

# BEING BANNED IN EDMONTON: LIVED EXPERIENCES

## Complex Needs Banning Research Project Results

### PROJECT PURPOSE

To learn from people who were banned from shelters, drop-ins, and other public spaces. In total, 118 individuals participated, 86 of whom also stayed outside in the past 12 months. (Data collected from June–August 2022).

### BANNING EXPERIENCES

65% did not know about banning policies

*There are no solid rules. Banning is done on an individual basis and that is unfair.*

#### TOP REASONS PEOPLE WERE BANNED

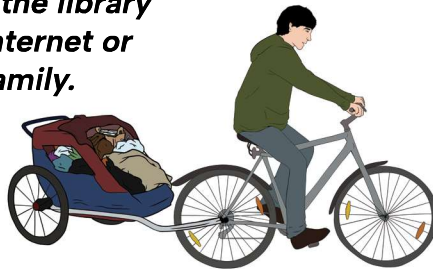
Theft	Yelling, Swearing, Racist Comments	Drugs & Alcohol
7 in 10	6 in 10	5 in 10

#### BEING BANNED MEANS ONE IS LESS ABLE TO

Access Personal Care	Find A Place To Sleep	Access Food
68%	64%	53%

*Being banned from the library means I have no internet or contact with family.*





*I became more jaded... I no longer care. I became more aggressive.*

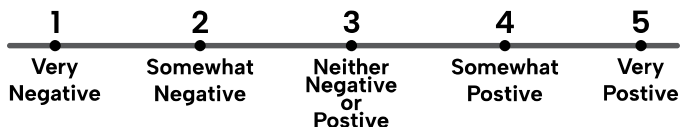


#### MOST CONTACT WITH

Drop-In Staff	Shelter Staff	Bus Drivers	Outreach Staff
88%	78%	73%	72%

#### HIGHEST QUALITY OF CONTACT WITH

Outreach Staff	Drop-In Staff	Healthcare Workers	Friends
			
4.2	3.8	3.7	3.7



### ABOUT COMMUNITY PARTICIPANTS

- 56% male, 41% female, and 3% non-binary
- Average: 48 years – male, 41 years – female
- 56% completed high school or more
- 8% in attached relationships
- 73% Indigenous
- 98% indicated having at least one health challenge
- 57% had 4 or more health challenges

#### TOP HEALTH CHALLENGES

Trauma	Addictions & Substance Abuse	Medical Conditions
78%	70%	69%

- Those who stayed outside:
  - Had more health challenges than those who didn't (4.0 vs. 3.4)
  - Received less help for trauma than those who didn't (1 in 10 vs. 6 in 10)

### HOW COULD BANNING BE DONE IN A MORE SUPPORTIVE WAY?

*A better solution is not to create sides but just deal with the issue.*

*Have someone not involved in the issues come and listen to both sides.*

*Staff should know and be trained in dealing with mental health and addiction issues.*

#### HOW CAN POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS BE BUILT?

*More of these kind of [talking] circles with staff and clientele being able to voice their opinions in a mediated scenario.*

*We all should behave in a respectful manner – staff and clients.*

*I tell the workers, you need to be humble to work here.*



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## WHAT COULD HAVE HELPED YOU NOT TO BE BANNED?



*I could have followed the rules instead of being stubborn.*

*If they talk to you like you're a person, and not like you're a menace then it's a big difference.*

*Being sober, not being angry, and taking it out on people or mistreating workers that are trying to help.*

*Do not be racist. Don't accuse me. Treat me as human. Do not berate me.*

## THE DIFFICULTY OF BEING MOVED

*Don't throw our property in the garbage. Do not throw our carts away... I have no safe place to put my backpack. Do not take our tents.*

*Being moved means no one knows where we are, and we have to wait for services because we cannot be found.*

*Some parts of it are dehumanizing and I don't think that's fair, because I didn't choose this.*

*Be less aggressive and help those who are physically disabled to find a better spot.*



## STAYING OUTSIDE

Staying outside is NOT a preference.

### TOP REASONS NOT TO STAY IN SHELTERS

Don't Feel Safe	Overcrowded	Lack of Privacy
56%	50%	50%

*I don't know who is around if I fall asleep. People weird me out at shelters. You are surrounded by people, but outside you get your space.*

### TOP CONSIDERATIONS OF WHERE TO STAY

Geographic Location	Personal Safety	Privacy
58%	56%	51%

*I want to stay with my family outside; I worry about my Mom and stay outside so I can be with her.*

## VOICES OF EXPERIENCED AGENCY OUTREACH WORKERS

*I don't think this gets said enough but the community does not get enough credit for respecting staff.*

*90% of the people don't cause any trouble or get banned, they're just biding their time.*

*I would say about 75% (of the homeless) are probably not hard to house. And to maintain housing they just need that hand up... We could solve homelessness in a span of time... And then when you're not dealing with that other 75% you could have all these awesome workers working with people that are high acuity.*



## STAYING HOUSED

*Better landlords who understand our situation. Having rent money alone is not enough...*

*Clear understanding of the expectations and communication would help to stay housed.*



## PROJECT SUPPORTERS

Bissell Centre  
Boyle Street Community Services  
The City of Edmonton  
Homeward Trust  
Hope Mission  
Jasper Place Wellness Centre  
M.A.P.S. Alberta Capital Region  
The Mustard Seed  
NiGiNan Housing Ventures  
REACH Edmonton  
Strathcona Baptist Church  
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