

Cracks in the Ice Evaluation: Summary of Results

What was the aim of the evaluation?

Between November 2018 and March 2019, the *Cracks in the Ice* team conducted an online evaluation survey. The focus was to determine the usefulness of the online toolkit. The three main aims of the survey were to:

1. Measure knowledge about, and attitudes, towards crystal methamphetamine ('ice') and people who use it in Australia
2. Determine whether *Cracks in the Ice* was useful and meeting the needs of its target audience
2. Identify perceived and actual barriers to help-seeking among people who use ice, as well as their family and friends

Ethics approval was obtained from the University of New South Wales (HC No HC180735) and University of Sydney (Project number: 2018/844) Human Research Ethics Committees.

Who were the participants?



Average age was **36 years**



59% female



56% from metropolitan areas



33% from regional areas
11% from rural/remote areas

Members of the Australian community (aged 18 years and older) were recruited via several channels including Facebook and Twitter advertisements, the *Cracks in the Ice* e-newsletter and networks. The survey took between 10-30 minutes, was completed by a total of 2110 community members and included responses from people in every state and territory in Australia.

27%
of participants reported previously using crystal methamphetamine





41%

had a family member or friend who they thought may be using crystal methamphetamine

Participants included **people who reported previously using crystal methamphetamine, families and friends of people who use crystal methamphetamine, health professionals and general community members.**

Participants had either visited *Cracks in the Ice* in the past or were new to the site.

What did the survey find?

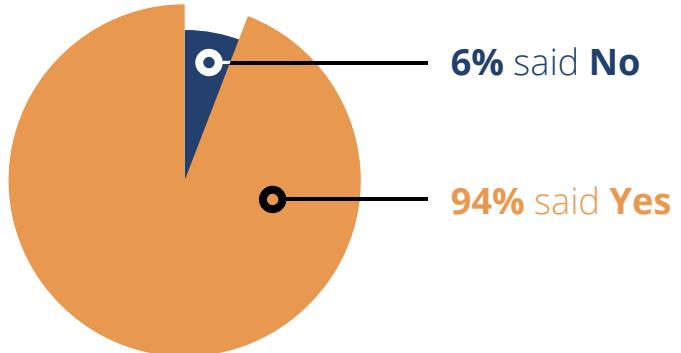
Strengths

The overall findings of the survey indicated that the toolkit was helpful, had a clear purpose, was non-stigmatising and strong in its evidence base.

The target audiences also indicated that *Cracks in the Ice* was meeting their needs.

Stigma was identified as a common barrier to help-seeking. Negative attitudes towards people who use crystal methamphetamine was high, with 66% of people saying they would not associate with people who have used it in the past. However, 46% of participants agreed that people needed to be more empathetic towards people who have used crystal methamphetamine. Given the high level of stigma and discrimination surrounding crystal methamphetamine use, *Cracks in the Ice* has an important role in challenging and reducing this stigma.

Did respondents find Cracks in the Ice useful?



Areas for improvement

While overall the feedback was positive, a few areas were identified for improvement and future development.

- **Usability** could be increased to maintain the site as the leading source of information and evidence-based resources about crystal methamphetamine.
- **More targeted resources** could be developed for people who use crystal methamphetamine, as this group of participants found the site less useful than other site user groups.
- Knowledge about crystal methamphetamine was high among participants. However, **legal implications, the physical and mental health effects of ice and prevalence of use** were less well known. This suggests future content could focus on these topics to improve knowledge.
- **A lack of service availability** was also identified as an issue for people in regional, rural and remote areas compared to those living in metropolitan areas.

What Next?

Improving usability of the site, challenging the stigma and attitudes towards people who use crystal methamphetamine and improving access and resources for people from regional and rural areas will be a focus of the toolkit in the future.

We would like to thank the many community members from around the country who provided their input and feedback during the evaluation of this resource, and who so generously shared their experiences and stories.



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