



# Mental Health and Substance Abuse Program for Youth with Faces

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## Introduction

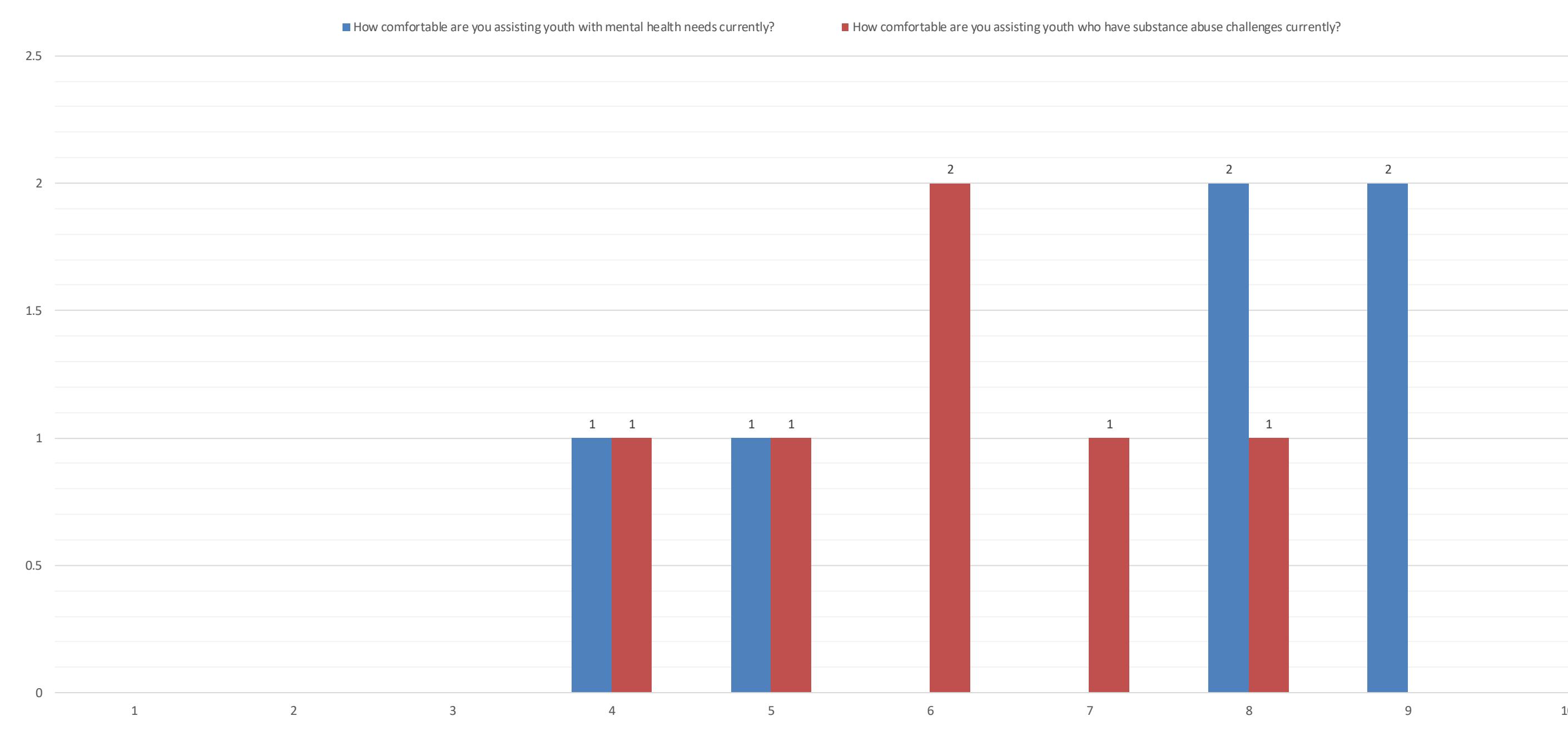
- Incarcerated youth are a protected population, and there is limited research on the mental health effects of this population. Due to being in adult facilities, these youth are at risk for early death, and poor health outcomes can result from increased exposure to violence, inappropriate services, and increased risk of social isolation (Semenza et al., 2024).
- These limitations include limited familial interactions, stigma, and lack of support, and the list is continuous (Erdem et al., 2024).
- The incarcerated youth are struggling with mental health, substance abuse, and trauma experiences while serving their time.
- Youth with Faces is a non-profit organization in Dallas and Collin county Tx aimed to assist the youth overcome the cycle of incarceration while providing the youth with skills and mentorship.

## Methods

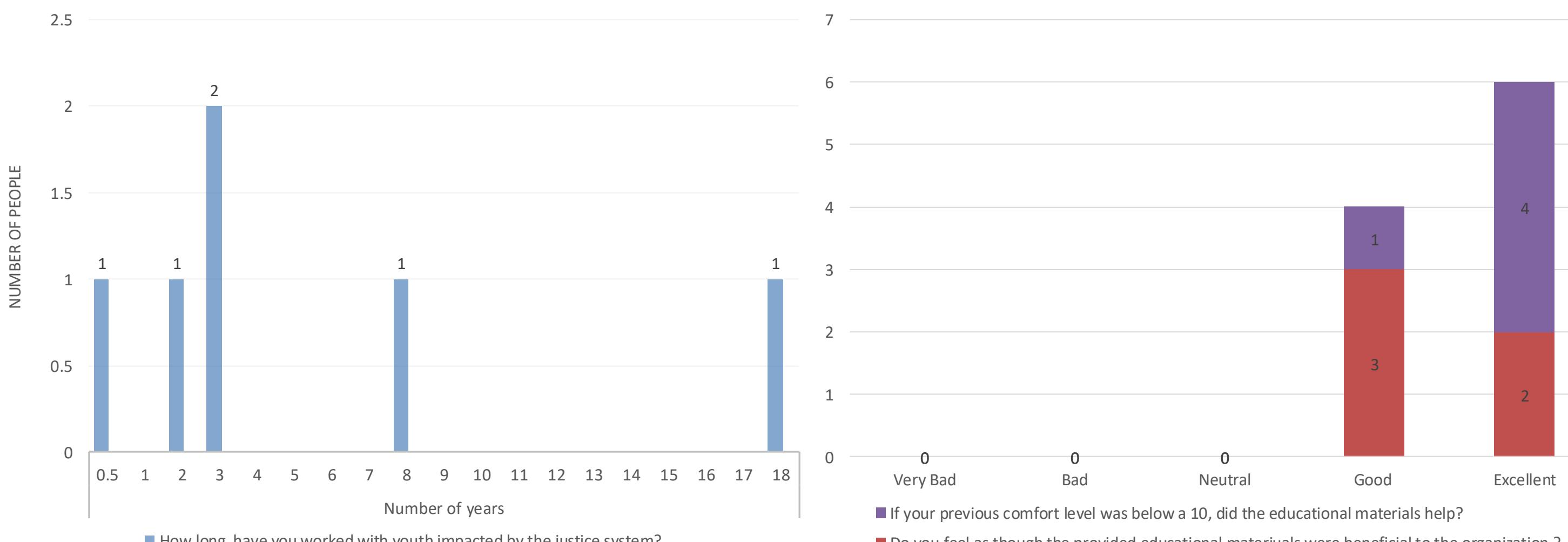
- Program
  - Initial questionnaire
  - 4 educational PowerPoints on mental health, substance abuse, trauma, and the cycle of incarceration.
  - Post Survey
- Convenience Sample
  - 6 participants completed the initial questionnaire and attended the presentation of the 4 topics.
  - 5 post-test surveys were received.

## Results

All participants scored the perceived benefits of the educational materials as good or excellent. Participants also reports the help (in relation to confidence) of the materials to be good and excellent.



- Upper graph:
  - Participants were asked to rate their comfort level in assisting youth with mental health needs on a scale of 1 to 10.
- Lower left graph:
  - The years of work experience with justice-impacted youth
- Lower right graph:
  - Post-test, participants were asked to rate how they felt regarding the educational materials using a Likert scale. The options were very bad, bad, neutral, good, and excellent.



## Discussion

- Limitations
  - A small number of participants
  - One post-test was not completed
  - Program length was restrained
- Implications for Practice:
  - Importance of occupations in mental health
  - Implementing educational program for future employees and volunteers

## Conclusion

- Addressing the youth's barriers early on while incarcerated, they have better outcomes upon release.
- Creating similar programs that target substance abuse and mental health needs, the youth are far more likely to succeed and return to their communities as productive participants.
- There was an increase in comfort levels assisting youth with mental health needs and substance abuse challenges.
- The materials will be used for future employees and volunteers to review prior to interacting with the justice-impacted youth.

## Acknowledgement & Contact Information

Special Thanks to: Dr. Valley McCurry & Dr. Jazminda Ryan

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## References Available upon request