



2014 Funder & Partner Survey

Summary Report to Survey Invitees

Victoria Cool Aid Society
June 2014

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About This Report

This report summarizes the results of Cool Aid’s third biannual funder and partner survey, undertaken in February 2014. While survey themes vary across time, the focus of each survey is Cool Aid’s performance, as perceived by funders and partners, in areas of strategic importance.

Organizational Leadership, Partnering & Collaboration, and Client Service Experience were the themes for the 2014 survey.

Report Context

Strategic Context

Part of Cool Aid’s strategic planning process involves regularly assessing and reporting on [how stakeholders rate our performance](#). Among our most important stakeholders are the [partner and funding agencies](#) with whom we collaborate to deliver essential services to adults facing marginalization.

About the Survey

Cool Aid’s three funder and partner surveys were administered in 2009, 2012 and 2014. Each survey aimed to answer the question “[How are we doing?](#)” from the perspective of organizations and individuals that we consider to be our partners and/or funders.

2009 Survey Themes

1. Organizational Leadership
2. Partnering & Collaboration
3. Knowledge-Sharing & Advocacy
4. Accountability & Transparency
5. Being a Good Neighbour

2012 Survey Themes

1. Organizational Leadership
2. Partnering & Collaboration
3. Learning from Others
4. Client Advocacy
5. Client Service Experience

About the Respondents

We invited 214 individuals to participate in the 2014 survey, significantly more than in previous years (113 in 2009, 120 in 2012).

The broader sample included representatives of major donor agencies as well as greater representation from management/supervisory and non-management roles.

2014 Survey Themes	Theme Descriptions
1. Organizational Leadership	<i>Cool Aid aims to practise a leadership style that is innovative yet practical. How are we doing?</i>
2. Partnering & Collaboration	<i>Cool Aid works with others to develop community-based solutions to homelessness. We strive to be a good partner by providing support to others and by working collaboratively. How are we doing?</i>
3. Client Service Experience	<i>At Cool Aid, we seek out and respond to client input in a variety of ways in order to improve service delivery. We also want to know how our partners perceive service delivery at Cool Aid. How are we doing?</i>

	Response Rate	Number of Respondents
2014	55%	117
2012	62%	74
2009	68%	77

While individuals in leadership or executive roles were strongly represented in all three surveys, in 2014, executives account for a smaller proportion of respondents (39%) than in previous surveys (51% in 2009, 60% in 2012). Refer to Appendix A for more information.

Performance Ratings

Based on the 4-point scale shown to the right, survey participants were asked to rate attributes under the three survey themes shown above.

Performance Rating Scale			
Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
4	3	2	1

OVERVIEW OF SURVEY RESULTS

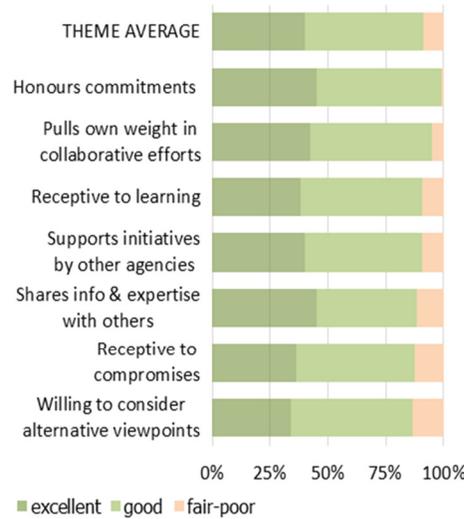
2014 Distribution of Ratings

**Organizational Leadership
Cool Aid as a Whole**



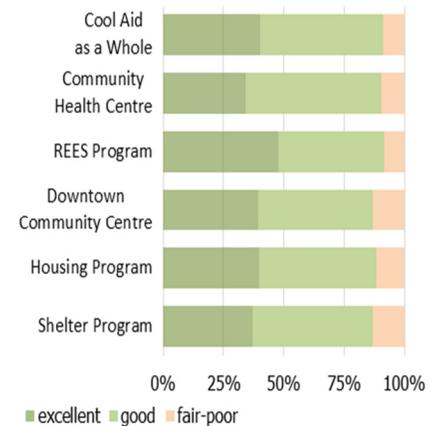
Agency-level only.

**Partnering & Collaboration
Cool Aid as a Whole**



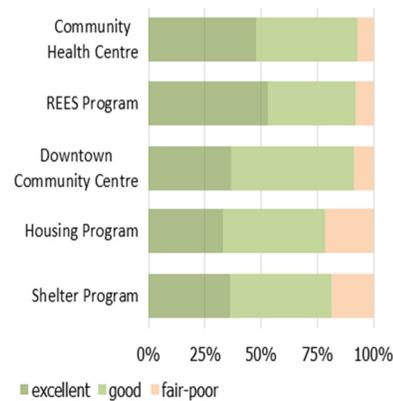
Average of ratings for Partnering & Collaboration attributes.

**Partnering & Collaboration
Cool Aid & Programs**



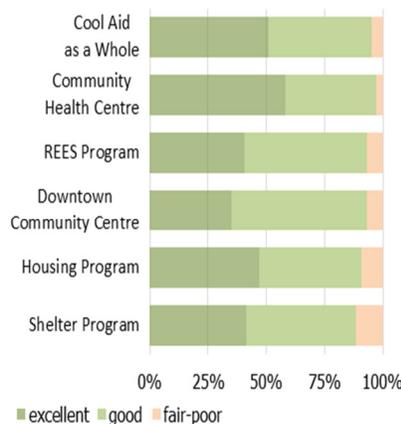
Average of ratings for Partnering & Collaboration attributes.

**Client Service Experience
Program Level**



Average of ratings for Client Service Experience attributes.

**Overall Performance
Cool Aid & Programs**



“Based on your total experience with this agency, how would you rate our overall performance?”

As in 2012, the vast majority of respondents rated Cool Aid and its programs as Good or Excellent on survey themes.

Overall, between 89% and 97% rated us Good to Excellent in 2014.

Looking Back

2009 vs. 2012

In our report on the 2012 funder and partner survey (May 2012), we noted that among 14 baseline attributes, average ratings increased for every single attribute, with increases ranging from 0.08 to 0.51 over 2009 for Cool Aid as a whole (where minimum rating=1 and maximum rating=4).

Average ratings increased primarily because significantly more respondents rated Cool Aid as Excellent, rather than Good, in 2012.

2012 vs. 2014

While similar proportions of respondents gave Good or Excellent ratings in both survey years, in 2014, relatively fewer respondents gave Excellent ratings while relatively more gave Good ratings.

For Cool Aid as a whole, decreases in average ratings varied between -0.27 and no change (where minimum rating=1 and maximum rating=4).

In other words, there appears to have been a moderate shift away from Excellent and toward Good in 2014.

This pattern—fewer Excellent ratings, more Good ratings—is evident across the board, applying to all five programs, the three survey themes, and almost all survey attributes.

Do our funders and partners feel we are “less excellent” than in 2012? Or is this apparent shift a consequence of expanding our respondent pool? Respondents in executive roles tend to give Cool Aid higher ratings than those in management and non-management roles and it is the non-executive respondents that are more strongly represented in our 2014 sample.

For our next funder and partner survey in 2016, we need to think more carefully about how and why we change our survey sample!

The primary difference between 2009 and 2012 was that significantly more respondents rated Cool Aid as Excellent, rather than Good, on 14 baseline attributes.

In 2014, Cool Aid's average ratings shifted slightly away from Excellent toward Good.

Theme—Organizational Leadership

2014 Highlights

- Leadership Overall—88% of respondents rated the agency Good or Excellent (98% in 2012), for an average rating of 3.39 (3.63 in 2012).
- The highest rated attributes were **Solution-focused** (3.35) and **Forward-looking** (3.34); 90% and 89% of respondents respectively rated Cool Aid Good or Excellent.
- The lowest rated attribute—**Outside-the-box thinkers** (3.07)—was rated Good or Excellent by more than three-quarters (77%) of respondents.

Theme Description—Cool Aid aims to practise a leadership style that is innovative yet practical. How are we doing?

Organizational Leadership	Average Ratings 4=Excellent 3=Good			Respondents choosing Good or Excellent		
	2009	2012	2014	2009	2012	2014
Cool Aid as a Whole						
Organizational Leadership Overall	n/a	3.63	3.39	n/a	98%	88%
Solution-focused	3.35	3.62	3.35	98%	98%	90%
Forward-looking	3.28	3.56	3.34	95%	97%	89%
Inspires and motivates others	3.08	3.59	3.32	81%	98%	83%
Adaptive to change	3.07	3.43	3.19	82%	93%	86%
Outside-the-box thinkers	3.15	3.23	3.07	87%	85%	77%

Comparable data not available at the program level.

Survey Groups

- Affiliations—Respondents affiliated with the Downtown Service Providers (DSP) and the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness gave Cool Aid the highest Good-Excellent ratings for Organizational Leadership overall (97% and 94% respectively).
- Respondent Role—Good-Excellent ratings varied little between roles (85%-89%). Notable, however, is that 68% of respondents in executive positions rated the agency Excellent, compared with 48% of those in management and 27% in non-management roles.
- Service Interactions—Respondents with service-oriented interactions with Cool Aid gave somewhat lower ratings for Organizational Leadership overall. Nonetheless, a large majority still rated the agency Good or Excellent: respondents who made referrals to Cool Aid (84%), received referrals from Cool Aid (83%), provided services at a Cool Aid site (73%).

Sample Comments

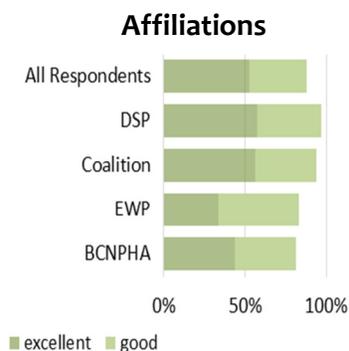
“Not only leaders of/in Cool Aid, leaders in the community as a whole.”

“Social enterprise development in partnership with others built into all housing projects.”

“I appreciate Kathy often forwards me to an ‘expert’ on the team. Does not assume top-down leadership!”

Organizational Leadership Overall

2014 Distribution of Ratings by Survey Group



Cool Aid as a Whole



Theme—Partnering & Collaboration

Cool Aid as a Whole

- Theme average—In 2014, 91% of respondents rated Cool Aid as a whole either Good or Excellent on Partnering & Collaboration attributes, virtually unchanged (92% in 2012).

The average rating did, however, slip from 3.41 in 2012 to 3.31 in 2014.

- Highest rated attributes—**Honours commitments made to partners** (3.44) and **Pulls own weight in collaborative efforts** (3.37) earned the highest ratings, with 99% and 95% of respondents respectively giving the agency a Good or Excellent rating.
- The lowest rated attribute—**Willing to consider alternative viewpoints** (3.18)—still earned Good or Excellent ratings from 86% of respondents.

Theme Description—Cool Aid works with others to develop community-based solutions to homelessness. We strive to be a good partner by providing support to others and by working collaboratively. How are we doing?

Partnering & Collaboration	Average Ratings			Respondents choosing Good or Excellent		
	4=Excellent	3=Good				
Cool Aid as a Whole	2009	2012	2014	2009	2012	2014
Theme Average	3.20	3.41	3.31	87%	92%	91%
Honours commitments made to partners	3.29	3.54	3.44	93%	97%	99%
Pulls own weight in collaborative efforts	3.42	3.61	3.37	94%	100%	95%
Shares information & expertise with others	3.30	3.47	3.33	89%	93%	88%
Supports initiatives sponsored by other agencies	3.17	3.43	3.31	87%	89%	91%
Receptive to learning from partners and funders	2.74	3.28	3.28	82%	87%	91%
Receptive to compromises proposed by partners	3.07	3.28	3.23	83%	88%	88%
Willing to consider alternative viewpoints	3.02	3.24	3.18	81%	87%	86%

Theme average based on average ratings for 7 attributes.

Program Highlights

Survey respondents were asked to rate a subset of Partnering & Collaboration attributes for the programs with which they were most familiar.

- Program-level results closely mirror those for Cool Aid as a whole.
- Between 88% and 94% of all respondents gave a rating of Good or Excellent to **Pulls own weight in collaborative efforts** (chart on next page), which was the highest rated attribute in four out of five programs.
- The lowest rated attribute in all programs—**Willing to consider alternative viewpoints**—was still rated Good or Excellent by between 80% and 90% of respondents.

Partnering & Collaboration	Average Ratings		Good or Excellent	
	2012	2014	2012	2014
Theme Average by Program				
Housing Program	3.43	3.26	94%	88%
Shelter Program	3.34	3.22	90%	87%
Community Health Centre	3.52	3.25	95%	90%
REES Program	3.31	3.39	88%	92%
Downtown Community Centre	3.24	3.24	87%	87%

Theme average based on average ratings for 4 attributes. Program-level results not available for 2009.

Partnering & Collaboration

2014 Distribution of Ratings by Program

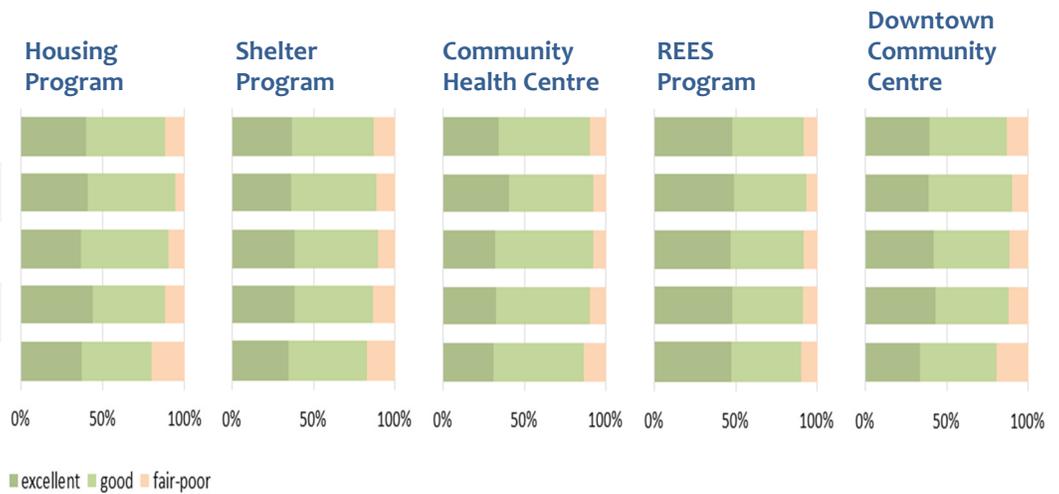
THEME AVERAGE

Pulls own weight in collaborative efforts

Supports initiatives sponsored by others

Shares info & expertise with others

Willing to consider alternative viewpoints



Sample Comments

“More youth initiatives and increase presentation to community partners to showcase events and programming happening within your agency.”

Downtown Community Centre—“Would be a good idea to set up with surrounding community agencies to do a presentation yearly or more often on what events/programming you have occurring.”

“Giving consideration to working with the business community to find the appropriate solutions for a small number of street-entrenched individuals who do not make the general public feel welcome or safe.”

“Great communication all around, I find the team very approachable.”

“I appreciate the very collaborative approach as I see all levels of people involved.”

Theme—Client Service Experience

Note: The average response rate for this theme is considerably lower than that for Organizational Leadership and Partnering & Collaboration, understandably so because respondents' frontline experience varies widely.

Program Highlights

- Highest rated attribute—The program makes a positive difference in client quality of life was the highest or second highest rated attribute across all programs, earning Good or Excellent ratings from 84% to 95% of respondents.
- Lowest rated attribute—Respondents gave Clients are asked for input on services the lowest ratings in all programs, with Good or Excellent ratings ranging between 65% and 88%.

Noteworthy are the client input ratings for the REES Program. The majority of respondents (61%) rated REES Excellent for this attribute, compared with 24% to 40% Excellent for the other four programs.

Theme Description—At Cool Aid, we seek out and respond to client input in a variety of ways in order to improve service delivery. We also want to know how our partners perceive service delivery at Cool Aid. How are we doing?

Client Service Experience	Avg Ratings 4=Excellent 3=Good		% choosing Good or Excellent	
	2012	2014	2012	2014
Theme Average by Program				
Housing Program	n/a	3.07	n/a	78%
Shelter Program		3.10		81%
Community Health Centre		3.39		93%
REES Program		3.45		92%
Downtown Community Centre		3.23		91%

Theme average based on average ratings for 5 attributes. Comparable data not available for 2009 or 2012.

Client Service Experience

2014 Distribution of Ratings



Sample Comments

Community Health Centre—*“Open more hours and on the weekends. Having room for some beds for the homeless and sick that just get in the hospital and/or cannot get into the hospital for some reason.”*

Shelter Program—*“Maybe just consider further alternatives to what has been tried and true...I think homelessness changes in some ways over the years, and we may need to alter the way we provide for people.”*

REES Program—*“The staff and volunteers are REES are incredible.”*

Community Health Centre—*“All staff at clinic—nurses, MDs, pharmacists—go well beyond what might be done in other medical clinics. There is a level of caring and action that has inspired me to do more.”*

Shelter Program—*“We hear that Cool Aid works hard to accommodate variations in hours so that clients can work, etc. It is appreciated, especially as we all struggle in the interim to find permanent housing for clients.”*

“Cool Aid is an excellent organization that services some of the hardest-to-house clients. They meet client need with dignity and respect.”

Overall Performance

Note: In Cool Aid’s funder and partner surveys, overall performance is a specific question (reproduced adjacent). Survey results for overall performance are therefore not a consolidation of average ratings but, rather, reflect respondents’ overall experience with Cool Aid and Cool Aid programs.

2014 Highlights

- As in 2012, the vast majority of respondents (89%-97%) rated Cool Aid and its programs as Good or Excellent on overall performance.
- For Cool Aid as a whole, respondents gave an average rating of 3.45 (out of a maximum of 4), compared to 3.63 in 2012.
- Survey Groups—Three groups gave the highest average ratings for overall performance: respondents in executive roles (3.58), Downtown Service Providers (3.46) and Coalition members (3.45).

Survey Question—Based on your **total experience** with this agency, how would you rate our overall performance?

Overall Performance	Avg Ratings 4=Excellent 3=Good		% choosing Good or Excellent	
	2012	2014	2012	2014
Cool Aid as a Whole	3.63	3.45	100%	95%
Housing Program	3.58	3.38	100%	91%
Shelter Program	3.44	3.28	92%	89%
Community Health Centre	3.72	3.55	100%	97%
REES Program	3.52	3.34	96%	93%
Downtown Community Centre	3.32	3.26	88%	93%

Question not part of 2009 survey.

Sample Comments

“Must applaud the staying power, daily effort and engagement. To me the purposeful endeavour is outstanding and interweaves vocation, enterprise and an overall humanity that is to be admired.”

“I actually wish I knew more about what you do, on a day-to-day basis. From what I have been reminded of in the survey, your approach to the problems of homelessness and poverty is varied and creative. Well done!”

“Highly respected enterprise striving to draw attention, to describe need, to gather resources to constantly reduce harm within a complex world of competing interests and varied understanding of consequences.”

Where We Go From Here

Overall, we are pleased with the results of the 2014 survey. Notwithstanding a potential shift in ratings, the vast majority of funders and partners in both 2012 and 2014 rated us as Good or Excellent in three strategic areas—Organizational Leadership, Partnering & Coordination, and Client Service Experience—as well as on overall performance. This is a vote of confidence that we have every intention of continuing to honour.

We appreciate that so many of our partners and funders participated in this survey and took the time to provide thoughtful and thought-provoking comments. This feedback will help inform the refresh of Cool Aid’s strategic plan currently underway.

In the years ahead, we anticipate working even more closely with many of our partners and funders in order to achieve the common goal of ending homelessness by 2018, a goal that is shared by Coalition partners and is the cornerstone of Cool Aid’s strategy.

Your Thoughts?

Do you have any questions, comments or suggestions about this report, about the survey, or about Cool Aid? If yes, we want to hear from you. Please get in touch.

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Together we *will* end homelessness.

	# Respondents				% of Respondents		
	2009	2012	2014		2009	2012	2014
Total Respondents	77	74	117				
Affiliations	65	52	77	**	*	*	*
ACT Community Advisory Board	n/a	6	11		n/a	12%	14%
BC Non-Profit Housing Association	n/a	10	16		n/a	19%	21%
Downtown Service Providers group	28	29	35		43%	56%	45%
Extreme Weather Protocol Committee	20	14	14		31%	27%	18%
Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness	32	38	54		49%	73%	70%
United Way Impact Council	17	14	n/a		26%	27%	n/a
Main Role	65	55	99	**	100%	100%	100%
Executive Director, CEO or similar leadership role	33	33	39		51%	60%	39%
Management or supervisory role	26	15	31		40%	27%	31%
Non-management role	6	7	17		9%	13%	17%
Board member	n/a	n/a	7		n/a	n/a	7%
Elected official	n/a	n/a	5		n/a	n/a	5%
Type of Organization	68	57	99	**	100%	100%	100%
Not-for-profit	37	33	50		54%	58%	51%
Government	25	18	19		37%	32%	19%
Health	n/a	n/a	10		n/a	n/a	10%
Faith-based	n/a	n/a	8		n/a	n/a	8%
Business	4	1	8		6%	2%	8%
Other	2	5	4		3%	9%	4%
Relationship with Cool Aid	68	58	101	**	100%	100%	100%
Funder	6	6	13		9%	10%	13%
Partner	32	28	52		47%	48%	51%
Funder and partner	12	11	17		18%	19%	17%
Other	18	13	19		26%	22%	19%

* Respondents may have more than one affiliation. Percentages will therefore exceed 100%.

** Number of respondents is less than total respondents because some respondents did not identify their affiliations, role, type of organization, or relationship with Cool Aid.