

Pathways to Sobriety: Interim Findings from the Empirical Data

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Executive Summary

Overview and Key Findings

This summary provides a high-level overview of the findings from the first two operational years of the Pathways to Sobriety program (September 2023 - August 2025). The evaluation reveals a story of successful program development, moving from a foundational pilot phase to a period of significant, measurable impact.

- Year 1 (Pilot Phase | N=33): The initial implementation year yielded no statistically significant changes in participant knowledge or skills. This outcome is consistent with expectations for a pilot program, where a small sample size limits statistical power and the focus is on establishing operational procedures.
- Year 2 (Scaled Implementation | N=289): With a substantial increase in participation, Year 2 produced clear and statistically significant gains across all measured domains, demonstrating the program's effectiveness in enhancing not only knowledge but also critical life skills.

Analysis of Year 2 Impact

The success in Year 2 was comprehensive, with notable improvements in three core areas: Knowledge & Awareness (understanding substance-related harm), Personal Skills (coping effectively and resisting peer pressure), and Interpersonal & Family Support. The largest gains were observed in practical, skill-based domains, suggesting the program is successfully translating knowledge into behavioral skills crucial for long-term resilience.

Conclusion and Strategic Recommendation

The Pathways to Sobriety program has demonstrated compelling evidence of effectiveness in its second year. The initial pilot year served as a necessary foundation, and the subsequent positive outcomes validate the program model. The findings strongly support the continuation and potential expansion of the program.

Continued monitoring and evaluation in subsequent years are essential to track the long-term sustainability of these positive effects and to identify opportunities for further refinement. The program is on a strong trajectory and warrants continued investment and support.

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1. Introduction

This report summarizes the pre- and post-intervention scores for the Pathways to Sobriety program. The following sections detail the results for each program year, displaying mean scores with 95% confidence intervals and the corresponding Cohen's d effect sizes for each survey item.

The current report covers years 1 (Sep 2023 - Aug 2024) and 2 (Sep 2024 - Aug 2025). There were 33 participants in year 1 and 289 in year 2.

2. Methodology

2.1 Participants

Participants in the Pathways to Sobriety program were youth who engaged with the intervention between September 2023 and August 2025. A total of 33 participants completed both pre- and post-program surveys in Year 1 (2023–2024), and 289 participants completed surveys in Year 2 (2024–2025). Participation rates reflect typical program ramp-up, with Year 1 representing initial implementation and Year 2 reflecting a more stable period of program delivery.

2.2 Procedure

Data collection occurred at two time points: (1) immediately before beginning the Pathways to Sobriety program (pre-test) and (2) upon completion of the program (post-test). Surveys were administered electronically within the program platform (Journey.do), ensuring consistency in delivery and data capture. Participants provided responses to a series of items assessing substance use knowledge, coping strategies, decision-making, and family- or peer-oriented skills.

2.3 Measures

Displayed in the table below, program outcomes were measured using 10 parallel pre- and post-intervention items. Each item was rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 = Strongly Disagree to 4 = Strongly Agree.

Item #	Short Title	Full Item Wording
1	Recognizes Harm	I am aware of the ways that using substances can cause harm in someone's life.
2	Can Differentiate Addiction vs Use	I understand how being addicted to substances differs from occasional usage.
3	Avoids Problems	I am making sure that substances don't cause problems in my life.

4	Makes Safe Choices	My choices will ensure substances don't cause me problems.
5	Knows How to Cope Effectively	I know how to cope with negative experiences without using substances.
6	Knows How to Resist Peer Pressure	I understand what skills I can use to resist peer pressure to use substances.
7	Understands Effects on Family	I am aware of how the use of substances can affect the entire family.
8	Understands Families Can Support	I understand how families can help each other to stop abusing substances.
9	Knows How to Help Others	I know how to help someone who is struggling with substances.
10	Can Support People Who Struggle	I can support people who are struggling with substance use.

2.4 Analytic Strategy

Pre- and post-program responses were matched at the individual level. For each survey item, mean pre- and post-test scores were calculated, and paired-sample effect sizes (Cohen's d) were estimated to provide standardized measures of change. Ninety-five percent confidence intervals (CIs) were constructed around each effect size to assess the precision of estimates. Results were disaggregated by program year to allow for examination of implementation effects over time.

3. Annual Results

3.1 Results for Year 1

In the program's first year, there were no statistically significant effects detected across any of the measured domains. While this might suggest a lack of immediate program impact, it is important to note that the Year 1 sample size was quite limited (N = 33), which dramatically constrains statistical power. This pattern is consistent with expectations for newly implemented programs, where early cohorts often yield unstable or null findings as both the intervention and delivery systems are still being established. Thus, the absence of detectable effects in Year 1 should be interpreted cautiously and understood within the broader developmental trajectory of the initiative.

Figure 1.1 below shows the comparison of mean scores for each item from the pre-intervention survey to the post-intervention survey. Error bars represent the 95% confidence interval.

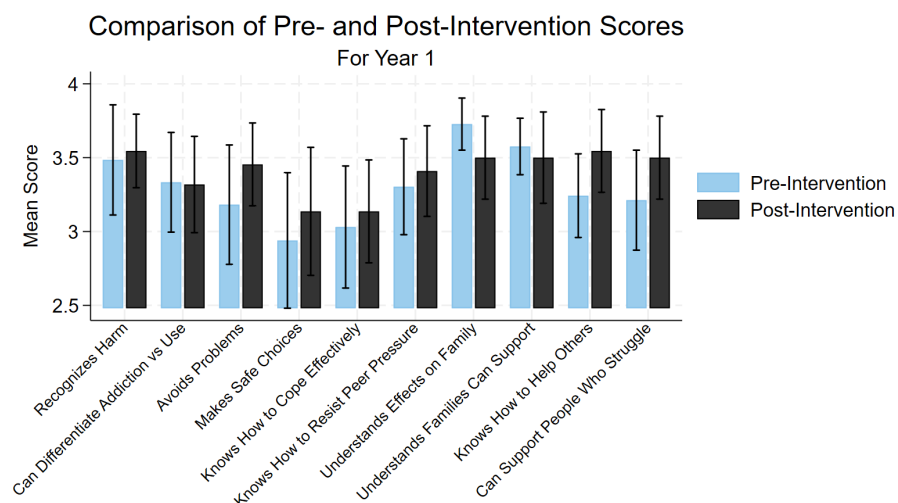
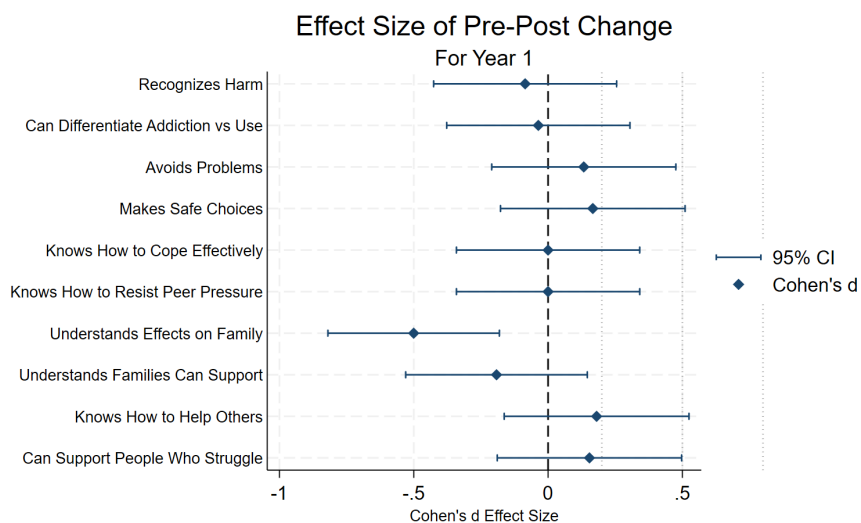


Figure 1.2 below displays the corresponding Cohen's d effect size for the change between pre- and post-intervention scores. This provides a standardized measure of the magnitude of change for each item.



3.2 Results for Year 2

By Year 2, program outcomes demonstrated clear and consistent improvements across all measured domains. Gains were observed in knowledge (e.g., recognizing harm, differentiating addiction from casual use), personal coping skills (e.g., making safe choices, resisting peer pressure, coping effectively), and interpersonal/family-oriented domains (e.g., understanding family effects, enabling family support, supporting peers struggling with substance use).

Effect sizes ranged from small to large, underscoring the program's broad impact. The smallest effects were observed in domains such as recognizing harm and differentiating addiction—areas where baseline understanding was already relatively high. The largest effects emerged in domains related to coping effectively and resisting peer pressure, which represent critical skill-building components of the program. Intermediate effects were found in family-oriented items, suggesting that the program not only enhanced individual knowledge and decision-making but also extended to relational contexts.

Taken together, the Year 2 findings provide strong evidence of the program's effectiveness once implementation stabilized and sample size increased. The uniform pattern of positive effects across all domains suggests that participants are not only acquiring knowledge but are also translating it into improved self-regulation, decision-making, and social support behaviors. The contrast between Year 1 and Year 2 underscores the importance of evaluating new programs over multiple years, as initial implementation often requires time before measurable impacts can emerge.

Figure 2.1 below shows the comparison of mean scores for each item from the pre-intervention survey to the post-intervention survey. Error bars represent the 95% confidence interval.

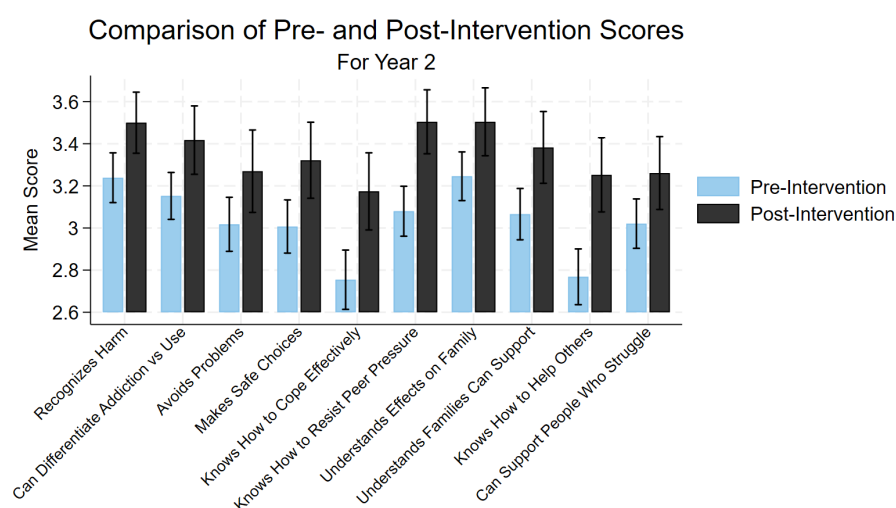
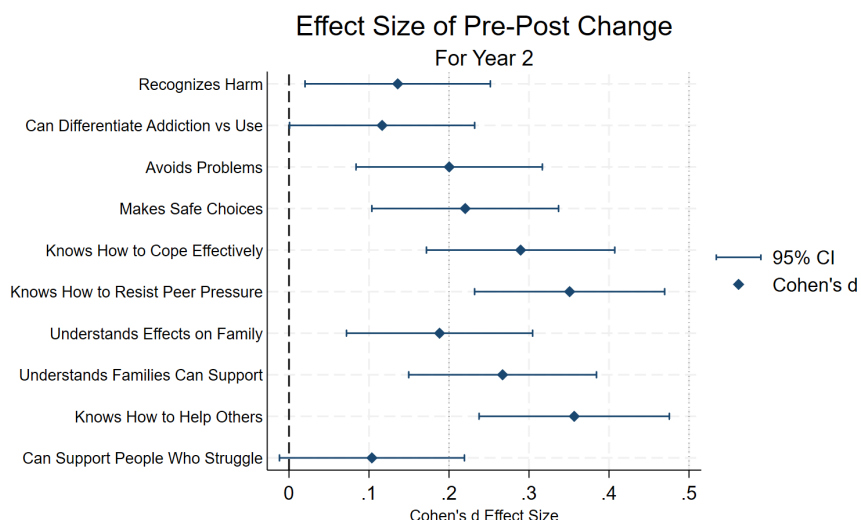


Figure 2.2 below displays the corresponding Cohen's d effect size for the change between pre- and post-intervention scores. This provides a standardized measure of the magnitude of change for each item.



4. Conclusion

The evaluation of Pathways to Sobriety over its first two years demonstrates the program's trajectory from early-stage implementation to measurable impact. In Year 1, limited sample size and the natural challenges of program rollout constrained the ability to detect meaningful change. However, by Year 2, once implementation stabilized and participation increased, the program produced consistent and significant gains across all measured domains.

Participants showed improved knowledge of substance-related harms, enhanced coping and decision-making skills, and strengthened family- and peer-oriented supports. Effect sizes ranged from small to large, with the most substantial improvements in skill-based domains such as coping effectively and resisting peer pressure. These outcomes suggest that the program is not only enhancing cognitive awareness but also fostering practical, behaviorally relevant skills that support long-term sobriety and resilience.

Taken together, the results highlight the importance of multi-year evaluation to capture the true impact of new interventions. Pathways to Sobriety is demonstrating strong early promise, with Year 2 findings providing compelling evidence of effectiveness. Continued monitoring in subsequent years will be essential to determine the sustainability of these effects, identify opportunities for refinement, and ensure that the program continues to deliver broad and lasting benefits for participants and their families.