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COMMUNITIVE JUSTICE INITIATIVE MEDIATION FINDINGS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This summary presents the findings from the Community Justice Initiative (CJI) mediation report. The goal of this project was to conduct a needs assessment for CJI in expanding their mediation service to the City of Guelph and County of Wellington.

METHODS

A focus group and individual interviews were conducted with community members living in Guelph and Wellington to gain their perspectives on introducing a mediation service to these communities.

KEY RESULTS

- Mediation was described as a positive, empowering, non-punitive, and flexible problem-solving process for the community
- A mediation service was viewed by participants as being needed in Guelph and Wellington
- All participants stated they believed a mediation service would benefit both people and organizations in Guelph and Wellington
- A mediation service was seen as providing a method of conflict resolution other than the legal system for people in Guelph and Wellington



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- A mediation service was agreed upon by participants as offering a peaceful and more positive way of resolving conflict in the community
- A mediation service was viewed as helping to resolve conflicts that were not suited for the court system
- Both urban and rural areas were stated as benefiting from a mediation service based on different needs such as land disputes
- People living in rural areas were stated as having more obstacles in accessing a mediation service compared to urban areas including a lack of public transportation, and potentially having to travel long distances
- Participants believed there is currently a lack of awareness by the general public in Guelph and Wellington about what mediation is resulting in misunderstanding, preconceptions, and people being less likely to use a mediation service
- Greater awareness about mediation was mentioned by participants as being crucial for a mediation service in Guelph and Wellington to be successful
- Using accessible language when providing information about mediation to the public was described as being important in creating greater outreach
- Stigma attached to mediation such as individuals feeling judged for using a mediation service was brought up by participants as an additional obstacle in people accessing a mediation service in Guelph and Wellington