



El'dad Ranch Alternative Justice Program

AJP Overview

The Alternative Justice Program (AJP) is based on the premise that men with intellectual disabilities who have come into conflict with the laws of society are a part of a population called vulnerable people. As such, a program that holds them accountable for their actions yet at the same time may provide a safe place to learn skills, positive values, and positive relationships may be more effective in changing behaviour than time in prison. El'dad's AJP is a residential and day program that offers vocational training, education, as well as other assistance to the men it supports. Together, staff and participants work at designing an individualized program that can result in a meaningful and productive future for the individual.

Eligibility Requirements

Adult Male

- Male, over 18

Intellectual Disability

- Documented intellectual disability as determined by Family Services (as opposed to mental illness). Dual diagnosis is acceptable and common for the individuals coming but the intellectual disability is what carries the funding for the program. FASD is also common among residents at El'dad.

Correctional Involvement

- Residents must have a CSW through Supported Living or Special Needs.
- Needing a place to serve, probation period, conditional sentence, or bail.
- The Alternative Justice Program does not provide support for individuals with a history of serious Violent or Sexual Crimes.
 - Exceptions would need to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis with considerations for the safety of other participants' staff and the community to which El'dad is accountable.

Desiring Change

- Willing and desiring to participate in a program where they can grow in areas of their choice that is both positive and productive.
 - Requirement to participate in the El'dad Day Program.
- Individuals from a rural background usually handle the relative isolation of El'dad better than individuals who have only known an urban environment.

First Step: CSWs should contact Initiatives for Just Communities via email, referrals@initiativesjc.org or the Eastman Region Family Services Supervisor (204-346-6259)



Getting Started

Alternative Justice Program is a provincial resource

- The AJP program of El'dad Ranch is regarded as a provincial resource, which means that although it is located in Eastman Region, it accepts and serves Family Service clients from the entire province. When a man with an intellectual disability, who is part of the Family Service system, comes in conflict with the law there are options for alternative sentencing.

Referrals are done through Family Services

- The Probation Department may work together with Family Services to ascertain if a placement at El'dad would seem to be appropriate. Initial screening is done by Family Services. When they have a potential candidate, they begin a dialogue with the IJC SIL Case Manager and the relevant Program Manager. If the fit appears to be positive, then the resident is brought into the discussions.

Potential Residents are encouraged to visit El'dad first

- A visit is arranged to El'dad and the individual can see the residence and the type of programs available and ask any questions. Part of the contract is an agreement with the resident that they will abide by the guidelines of El'dad and they will participate in the various programs of El'dad. If a visit is not possible, El'dad staff will visit the potential client in the correctional centre to make a personal connection.

Residence Program

Location

- El'dad is located on an 18-acre farm site about 12 km from Steinbach, which itself is situated on Treaty 1 Territory. There is 24-hour supervision of residents in the Justice program.

DSWs

- In the Residential Program there is a team of disability support workers (DSWs) who are on hand to assist with the life skills needed to go about the business of living, meals, laundry, keeping accommodations clean, etc. A DSW sleeps over in the same dorm as the men and is available if there are any needs during the night. We have a close working relationship with the local probation department and any incidents are reported and dealt with in consultation with the appropriate Probation and/or Family Service officer.

Individual Planning and Goals

- All residents must have an IPP done in conjunction with the CSW, El'dad, and the resident. Residents are involved with developing and participating in their individual planning. Each goal identified will have a DSW assigned to help the resident work towards achieving that goal on a weekly basis.

Groups

Dorm Meetings

- Every week we have a meeting on dorm life. Residents are encouraged to share their concerns and frustrations in a safe and open forum. This allows residents to practice assertiveness and respect for others. It also gives the residents a sense of control and ownership of their living situation.

Personal SMART Goals

- Once a week we have a Specialized Support Worker working one on one with each of our residents. The support model is based on solution-focused therapy. This works towards recreating successes. Goals are identified and tracked regularly while emphasizing the things that went well. This helps the clients develop self-esteem and hope for their future. Clients feel empowered and supported to make real changes.

Ranch Recovery

- This group night focuses on addictions. Topics include triggers and harm reduction. We are developing outside connections to provide additional resources (speakers, workshops, etc.).

Phoenix Program

- This group night focuses on anger management and coping skills. Similar to the Ranch Recovery group, we are developing outside connections to provide additional resources.

Self Exploration

- A variety of topics are covered in this group night including forgiveness, self-worth, self-sabotage, online safety, accountability, budgeting, and life skills. Painting, journaling, and arts and crafts are some of the tools and activities used.

Restorative Conflict Mediation

- When there is a conflict between participants, we have both parties engage in structured mediation. This process allows participants to: practice assertive communication, learn coping strategies, learn to handle conflict in a non-violent manner, establish boundaries, and come to a deeper understanding of both other people and themselves.

Reconnecting with Community

- El'dad strives for our residents to connect within their community. To facilitate this, we encourage our residents to participate in activities outside El'dad. We have had residents going to church, church groups, school, literacy programs, gym, sports, swimming, and volunteering. Aside from some of the intrinsic benefits of these activities, there is also the opportunity to establish positive friendships.



Contact Information:

Referrals: referrals@initiativesjc.org

For more information:

- Visit our website: <https://www.initiativesjc.org/wpblog/>
- Email us: info@initiativesjc.org
- Telephone: 204-326-1050

