

MAP Rounds

# 7 BIG QUESTIONS WITH DR. FLORA MATHESON



ST. MICHAEL'S  
UNITY HEALTH TORONTO

**MAP**

Centre for  
Urban Health  
Solutions



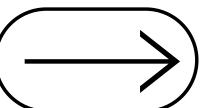
# INTRODUCING DR. FLORA MATHESON

- Scientist - MAP Centre for Urban Health Solutions
- Chair, Homelessness, Housing & Health - Unity Health Toronto
- Associate Professor - University of Toronto
  - Dalla Lana School of Public Health
  - Centre for Criminology & Sociolegal Studies
  - Institute for Medical Science
- Senior Adjunct Scientist – ICES



# WHY COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH?

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01

## Trained as a Sociologist

- Grounded in crime & deviance, gender, community, belonging, and social determinants of health
- Early intention to work directly with people, not solely in academia

02

## Foundational Community & Justice Experience

- Volunteer parole officer (Correctional Service of Canada)
- Volunteer recreational facilitator in a secure forensic unit (CAMH)
- Research position at Ontario Board of Parole

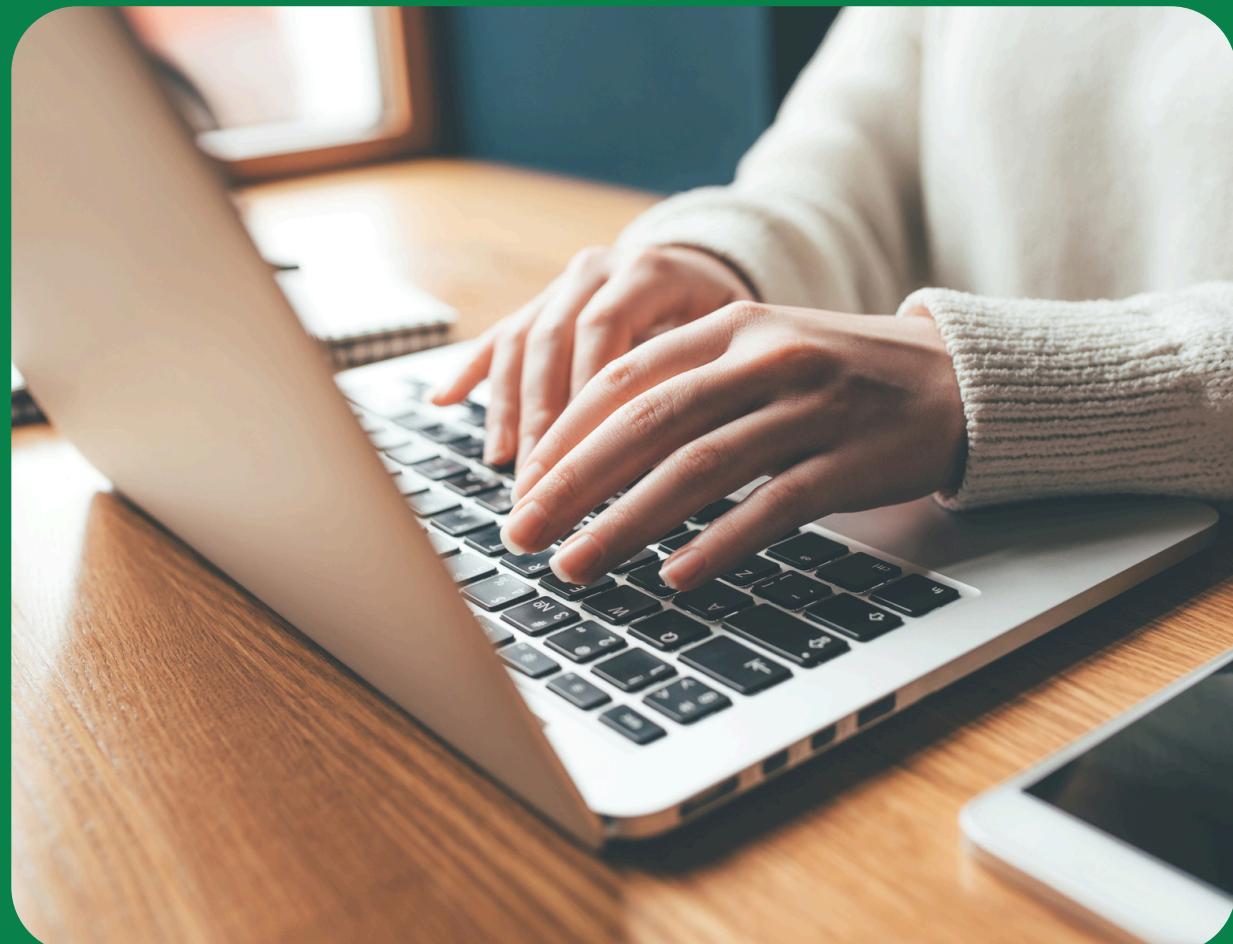
03

## Community-based Research

Allowed me to:

- Reconnect with people and communities
- Build meaningful, community-driven research
- Focus on solutions, not just documenting problems

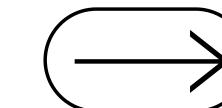
# WHO I AM & HOW I CAME TO THIS WORK





# DESCRIBE YOUR OVERALL RESEARCH PROGRAM & KT GOALS

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# CRIMINAL LEGAL INVOLVEMENT



## Core Orientation

A commitment to understanding hidden harms in underserved communities, and developing community-informed solutions.

## Our Goal

Listen to community partners, document what's happening, and work collaboratively to build realistic, meaningful solutions.

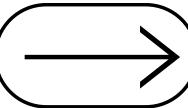
# PROBLEM GAMBLING, HOMELESSNESS, & POVERTY





**WHAT'S ONE BIG RESEARCH  
QUESTION YOU ARE TAKING ON  
AT MAP?**

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# WHY BRAIN INJURY? WHY BAIL? WHY NOW?

**How can a Navigator program support people with brain injuries at the earliest point of their involvement with the bail court?**

» What is the prevalence of brain injury among women at the TRBC?

» How do system actors understand—or misunderstand—brain injury?

» Where do supports break down?

» What would a truly effective Navigator program require in order to help people succeed?



# **A TRUSTED PARTNERSHIP**

## **ELIZABETH FRY SOCIETY TORONTO**

- An organization deeply rooted in supporting women affected by Canada's criminal legal system
- Working to amplify voices that too often go unheard and to create research that honours women's experiences and advances meaningful change





**WHAT METHODS ARE YOU USING  
TO INVESTIGATE THIS QUESTION?**

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# METHODS

## HOW WE'RE INVESTIGATING THE QUESTIONS



### Quantitative Work

Tracking:

- BI screening
- referrals to services
- access to brain injury diagnosis
- access to financial supports
- breaches, rearrest, other outcomes



### Qualitative Work

Interviewing:

- 2 navigators about challenges they see and what it's like to carry out their roles
- 15 women navigating bail or recent release



### Community-Based Participatory Approach

Guided by a community-based participatory research framework



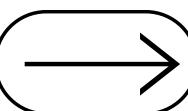
### Bringing It Together

- The numbers show us the size of the problem
- The stories show us how it plays out



**SHARE CHALLENGES YOU'RE UP  
AGAINST & WINS THAT HAVE  
MOVED THIS WORK FORWARD**

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# CHALLENGES



Funding



Stigma



Politicization

# WINS



Brain Injury Bail Court  
Navigator Program



Prevalence Studies

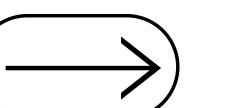


Community Engagement

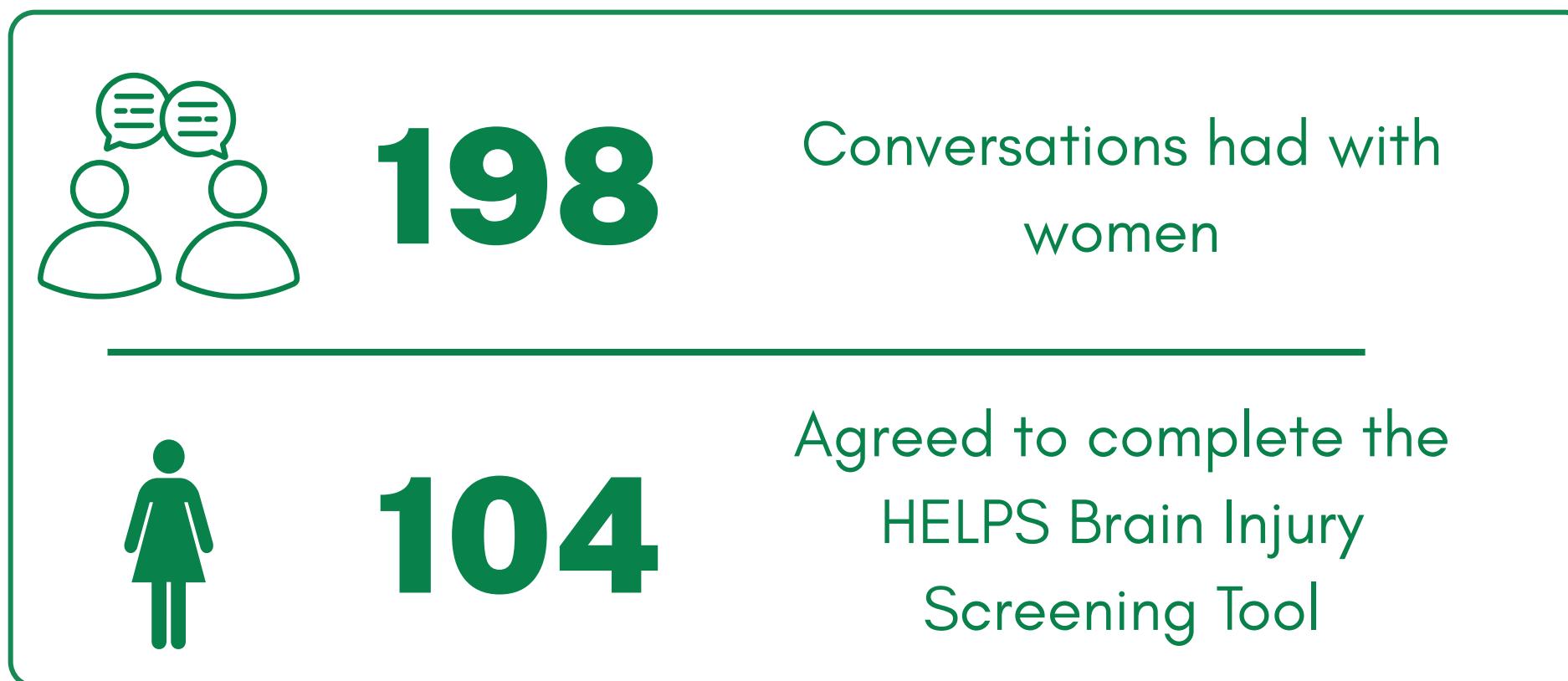


**WHAT STATISTIC WOULD YOU  
SHOW EVERYONE IN CANADA  
ABOUT YOUR RESEARCH?**

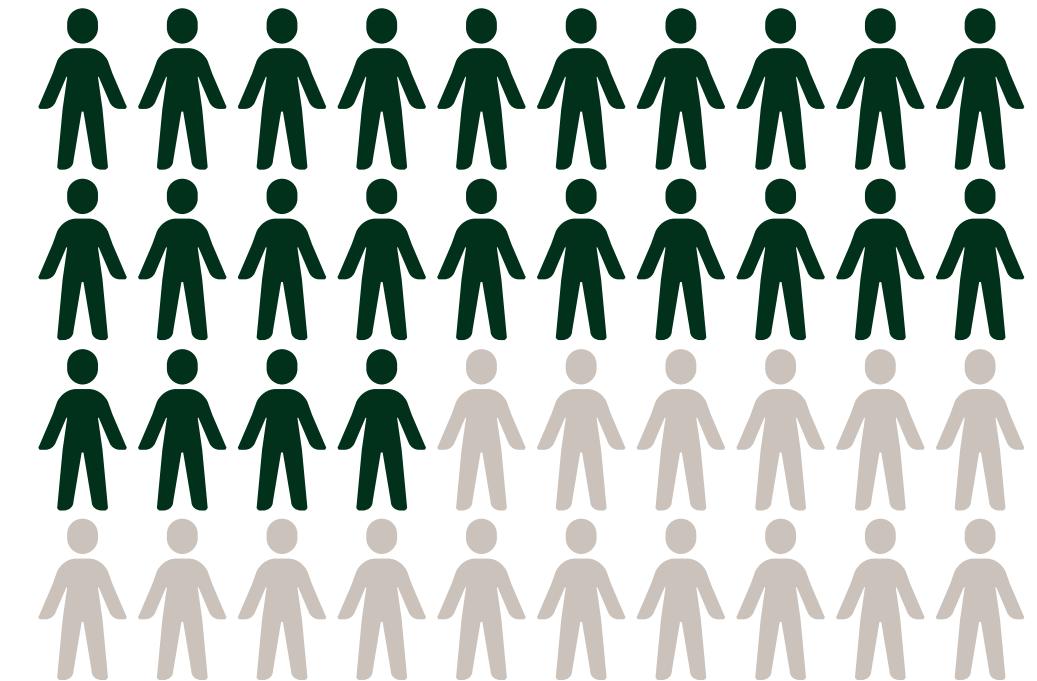
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# NAVIGATOR PROGRAM PRELIMINARY STATISTIC



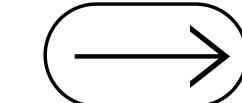
**60%**  
of women screened positive for brain injury





# CLOSING THOUGHTS

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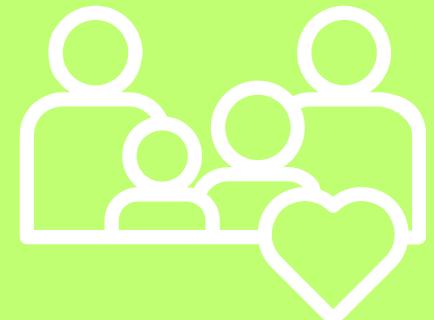


**LISTEN FIRST.  
CO-CREATE SOLUTIONS.  
PUSH THE SYSTEM TO BETTER  
SUPPORT PEOPLE WHO ARE  
TOO OFTEN LEFT BEHIND.**

**“We criminalize people for being homeless, then act surprised when homelessness becomes a pipeline to prison.”**  
— Anonymous

# BREAKING THE CYCLE NETWORK MEMBERS

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT GROUPS

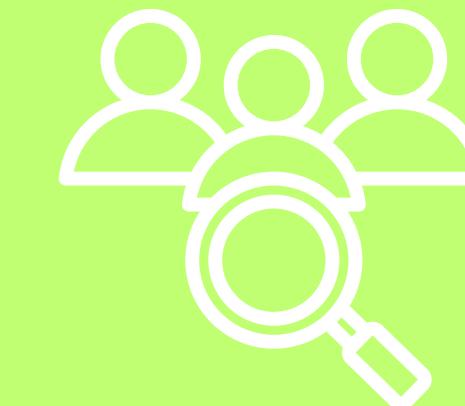


Mothers Offering Mutual Support

## JUSTICE AND EQUITY RESEARCH LAB



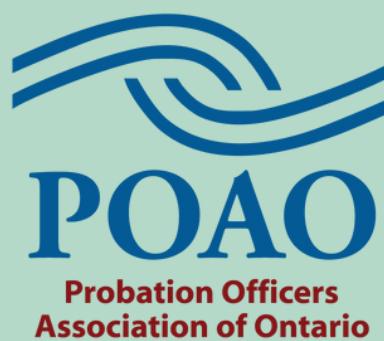
## PEOPLE WITH LIVED EXPERTISE



## JUSTICE SYSTEM PARTNERS



Ministry of the  
Solicitor General



Toronto Bail Program



## COMMUNITY JUSTICE & RE-ENTRY SERVICE AGENCIES



## TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS



Equitable Care for ALL

# FUNDERS

SSHRC  
CRSH



Canada

**Social Sciences and  
Humanities Research  
Council**



CIHR IRSC

**Canadian Institutes of  
Health Research**

**Meighen Family Foundation**

**Ontario**



**St. Michael's  
Foundation**

ST. MICHAEL'S HOSPITAL  
PROVIDENCE HEALTHCARE



**Ontario**

Ministry of Health & Long Term Care

Ontario  
Trillium  
Foundation



Fondation  
Trillium  
de l'Ontario



**Northpine  
Foundation**

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

## QUESTIONS?



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