back into the community after a period of incarceration. Additionally, this question examines how programming addresses the multiple marginalities and pathways that bring women into conflict with the law. The multiple marginalities framework illustrates the ways in which various inequalities work simultaneously to contribute to deviant behaviour. This approach allows those who work with women in conflict with the law to appreciate the multiple and unique pathways that lead women to crime. The results from this study provide support for this theoretical framework. Categories such as poverty, addiction, victimization, and mental health all prove to be relevant and many of these categories operate simultaneously. Consistent with the multiple marginalities framework, many women, for example, have suffered from past victimizations as well as addictions to drugs, alcohol, or both. Given these theoretical perspectives and the insight gained from this research, it comes as no surprise

that some participants refer to their clients as the most traumatized women in society.

Research question one also explores how programming assists women in managing their offender status and renegotiating a positive self-identity. The category stigma was borrowed from Goffman (1963). He argues that the stigma associated with a criminal record can have profound effects on the ways in which offenders come to perceive themselves. He also argues that an offender status can minimize the opportunities available to them. Due to the offender status, we discriminate against them and inevitably reduce their life choices (Goffman, 1963). The findings provide support for Goffman's (1963) theory on stigma. The data reveal that many women offenders do experience discrimination and strain associated with a criminal record. In fact, many of these women are often discriminated against when it comes to finding housing and employment. As such, many have feelings of low self-esteem and self-worth. The data suggest that the programming at Elizabeth Fry Toronto is geared towards raising self-esteem and assisting women in renegotiating a positive self-identity.

As a result of these findings, future research on women offenders both in prison and in the community may find these three theoretical perspectives useful in explaining female criminality. This research further demonstrates the importance of these sociological perspectives. As such, researchers who are examining policy and practice on women in conflict with the law in the community could use these theories and the associated themes. These could be used by those directly involved in the reintegration process when designing programs for women offenders in the community.

The goal of research questions two and three is to identify the key program characteristics that assist with women's reintegration back into the community. In order

to answer these research questions, categories were borrowed from the existing literature on women offenders in the community. Based on the findings reported by Austin et al. (1992), the Correctional Service of Canada (2002), Koons et al. (1997), and Morash et al. (1998), this study examines the ways in which the program elements represent characteristics of successful programs as identified in the literature. According to the literature, innovative and promising programs for women offenders in the community should: adopt a women-centred approach to treatment; be based on a model of empowerment; have structured program environments; employ unrestrictive supervision; have program environments that are safe, supportive and homey; employ positive role models; encourage positive relationships; offer after-care to their clients; establish partnerships in the community and; offer an individualized approach to treatment. This study provides support for almost all of these categories, with the exception of after-care and an individualized approach to treatment. However, the data did reveal partial support for these two outstanding categories. Additionally, from an administrative perspective, community-based programs for women in conflict with the law should screen all participants who enter the program(s), as well as conduct evaluations to determine if program goals are meeting clients' needs. Again, the data provide support for both of these categories.

Overall, the findings provide support for the program elements and characteristics previously identified in the literature. This research looks at the literature and the associated categories and themes and offers an example of an innovative and promising community-based agency. Future research should consider applying these categories and themes on a larger sample size in Ontario or across Canada to see if the results remain

consistent and relevant across multiple cases.

This study's final research question seeks to identify the challenges Elizabeth Fry Toronto faces in delivering or implementing key program strategies. The data show that two major categories appear to be of concern for the staff and volunteers at Elizabeth Fry Toronto. According to the respondents, the two major challenges faced by the agency are issues surrounding housing as well as fiscal restraints. These results could be used by policy makers to help alleviate some of challenges associated with assisting women offenders reintegrate back into the community after a period of incarceration. By increasing funding, Elizabeth Fry Toronto could expand their services and reduce the long waiting lists for many of the programs they offer. Policy makers also need to consider the lack of affordable housing in the City of Toronto. According to the respondents, housing arrangements are often considered an essential first step that women offenders need to take on their path to reintegration. Due to the lack of housing, many women in conflict with the law find themselves on the streets or at friend's houses, often leading themselves back into trouble. As sociologists we need to identify the social inequalities that exist in our society and promote the tools needed for social change. Future research should examine the lack of affordable housing available in the City of Toronto and the effects it has on a women's ability to reintegrate successfully back into society.

In short, according to Tepperman, Curtis and Albanese (2008), a sociologist's goal is to develop and refine a body of knowledge that explains social life while working towards applying this knowledge to affect social change. In order to affect social change, many sociologists have begun to use the knowledge of human social behaviour for the

formulation and evaluation of social policies (Vago & Nelson, 2008). By providing sociological knowledge, many contemporary sociologists are attempting to improve the social welfare of society through policy recommendations. Improving the social welfare of society helps to ensure that all individuals are given the same opportunities to succeed and also helps those who face certain contingencies to overcome these challenges. As such, sociologists contribute to improving the conditions of society by providing policy makers with knowledge, perspectives, and theories that are useful in developing policy geared toward social change (Vago & Nelson, 2008).

With a goal of improving policy and practice as well as adding a much needed Canadian perspective, it is necessary that sociologists and criminologists identify what programs and program characteristics are essential for women in conflict with the law who return to the community after a period of incarceration. This knowledge can then be used in the formulation of social policies that are geared towards helping women in conflict with the law to successfully reintegrate back into society. The results from this study can possibly inform policy makers with the knowledge, perspectives, and theories needed to improve the social conditions for women both in prison and in the community.

The findings from this study can benefit the women, but also their families, their communities, and the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC). Addressing and targeting women offenders' needs in the community will likely lead to lower prison re-admissions; it keeps children with their mothers and; assists women in addressing their destructive behaviours and becoming contributing members in society. We all benefit when we can assist women in conflict with the law to find a place in the community and a life that no longer involves the criminal justice system. The findings from this case study illustrate

successful program elements, from the perspective of those who work with these women, and the challenges faced by clients and one community-based agency.

5.3 Limitations to the Research

5.3.1 Sample Size

A total of eight interviews were conducted. Although theoretical saturation was achieved from these eight interviews, I believe more participants from the Residential Program and Community Programs could have been beneficial to the research results. More participants from the Residential Program could provide more insight into the workings and structure of the program. Additional participants from this program could outline the process for federal female offenders wishing to attend the residence. Greater participation from Community Programs could provide this research with a better understanding of some of the programs and services offered to women in the community. Although the one participant from Community Programs could talk generally about all of the programs in her department, she was unable to speak on behalf of some of the programs and services available, as she is not directly involved. As a result, the low response rate from Community Programs and the Residential Program could impact the validity of the data and inferences that were drawn about these departments. Future researchers should consider offering a small monetary incentive in order to elicit a greater response rate.

5.3.2 Biased Sample

Another limitation that needs to be considered is the possibility of a biased sample. It could be the case that those staff members and volunteers who participated in this study brought with them background perspectives and assumptions which already

provide support for the multiple marginalities and pathways to crime perspectives. The fact that the call for participants outlines the theoretical perspectives adopted in this research could have elicited over enthusiastic participants who were eager to give answers that supported these hypotheses. Given the programs and services offered at Elizabeth Fry Toronto as well as their mission and vision statements, this study may have attracted a group of participants who were already positively aligned with the theoretical perspectives utilized in this research.

5.3.3 Authority to Speak for Others

The agency staff and volunteers were the ‘authorities’ in relation to the research and proposed research questions. Due to the likelihood that the majority of the staff and volunteers have not been in conflict with the law could pose some limitations to the research results. Collins (2000) argues that there are two types of knowing, knowledge and experience, with an important emphasis on the latter. For Collins (2000), it is those individuals who have lived through the experiences that should be considered the experts or knowledgeable ones, not simply those who have read about these experiences in books. To illustrate her point she makes reference to the fool “that would take a shotgun to a roach” (Gwaltney, 1980 in Collins, 2000: 257). Consequently, even those who are considered experts or those who are familiar with the research and subjects under investigation may produce stereotypes or perpetuate commonsense beliefs (Collins, 2000).

In addition to issues of knowing, Collins (2000) voices concerns regarding who and what we believe. Epistemology is a theory of knowledge that examines “why we believe what we believe to be true” (Collins, 2000: 252). For this research, the knowledge

created by the staff and volunteers at Elizabeth Fry Toronto is accepted as true.

According to Collins (2000), the existence of power relation's shape whom we believe, why we believe them and how their claims come to prevail as truths. Most experts, scholars and publishers belong to various pockets within the academic community.

Within these pockets are a variety of political, social, and epistemological criteria that each member must adhere to or face member scrutiny. The same is true when a member of one of these communities advances knowledge claims. He or she must satisfy all of the criteria set forth by the group, which often reflects the group's social and political interests (Collins, 2000). Each expert, scholar or publisher must maintain their credibility with their peers. Challenging basic beliefs held by the group could lead to public scrutiny and run the risk of being discredited by their peers (Collins, 2000).

For example, Collins (2000) uses the example of how black women interpret their experiences as single mothers and how the social science community interprets their experiences as single mothers. For many black women concerns are raised regarding job discrimination, inadequate childcare, inferior housing, and violence (Collins, 2000). Social science research, on the other hand, is "mesmerized by images of the 'welfare queens' content to stay on the dole" (Collins, 2000: 255). Collins (2000) argues that African-American women are unable to have their claims legitimized among the scholarly community and their prevailing norms. Any new knowledge must be aligned with existing claims of truths which have been set forth by the controlling group or result in being pushed to the way side (Collins, 2000). Thus, for the project at hand, by accepting only the knowledge claims set forth by the staff and volunteers the results of this project will reflect only the perceptions of those who, I believe, have the 'authority'

to speak for the women enrolled in their community-based program(s).

5.3.4 Partial Knowledge

By providing insight from only the staff and volunteers at Elizabeth Fry Toronto, this thesis presents only one perspective on the needs of female offenders returning to the community after a period of incarceration and the ability of a community-based agency to meet these needs. This is only one perspective of a bigger story. According to Collins (2000), there are many different writers of a story, with many different perspectives. No perspective is more or less important than another. Yet, “each writer can write the missing part of the other writer’s story” (Walker, 1983 in Collins, 2000: 43). It is when all of these stories or perspectives are put together can we form truth or meaning about any given subject. Although this research provides only part of the story, or partial knowledge, future research can add to this knowledge base – through other perspectives or standpoints – eventually creating the entire story. Additional research should consider the perspectives or standpoints of the women in conflict with the law who are directly involved in programs and services available in the community.

5.3.5 Participants, Power & Impression Management

Although all of the participants in this study appear to be genuinely committed to the well-being and successful reintegration of women offenders back into the community, the issue of institutional power and techniques of impression management cannot be ignored. Institutional power refers to the ability of a person to influence the actions of other people and affect what others believe to be valid knowledge (Barnett & Duvall, 2005). Institutional power is possible simply because of the institutional rules that grant certain people differential and superior status. This power differential limits the

subordinate's ability to stand up against the powerful and refuse treatment, support, or services. This could potentially limit the results of this research by accepting only what the staff and volunteers consider being essential programs for women in conflict with the law in the community. Through this power differential woman in conflict with the law may not be able to refuse treatment or services even though they believe it to be unnecessary. As one participant put it, "because they want to get out of jail they will say 'yes' to whatever [program] you suggest because it goes in their letter of support. Then when they get here it's like ok, you wanted to address this, and I have already referred you [to the program]."

Furthermore, institutional power also grants those in power the ability to define, interpret, and validate knowledge (Barnett & Duvall, 2005; Collins, 2000). According to Collins (2000), those with power often believe that only they have the capacity to interpret their own experiences and also everyone else's experiences. They have the power to define what we accept as truths (Collins, 2000). For instance, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (n.d.) uses the example of the American Psychiatric Association definition of homosexuality as mental disorder until 1973. From this knowledge, the powerful create policies, programs, and services that address what they have defined as social problems. Often times this knowledge is used by the powerful to support their special interests or influence what we believe to be true. Through this process they employ techniques of impression management. It is possible that the knowledge presented by the participants was presented in a way to advance their own special interests. The participants may have been careful about what they revealed. Thus, advancing only knowledge that was favourable to the agency's interests and self-image.

5.4 Recommendations for Future Research

As previously stated, one major limitation of this research was the small sample size. Of the approximately forty staff members and seventy-five active volunteers who were contacted to participate, only eight agreed to participate in this research project. Due to a small sample size and the case study nature of this research, the results of this thesis cannot be considered transferable to other Canadian community-based agencies that work with women in conflict with the law in the community. Future research would benefit from a comparative look at numerous agencies across Ontario or Canada. A comparative look at other community-based agencies could provide a more comprehensive look at the programming options and characteristics of community-based agencies working with women in conflict with the law.

Next, this research only offers information retrieved from a small number of those directly involved in the reintegration process. Due to issues surrounding client confidentiality as well as limitations to access (e.g., women in conflict with the law), this research only provides the perspective of staff and volunteers of a community-based agency. Future researchers may wish to explore the perspectives of women in conflict with the law participating in community programming. Their perspectives could help community-based agencies understand the needs of women in the community and if these needs are being appropriately met. Furthermore, based on a theme that emerged during this research – quantitative data cannot effectively capture the work of community-based agencies – future studies should strongly consider adopting a qualitative or mixed methods approach to their research when conducting program evaluations.

Additionally, future research may wish to explore whether the elements identified

in this research, which have not previously been identified in literature, are present at other agencies in Ontario or across Canada that serve women in conflict with the law once back in the community. Other researchers could investigate themes such as: positive co-workers and supervisors helping to stimulate a positive environment for both staff and clients; the effectiveness or presence of supportive staff who maintain their relationships even once their clients have completed their programs or services; the benefits associated with both individual and group counseling; and lastly, how various agencies believe program success should be measured. Transferability of these themes across other community-based agencies can provide further support for these elements as positive program characteristics that assist with the reintegration of women in conflict with the law back into the community after a period of incarceration.

Due to the fact that very little is known about the successful programming characteristics or programming options available to women in conflict with the law in the community, researchers need to continue to explore what programs and services – from the perspectives of those directly involved in the reintegration process as well as the women themselves – are considered essential to successful reintegration of women back into the community. By identifying program characteristics other Canadian community-based agencies can learn from the models that assist in successfully meeting women offender's needs. We need to identify and target the needs of women in conflict with the law so that we can provide the tools and resources necessary to assist formally incarcerated women find a place in the community. It is essential that women in conflict with the law be given the opportunity, including the necessary tools and resources, to become law-abiding members of society.

5.5 Conclusion

Beginning in 1952, Elizabeth Fry Toronto has changed the lives of thousands of women who have found themselves in conflict with the law. The stigma associated with an offender status creates many barriers and challenges for women in conflict with the law as they try to navigate through social institutions and life in the community.

Elizabeth Fry Toronto provides support and services to these women as they face multiple and complex challenges in trying to find their place in the community after a period of incarceration. According to the agency, the women that they work with are resilient and with a little support and guidance many can overcome what most of us cannot imagine (Elizabeth Fry Toronto, 2009a)

In conclusion, it is necessary that we identify what programs and program characteristics are essential for women returning to the community after a period of incarceration. To date, very little Canadian literature has focused on the program design and characteristics adopted by community-based agencies and the ability of these agencies to meet the needs of women in conflict with the law. It is vital that community-based agencies address the pathways and multiple marginalities that bring women into contact with the criminal justice system and provide them with the tools necessary to manage their offender status if we are to reduce the likelihood of recidivism. This qualitative case study of one community-based agency can help improve policy and practice. From the perspective of staff and volunteers, essential programs and programming characteristics have been identified for women serving the remainder of their sentence in the community. Policy makers could use what has been learned from this case study and those directly involved in the reintegration process to help women in

conflict with the law to find a place in the community and choose a path that no longer involves crime.

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Appendix A – Categories & Properties

1) Core Category: Key Programming Characteristics

Sub-Category: Women-Centre Approach

Properties: 1) Need to address the differences between men and women as reasons why they come into conflict with the law; 2) Women would be more likely to open up and relate better to other women rather than men; 3) Need to have women offenders' unique needs acknowledged in a male dominated society

Sub-Category: Empowerment

Properties: 1) Need the confidence to regain control over their lives; 2) Starts from an empowered staff

Sub-Category: Structured Environment

Property: 1) Clearly articulated rules and regulations

Sub-Category: Supervision Levels

Properties: 1) Reliable; 2) Unrestrictive

Sub-Category: Positive Program Environment

Properties: 1) Supportive; 2) Laidback; 3) Safe; 4) Great co-workers and bosses

Sub-Category: Positive Role Models

Properties: 1) Diverse; 2) Professional; 3) Have a history with the criminal justice system

Sub-Category: Positive relationships

Properties: 1) Trust; 2) Support; 3) Long lasting

Sub-Category: After-Care

Property: 1) Continual Support; 2) Long lasting relationships

Sub-Category: Coordinated Efforts & Partnerships

Property: 1) Networking

Sub-Category: Group & Individual Counseling

Properties: 1) Determined by the client; 2) Benefits associated with both approaches; 3) Funding

Sub-Category: Screening Process

Property: 1) Depends on the program

Sub-Category: Program Evaluations

Property: 1) Qualitative

Thus, twelve key program characteristics have been identified in the literature:



2) Core Category: Meeting Women Offender's Needs in the Community

Sub-Category: Histories of Abuse & Victimization

Properties: 1) Plays a significant role; 2) Must be ready to deal with the trauma

Sub-Category: Addiction

Properties: 1) Major concern for women offenders; 2) End up in jail trying to support their habit; 3) Trauma and addiction are closely related

Sub-Category: Mental Health

Property: 1) Not enough resources

Sub-Category: Stigma & Self-Identity

Properties: 1) Feelings of self-worth; 2) Raise self-confidence and self-esteem

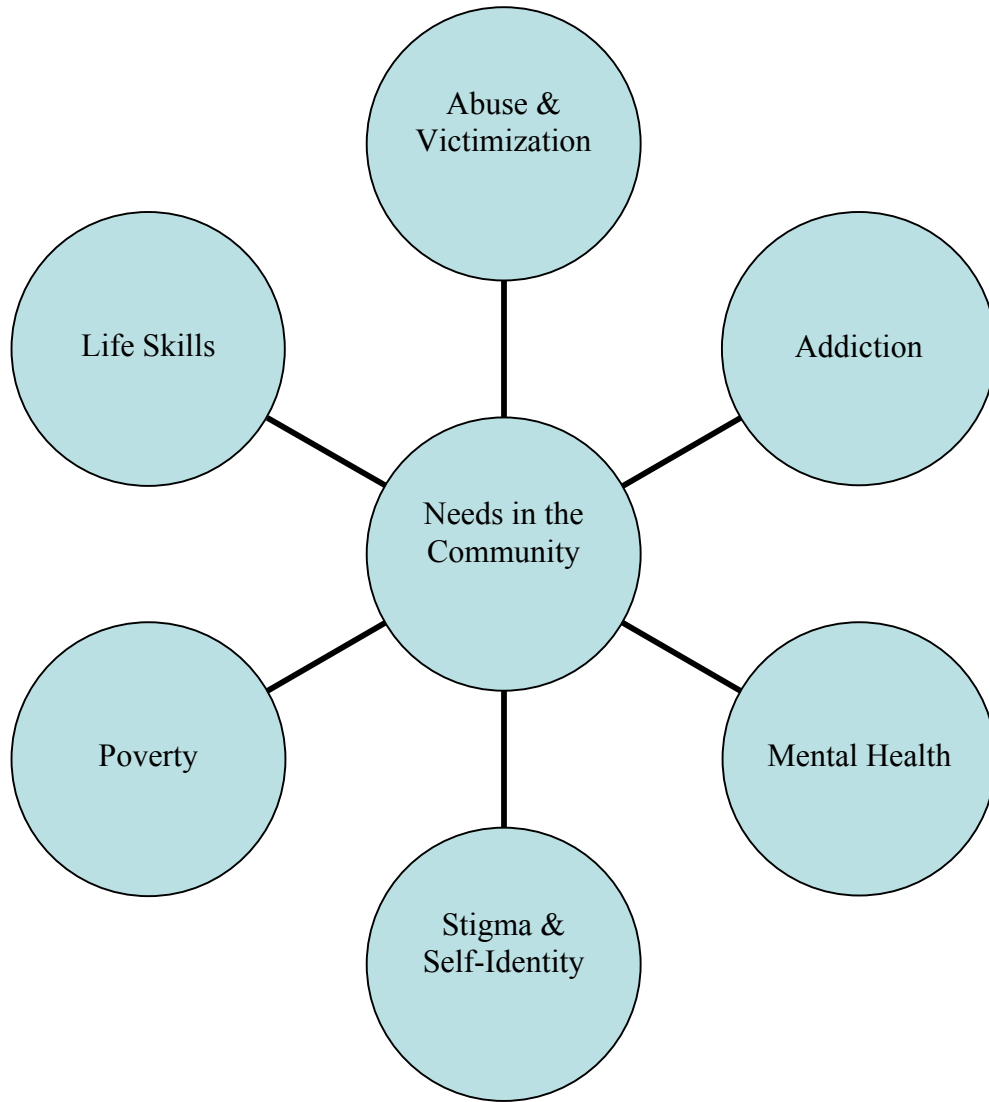
Sub-Category: Poverty

Properties: 1) Unable to escape the cycle of poverty; 2) Need employment and educational placements; 3) Client needs to be ready; 4) Need safe and stable housing arrangements

Sub-Category: Life Skills

Properties: 1) Helpful for reintegration; 2) Need to learn to manage money

Thus, the data suggests that six key needs must be addressed if women offenders are to find a place in the community after a period of incarceration:



3) Core Category: Challenges with Program Delivery & Implementation

Sub-Category: Housing

Properties: 1) Lack of affordable housing; 2) Long waiting lists; 3) Discrimination

Sub-Category: Funding & Waiting Lists

Properties: 1) Funding restrictions; 2) Governmental cutbacks

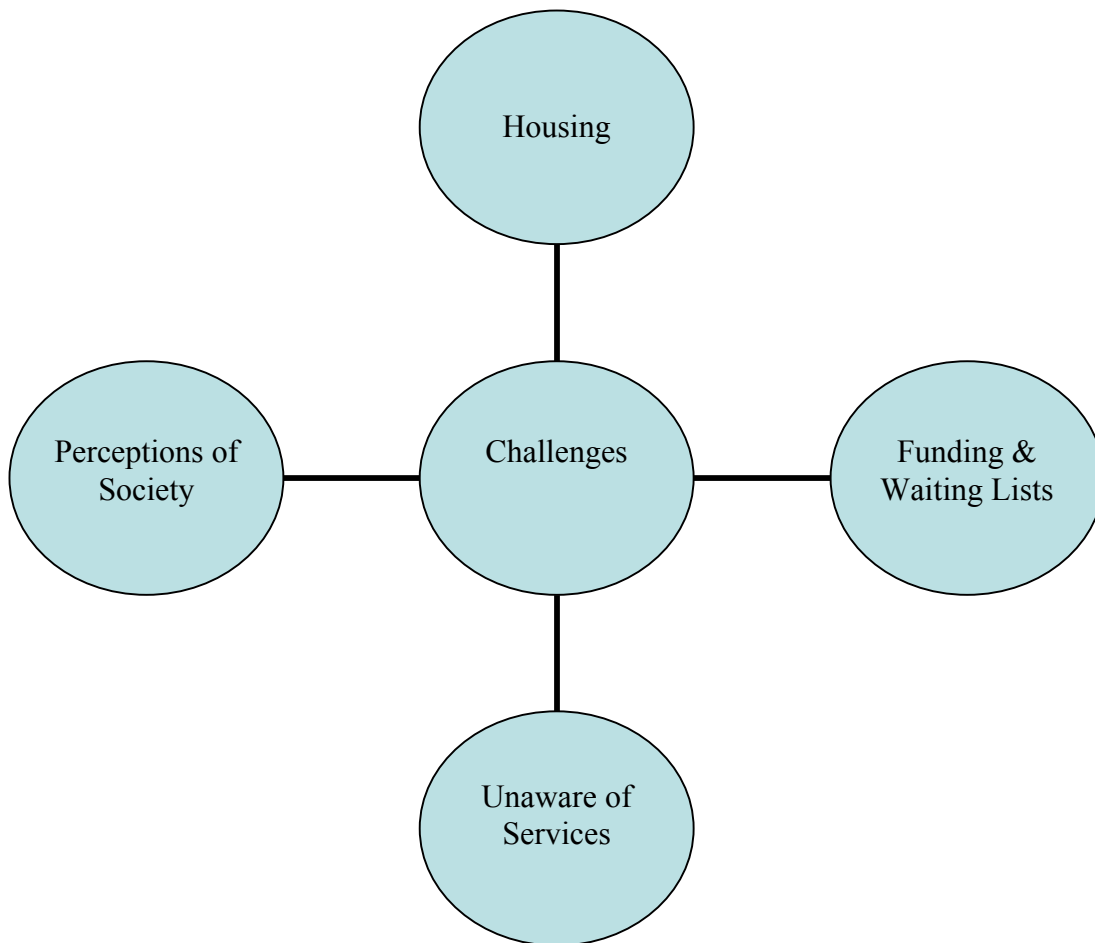
Sub-Category: Unaware of Services

Properties: 1) Women are isolated, alone and stigmatized; 2) Need to raise awareness

Sub-Category: Perceptions of Society

Properties: 1) Society needs to understand pathways to crime; 2) Women deserve to be reintegrated; 3) Gender stereotypes

According to the data, four major challenges exist for Elizabeth Fry Toronto:



Appendix B – Call for Research Host: Study on Community-Based Programming for Women in Conflict with the Law: The Perceptions of Staff and Volunteers

UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

Date:

Dear:

This letter is an invitation to your organization to consider participating in a study I am conducting as part of my Master's degree in the Department of Sociology at the University of Waterloo under the supervision of Dr. Jennifer Schulenberg. I would like to provide you with more information about this project and what your organizations involvement would entail if you decide to take part.

This study will focus on providing insight from the staff and volunteers of one community-based agency into the program characteristics for women offenders in the community. By focusing on the pathways and multiple marginalities that bring women into contact with the criminal justice system, this project hopes to explore the needs of women offenders in the community and how the agency is perceived by the staff and volunteers to meet the needs of women offenders in the community. This research is valuable in that resources can be effectively directed towards the programming models which are believed – from the perspective of staff and volunteers – to assist female offenders when they return to the community after a period of incarceration. This qualitative case study of one community-based agency will help improve practice and/or policy by identifying programming elements for women serving their time in the community and associated programmatic challenges. It can also assist other Canadian community-based agencies who work with female offenders by sharing what has been adopted in this particular context.

This research will address the following research questions: In what ways does a community-based agency assist in the reintegration of women back into the community? How does the programming address the pathways and multiple marginalities that bring women into contact with the criminal justice system? How does the programming assist women in managing their offender status upon reintegration? How does the programming assist women in negotiating a positive identity upon reintegration? What are the key program elements that assist with women's reintegration back into the community? In what ways do the program elements represent characteristics of successful programs as identified in the literature (i.e., stable funding, structured environment, accountability, clearly articulated goals, etc.)? What challenges do they face to deliver or implement key program strategies?

Understanding the sensitive nature of the work you do, all limits to access will be discussed and respected prior to any data collection procedures commencing. I will

ensure as little interruption as possible to any daily activities and routines. Potential participants may include all staff, directors, doctors on staff who deliver programs, personal support workers and volunteers to inquire into their willingness to participate in an interview approximately 60 minutes in length at a mutually agreed upon location, date, and time. You should be informed that searches on the internet, newspapers and other public documents will also be completed.

Confidentiality and anonymity will be guaranteed to all participants as well as the organization. Both the participants and the agency will be given a pseudonym which will be used for all references and quotations in the thesis, executive summary, and any other academic publication or presentation. Individual's names will be attached to their responses for my personal reference only. Only the supervisory committee will have access to the data collected. If there is a possibility of identification, the respondent or agency will be contacted for permission to use the possibly identifying information. Upon completion of the research the information will be deleted off the computer and only be stored on the memory stick, which will be stored in a locked filing cabinet and destroyed after ten years.

I have chosen your agency for the following reasons: the program(s) you offer women in conflict with the law demonstrate typical characteristics that make it representative of other similar agencies; what can be learned from your agency will assist in answering the previous identified research questions and; issues related to accessibility and location.

I will contact you by phone within a few days to arrange a meeting where this research project can be discussed in greater detail. I can also answer any questions, comments, or concerns you may have. Or, please do not hesitate to contact my thesis supervisor, Dr. Jennifer Schulenberg at 519-888-4567 ext. 38639 or by email at jlschule@uwaterloo.ca. I would like to assure you that this study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. However, the final decision about participation is yours. If you have any comments or concerns resulting from your agency's participation in this study, please contact Dr. Susan Sykes of this office at 519-888-4567 ext. 36005 or by email at ssykes@uwaterloo.ca.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Pavao
Phone: 289-244-5668
Email: jpavao@uwaterloo.ca

Appendix C – Call for Participants: Study on Community-Based Programming for Women in Conflict with the Law: The Perceptions of Staff and Volunteers

UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

Date:

Dear:

This letter is an invitation to consider participating in a study I am conducting as part of my Master's degree in the Department of Sociology at the University of Waterloo under the supervision of Dr. Jennifer Schulenberg. I would like to provide you with more information about this project and what your involvement would entail if you decide to take part.

This study will focus on providing insight from the staff and volunteers of one community-based agency into the program characteristics for women offenders in the community. By focusing on the pathways and multiple marginalities that bring women into contact with the criminal justice system, this project hopes to explore the needs of women offenders in the community and how the agency is perceived by the staff and volunteers to meet the needs of women offenders in the community. This research is valuable in that resources can be effectively directed towards the programming models which are believed – from the perspective of staff and volunteers – to assist female offenders when they return to the community after a period of incarceration. This qualitative case study of one community-based agency will help improve practice and/or policy by identifying programming elements for women serving their time in the community and associated programmatic challenges. It can also assist other Canadian community-based agencies who work with female offenders by sharing what has been adopted in this particular context.

I am contacting you to inquire into your willingness to be interviewed. It will involve an interview of approximately 60 minutes in length to take place at a mutually agreed upon location, date and time. All information you provide is considered completely confidential. To minimize any risks associated to yourself or organization, no information will be collected or published that could identify you as a participant in the research. Participation is completely voluntary and you will have the opportunity to withdraw during or after the interview without any negative repercussions or penalty to you or your organization. Participation in this study will have no affect on your role, status, or performance within the organization.

I hope to use this information not only for the purpose of my Master's thesis but also to formulate academic publications, articles in appropriate trade publications, and possibly conference presentations which address the successful reintegration of women offenders back into the community after a period of secure custody. As a participant you will receive an executive summary of the results. In addition, you can also request a full copy of the final report.

If you have any questions regarding this study, or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me at 289-244-5668 or by email at jpavao@uwaterloo.ca. You can also contact my supervisor, Dr. Jennifer Schulenberg at 519-888-4567 ext. 38639 or by email at jlschule@uwaterloo.ca. I would like to assure you that this study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. However, the final decision about participation is yours. If you have any comments or concerns resulting from your participation in this study, please contact Dr. Susan Sykes of this office at 519-888-4567 ext. 36005 or by email at ssykes@uwaterloo.ca.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Pavao
Phone: 289-244-5668
Email: jpavao@uwaterloo.ca

Appendix D – Letter of Information and Informed Consent

UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

Community-Based Programming for Women in Conflict with the Law: The Perceptions of Staff and Volunteers

Researcher: Jennifer Pavao
Department of Sociology
University of Waterloo
200 University Avenue West
Waterloo, ON N2L 3G1
Phone: 289-244-5668
Email: jpavao@uwaterloo.ca

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to provide insight from the staff and volunteers of one community-based agency into the program characteristics for women offenders in the community. By focusing on the pathways and multiple marginalities that bring women into contact with the criminal justice system, this project hopes to explore the needs of women offenders in the community and how the agency is perceived by the staff and volunteers to meet the needs of women offenders in the community. This research is valuable in that resources can be effectively directed towards the programming models which are believed – from the perspective of staff and volunteers – to assist female offenders when they return to the community after a period of incarceration. This qualitative case study of one community-based agency will help improve practice and/or policy by identifying programming elements for women serving their time in the community and associated programmatic challenges. It can also assist other Canadian community-based agencies who work with female offenders by sharing what has been adopted in this particular context.

Information collected from these interviews will be used to formulate not only my Master's thesis but will also be used for academic publications, articles in appropriate trade publications, and possibly conference presentations which address women in conflict with the law and their the successful reintegration back into the community after a period of closed custody.

Procedures involved in the Research

I would like you to participate in a face-to-face interview at a day, time, and place convenient to you. The interview will last approximately 60 minutes in length. I will invite your open ended responses to several questions about your agency, program characteristics and how women offenders' needs are met in the community. With your consent, the interview will be tape recorded for transcription to ensure accuracy and to facilitate the analysis. You have the right, without penalty, to decline to answer a question, stop the interview, turn off the tape recorder at any point during the interview, or to withdraw your responses at any time before, during, or after the interview.

Participation in this study will have no affect on your role, status, or performance within the agency. You have the right to request a copy of your interview transcript at any time to review your responses to the interview questions.

Potential Harms, Risks, or Discomforts

The risk to participants in this study is no more than minimal. No personal information or sensitive questions will be asked of the participants. Rather, the interview questions will simply focus on characteristics of the agency, programming characteristics and the needs of women offenders' in the community from the perspective of staff and volunteers at the host agency.

Potential Benefits

Each participating agency and research participant will be provided with an executive summary and, upon request, a copy of the final report. This qualitative case study of one community-based agency will help improve practice and policy by identifying programs and program characteristics for women serving the remainder of their sentence in the community. By identifying program characteristics other Canadian community-based agencies can learn from the models that assist in meeting women offender's needs. We need to identify and target the needs of female offenders so that we can promote the tools and elements necessary to assist formally incarcerated women find a pace in the community. It is the duty of the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) and our society as a whole to ensure that women offenders are given the opportunity, including the necessary tools and resources, to become law abiding members of society.

Confidentiality & Anonymity

With your permission, the interview will be audio taped to ensure accuracy and to facilitate data analysis. By agreeing to participate in this interview, you are not required to answer any of the questions if you do not want to and can end the interview at any time without any negative repercussions or penalty to you or the agency. If you decide to withdraw from the study before, during, or after the interview, you can request that any, or all, of your interview data recorded on audio tape, paper, and electronically be destroyed immediately. All of your answers to the interview questions will be held in strict confidence.

Confidentiality and anonymity will be guaranteed to all participants as well as the agency. Both the participants and the agency will be given a pseudonym which will be used for all references and quotations in the thesis, executive summary, and any other academic publication or presentation. Individual's names will be attached to their responses for my personal reference only. Only the supervisory committee will have access to the data collected. Letters of informed consent and all interview data, including notes, audio material and electronic material, will be kept separate from each other. If there is a possibility of identification, the respondent and/or agency will be contacted for permission to use the possibly identifying information. Upon completion of the research the information will be deleted off the computer and only be stored on the memory stick, which will be stored in a locked filing cabinet and destroyed after ten years.

You will receive a signed copy of this consent form for your records. If you have any questions or require more information about the study itself, please contact by phone at 289-244-5668 or by email at jpavao@uwaterloo.ca. Or you can contact my supervisor Dr. Jennifer Schulenburg by phone at 519-888-4567, ext. 38639 or by email at jschule@uwaterloo.ca. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns resulting from your participation in this study, please contact the Director, Dr. Susan Sykes at 519-888-4567, ext 36005 or by email at ssykes@uwaterloo.ca

Sincerely,

Jennifer Pavao

Informed Consent to Participate in an Interview

Community-Based Programming for Women in Conflict with the Law: The Perceptions of Staff and Volunteers

Please mark the “YES” and “NO” boxes with your initials to indicate whether you are providing consent to each of the consent and privacy options outlined below.

	Consent and Privacy Options	YES	NO
1.	I understand and willingly agree to participate in a face-to-face interview to be scheduled and conducted at my convenience		
2.	I agree to have the interview tape recorded		
3.	I would like to review a copy of my transcript		
4.	I am willing to allow the researcher to use quotations from the interview providing they are cited anonymously (the quote does not identify me)		
5.	I am willing to allow the researcher to use quotations from the interview that are not completely anonymous as long as I am contacted by the researcher so I can review the quotations and give my consent		
6.	I would like to review and have the opportunity to comments on a draft report before it is published		
7.	I would like to receive a copy of the executive summary		
8.	I would like to receive a copy of the thesis once it has been defended		
9.	I agree to be contacted at a future date is the researcher would like clarification on my answers to any of the interview questions		

I have read the information in the attached Letter of Information about a study being conducted by Jennifer Pavao at the University of Waterloo. I have had the opportunity to ask question regarding my involvement in the study and to receive additional details I wanted to know about the study. I understand that I can choose to withdraw from the study at any time and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Name of Participant (Please Print)

Signature of Participant

Email address

Date

In my opinion, the person who has signed this informed consent is agreeing to participate in this study voluntarily, understands the nature of the study, and any consequences of participation.

Name of Researcher (Please Print)

Signature of Researcher

Appendix E – Sample Interview Schedule

Section A – Participant Background:

1. What is your position/job title in the agency?
2. How long have you been with the agency?
3. What does your job requirements entail?

Section B – Agency Characteristics:

1. Does your agency have a mission statement?
→ If so, what is it?
2. What are the rules and regulations that employees must follow?
3. What are the rules and regulations that participants must follow?
→ How does your agency enforce positive behaviour in the participants?
→ Are your participants held accountable for their actions?
→ If so, in what ways is accountability enforced?
4. What is the screening process for allowing participants into the program?
→ How does the agency determine who is eligible to participate in the program?
5. How are the participants put into contact with your agency?
6. Does your agency conduct evaluations to determine if program goals and outcomes are meeting your participant's needs?
→ How often are these evaluations conducted?
→ How is program success measured?
7. Does your agency offer the program participants after-care once they have completed the program?
→ Are the women assisted in finding safe and stable housing arrangements?
→ Are women encouraged to maintain supportive and healthy relationships with staff, volunteers or other women in program?
8. Does the agency employ positive role models for the women offenders?
→ How does the agency determine who are positive role models?

Section C – Program Characteristics:

1. How would you describe the environment in which the program is offered?
2. Are only women allowed to participate in the program?

- If YES, do you think this is essential in addressing why women come into contact with the criminal justice system?
 - WHY?
- 3. What programs and/or services does your agency offer women who are returning to the community after a period of incarceration?
 - Which services and/or programs receive the highest demand?
- 4. How does your agency enforce levels of supervision on the participants?
 - How would you describe this supervision?
- 5. Are programs offered on an individual basis or in group settings?
 - What is the preferred approach in program delivery? WHY?
- 6. Does your agency offer and encourage educational and employment placements?
 - Could you please describe the kind of programs offered?
 - Do women successfully complete these kinds of programs?
 - Do you believe these types of programs are essential for the successful reintegration of women back into society?
- 7. Does your agency offer life-skills training?
 - Are the women in the program shown how to budget, do banking, grocery shopping, pay rent/mortgage?
- 8. Are safe and stable housing arrangements made available to the women once they are released back into the community?
 - How is this process achieved?
- 9. How are addictions to drug and/or alcohol addressed and overcome?
- 10. How are the women's mental and/or physical health needs being met?
- 11. How does the agency encourage women to address their histories of abuse and victimization?
 - In what ways does the agency encourage women to address their dysfunctional relationships?
- 12. In your opinion, would you consider your agency to be based on a model of empowerment?
 - If NO, why do you believe this model has not been adopted?
 - If NO, should this model be adopted? Why? Why not?
 - If YES, in what ways does your agency encourage the women to adopt a positive self-concept?
 - If YES, in what ways does your agency encourage women build their self-esteem?

13. Does the agency help women to build both a positive self-concept and raise self-esteem?
 - IF YES, how is this achieved?
 - IF NO, do you believe a positive self-concept and self-esteem is essential to the successful reintegration of women back into the community? Why? Why not?

Section C – Meeting Women’s Needs in the Community:

1. In your opinion, what needs must be met if women offenders are going to successfully reintegrate back into the community after a period of incarceration?
 - Does your agency address any of these needs?
2. What challenges exist that prevent your agency from delivering necessary programs?
 - What could be done to alleviate these challenges?
3. What criminogenic factors (i.e., addiction, victimization, poverty) must be addressed if women offenders are going to successfully reintegrate back into society after a period of incarceration?
4. In your opinion, what program characteristics are essential for the successful reintegration of women back into the community after a period of incarceration?
5. In your opinion, why do some women offenders end up back in the criminal justice system while others successfully find a place in the community after a period of incarceration?

Appendix F – Feedback Letter

UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

Community-Based Programming for Women in Conflict with the Law: The Perceptions of Staff and Volunteers

Date:

Dear:

I would like to thank you for your participation in this study. As a reminder, the purpose of this study is to gather information from one community-based agency to provide insight into the program characteristics designed for female offenders and how they are perceived by staff and volunteers to meet the needs of these women in the community.

Information collected from these interviews will be used to formulate not only my Master's thesis but will also be used for academic publications, articles in appropriate trade publications, and possibly conference presentations which address women in conflict with the law and their the successful reintegration back into the community after a period of closed custody.

Please be assured that all data pertaining to you as a participant will be kept confidential and destroyed after a period of ten years. If you are interested in receiving more information regarding the results of this study, or if at any time you have questions or concerns, please contact me either by the phone number or by email address listed at the bottom on the page. If you have changed your mind since the interview and would now like to receive an executive summary of the results, please let me know by providing me with your mailing or email address. When the thesis has been successfully defended I will send you a copy. The defense date is expected to occur during the Fall 2010 semester.

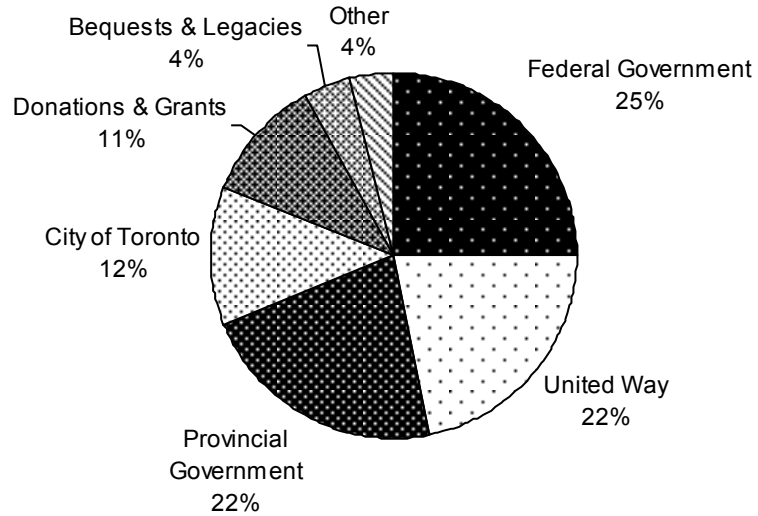
As with all University of Waterloo projects involving human participants, this project was reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. Should you at any time have questions or concerns resulting from your participation in this study, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Susan Sykes of Research Ethics by phone at 519-888-4567, Ext. 36005 or by email at ssykes@uwaterloo.ca

Sincerely,

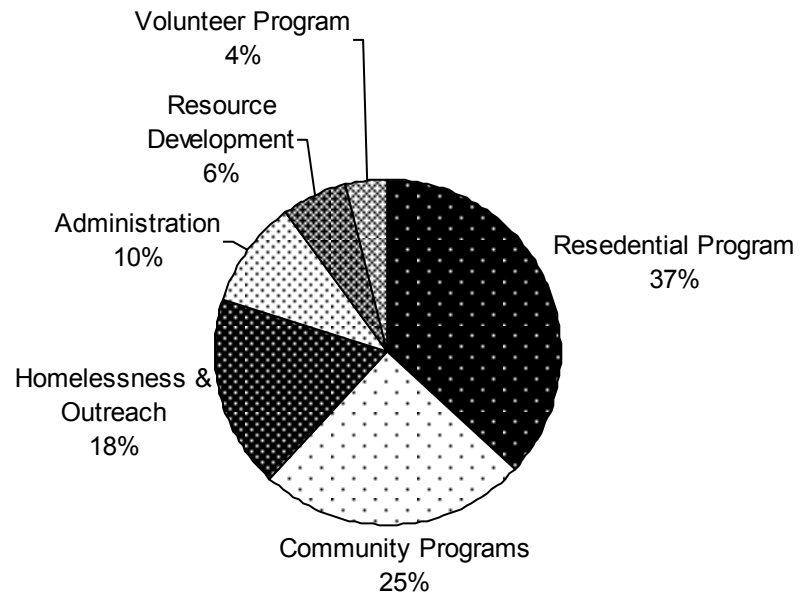
Jennifer Pavao
Phone: 289-244-5668
Email: jpavao@uwaterloo.ca

Appendix G – Elizabeth Fry Toronto: Revenues & Expenses

REVENUES



EXPENSES



Source – Elizabeth Fry Toronto: Financial Report (2009a)