



The PCAP Women's Quilt – The Next Stitch

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Social Work Research Symposium - TRANSFORMATIVE SOCIAL WORK: ADVANCING RESEARCH IN ACTION, Faculty of Social Work, University of Calgary, March 17, 2016.

The PCAP program works with vulnerable women who struggle with addictions and have given birth, or are at risk of giving birth to a child born with prenatal alcohol exposure, and often, a later diagnosis of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), a lifelong disability. There are about 25 programs in rural and urban Alberta and women engage in supportive, long term relationships with mentors. The PCAP primary goal is: *Prevent future births of alcohol and/or drug exposed children*. The focus of this research was on developing an in-depth understanding of the ways in which women, through visual imagery reflect their experience of mentorship. Deeply powerful images reflective of children, relationship and support combined to construct a rich tapestry of lived experience. The work done by the PCAP mentors, supervisors and staff and PCAP Council is expressly acknowledged as their support of women, children and families is making a profound difference. The PCAP programs have been supported by the Alberta FASD Cross Ministry Committee (www.fasd.alberta.ca) and the 10 Year Strategic Plan on FASD (2007-2017).

History of the PCAP Women's Quilt - The inspiration for the PCAP Women's Quilt emerged from the creation of a PCAP Mentor's Quilt created in 2012 with 47 participants as identified as FASD Prevention Specialists by Job et al. 2014.* The mentor's experience was positive and meaningful - the seed was sown for the PCAP Women's Quilt. Mentors in Alberta supported women getting to quilting workshops held in Calgary, Edmonton and several rural communities. The workshops offered time for women, mentors and the research team to engage and interact. The workshops were lively, dynamic and children were often present.

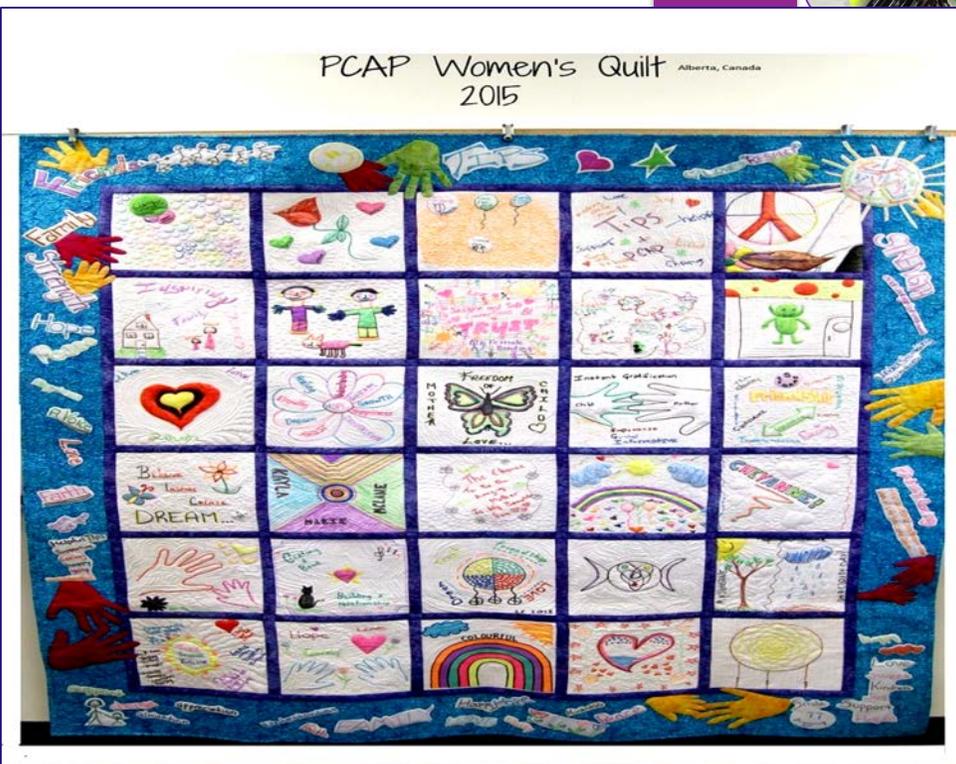
Project Goals

- To invite women to share the meaning of participation in this program through contributing to the PCAP women's quilt.
- To invite women to share how their visual creation was representative of change in their lived experience.
- To appreciate visual methodology as a potential supportive activity in women's healing/recovery work in PCAP work.

Interpretation - Creating the quilt was a remarkable process as each woman interprets their experience uniquely. Each quilt square was a flat piece of fabric and fabric pens were used to create, write and illustrate the squares. The small images above are the beginning place of the work of participants, and the image to the right is the full quilt. Once complete the squares were sent to the master quilters and a transformative process began. In the words of the master quilters: *The community of women suggest that the program offers safety, security, significance and hope... for a good life in the future.*

Dissemination – A book chapter is currently in progress for a forthcoming Canadian book focused on discourse related to mothering and addictions – in process. At least 2 articles will be submitted to research journals. A visual online quilt will be forthcoming on the PCAP website. Each participant will receive an image of their contribution and an image of the full quilt that represents a collective of women's lived experience and voice.

The PCAP WOMEN'S QUILT: A Qualitative Participatory Action Research Project (2014 – 2015) - A project of the Alberta PCAP Council & the Faculty of Social Work, University of Calgary. **CONTRIBUTORS:** 30 Women in Alberta PCAP Program . **MASTER QUILTERS:** Lin Taylor & Bev Ewan **METHODOLOGY:** Visual Research -Participatory Action Research . **ETHICS:** This research was approved by the CFREB, University of Calgary . **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:** Thank you to the women participants and mentors with deep appreciation and gratitude for their work.



Emerging Themes

Love, support, relationship, family, mothering, children, happiness, nature, spirituality, connections, community, resilience

For further information on the PCAP Women's Quilt Project please contact:

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The PCAP Mentor's Quilt 2014 online: <http://alberta-pcap.ca/pcap-quilt/>

*Reference: Job, J., Poth, C., Pei, J., Wyper, K., O'Riordan, T. & Taylor, L. (2014). Combining visual methods with focus groups: An innovative approach for capturing the multifaceted and complex work experiences of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder prevention specialists. *International Journal on Alcohol & Drug Research*. 3(1), 71 – 80. doi: 10.7895/ijadr.v3i1.129