

Capturing the Experiences of Mentors in the Parent Child Assistance Program (PCAP)

Toward Enhanced Prevention Practice



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Presentation Outline

- What is PCAP?
- Research Context & Purpose
- Methods
- Focus Group Findings
- Quilting Findings
- Integrated Findings
- Impact on Researchers
- Implications
- Acknowledgements

What is PCAP?

- Evidence-based home visitation program for substance using women who are either pregnant or new parents and who are at risk of giving birth to a child with a fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD).
- Advocacy and case management model
- **Program goal: to prevent future alcohol exposed pregnancies**
- This goal is attained through:
 - assisting at-risk women in seeking addictions treatment
 - promoting effective birth control and family planning
 - ensuring that children are in a safe environment
 - linking families with community resources

Research Context

- Evaluation of FASD service delivery in Alberta
- Necessitated innovative data collection methods
 - Qualitative methods
- **Purpose:** To capture the experiences of FASD prevention specialists
 - training, service delivery, planning, and support.

Methodology

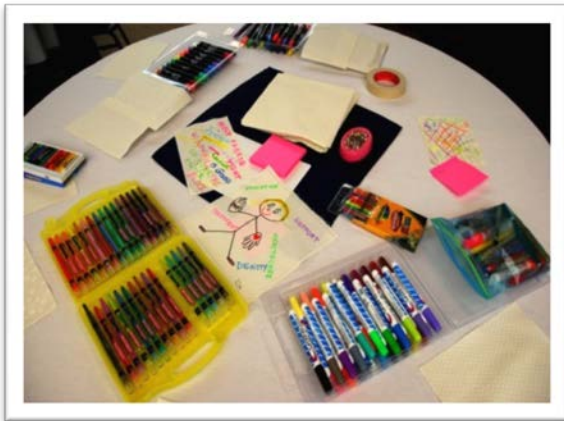
- Participants = 47 FASD Prevention Specialists
 - service providers, network coordinators, program managers, administrative personnel, leadership team members
- Setting = Alberta PCAP Annual General Meeting
- Multi-Method Approach (Qualitative)
 - Focus Groups (7 total)
 - Quilting Activity
- Data Analysis
 - Thematic Analysis of focus groups
 - Visual Interpretation of quilting images

Key Focus Group Findings

- Relationship-Focused
 - flexible, non-judgemental, client advocacy
- Ecological Understanding
 - Navigating systems, client access to services
 - *“Other people outside our service... they need to know what we know otherwise they will not be able to work successfully with them”*
- Staff Wellbeing
 - Self-care, support, burnout, staff safety
 - *“You need to take care of yourself as a service provider, because if you’re not okay, then you aren’t going to be any good for the girl that you’re working with”*

Visual Methods

- Visual methods within the field of qualitative research have been gaining momentum because of their usefulness in documenting and representing the social world (Banks, 2001).



Step 1: Participants were provided with fabric patches, markers, glitter glue, pastels, & pencil crayons to create their pieces.

An example of a complete patch was also available for view.

Step 2: Participants were asked to share their experiences working in PCAP through illustration &/or words.

Participants included their ***name, role, & explanation*** on the back of their piece.

Step 3: A quilter assembled the pieces together, identifying common words, images, colors, & theme

Analysis was completed by a second rater to ensure accuracy & consistency.



"[This] was a great way to start the morning...very therapeutic."



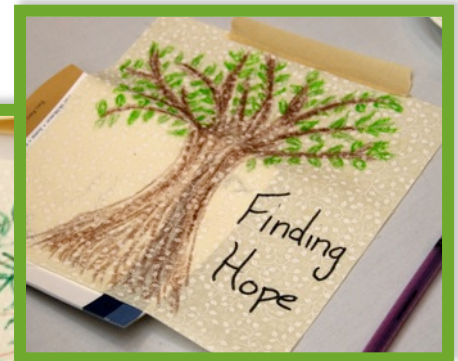
Quilt Interpretation: Shape

- Round shapes, cursive letters, fluid images
 - Demonstrate a mindfulness & gentleness
 - Speaks to the relational aspect of PCAP & change as a process



Quilt Interpretation: Image

- Key images appeared across pieces
 - Eye, tear, hand, heart, sun, tree, & rainbow



Quilt Interpretation: Color

- Colors selected linked well to themes across participant pieces
 - ▣ **Green** was used to depict **growth & life**
 - ▣ **Yellow** was used to depict **hope & vision**





- Scroll represents knowledge & wisdom
- Blank square signifies the untold story
- Collaborative process

Integration - The Big Picture

- Client-Advocate Connection



“... programs and strategies don’t heal people, relationships do and that’s just so important...it’s not just the programs that are great programs, it’s the individuals who are [leading them].”

Integration - The Big Picture

- Change as a Process
 1. PCAP as a model continues to grow, expand, and evolve
 2. Program clients progress as they move towards recovery

Pain &
Grief



Hope &
Vision



Change as a
Process

Connectedness



Love



Healing



Growth
& Life



Impact on Researchers

“[I was] surprised by the flood of emotions that I was experiencing [upon seeing the quilt]... I felt overwhelmed by the powerful messages of hope and struggle depicted in the squares. I was also moved by [the] level of care, commitment and enthusiasm... expressed in... the quilt. I felt like I was taking part in something very special; which I have never really felt in my past research experiences.”

“They really care...and understand the impact of their job. They are really good at building relationships with their clients, which makes the program so successful.”

“...in our research we are usually focused on the child, their deficits, and the interventions needed...This focus on prevention and the struggles that are involved in working with this population definitely added to my understanding.”

Implications

- **Focus groups** explored aspects of mentors' experiences that would not have been accessible through surveys and was responsive to participants' needs.
- **Quilting** and other visual methods can be a valuable data collection tool in FASD Prevention research.
- Visual methods is unique in its ability to understand and convey the participants' individual and collective lived experiences.
 - This is key to establishing an **authentic connection** in community-based research and service delivery



“Our lives are like quilts - bits and pieces, joy and sorrow, stitched with love.” Unknown



Acknowledgements

- This research would not have been possible without support from the following people:
 - The women and men working in the PCAP program whose dedication to FASD prevention is both noteworthy & inspiring
 - Drs. Jacqueline Pei & Cheryl Poth, Principal investigators
 - Teresa O’Riordan, Co-Chair of the Alberta PCAP Council
 - Lin Taylor, Master quilter
 - Jenelle Job, Project lead
 - The Alberta Community-based Collaboration and Evaluation Research Team (ACCERT)