

PCAP Small Projects: Fostering Community (March 2023)

This past year, the Alberta PCAP Council provided participating PCAP agencies with one-time funding to host an event **Fostering PCAP Community**. The focus of this funding is to involve PCAP participants in a creative project that meets the following objectives:

1. Participation in the project builds stronger relationships with participants
2. The project result will be used to promote or otherwise impact PCAP within your community

The **Fostering Community** theme encouraged agencies to build stronger relationships with participants and promote PCAP within individual communities. Agencies showed their creativity and held some wonderful events for PCAP staff and participants!

In March 2023, Alberta PCAP Council distributed about \$4600 in funding to 11 programs, hosting events for 36 staff, 80 participants, and 4 community members in total.

- **Common themes** included supporting access to food, doing community-building activities with participants, and connecting post-COVID restrictions.
- **Common barriers** agencies noted included transportation and limited funding opportunities.

Events included: creating participant led paintings, creating a participant photo calendar, a family bowling night, learning meal-prep and food security, a partner networking lunch, creating a cookbook, a participant art project, and providing an anxiety management program. Agencies were able to have the flexibility to chose a topic most pertinent in their communities, and for many this was the first time participants were able to meet each other since starting in PCAP.

A special thanks to the 11 agencies who participated in these micro-events on Fostering Community: Camrose Association for Community Living, First Steps Edmonton and Wetaskiwin, Driftpile Cree Nation, East Prairie Metis Settlements, Family Services of Central Alberta, Grand Prairie Family Education Society, Hinton Adult Learning Society, McMan Calgary, McMan Lethbridge, and the Mackenzie FASD Society.

In total:

36 PCAP Staff,
80 PCAP Program Participants &
4 community members
joined an event hosted by one of
the **11** PCAP agencies.

Camrose Association For Community Living

Connecting in Community for Fun

The PCAP team in Camrose held a bowling event to get participants back out into the community following pandemic measures. Social events such as bowling allow attendees to get together, feel connected, and enjoy a sober activity. Participants were able to get to know each other, and many made plans to connect again in the future.

Bowling together as a group introduced some attendees to a new, family-friendly and cost-effective recreational activity that can be returned to in the future. 6 participants and 7 children had fun bowling with the Camrose PCAP team!



Catholic Social Services First Steps Wetaskiwin

PCAP Calendar

Participants shared and collaborated on the creation of a PCAP calendar, collecting photos and phrases of meaningful places around the community. Some participants brought pictures in and wrote why the picture was special to them. Other participants went out into the community with PCAP staff to take pictures together.



“It was great to observe the groups connecting through face-to-face interactions through conversation and laughter over snacks and beverages, the “participants expressed gratitude and how they felt the belonged and enjoyed the fun.”

The staff supported participants to attend by arranging transportation, the event closed with a shared lunch.

East Prairie Metis Settlement

Recipe Book

The East Prairie Metis Settlement PCAP worker organized 3 participants to create a recipe book and photo albums. Participants really enjoyed their time together and shared they would like more activities like this in the future. “There was a lot of laughs and good positive talks.”

Catholic Social Services First Steps Edmonton

Heal the Root, so the Tree is Stable

The First Steps Team out of Catholic Social Services gathered with participants to create an art project called “Heal the Root, so the Tree is Stable.” PCAP participants, their children and program staff came together to “First Steps Success Day” to create a large-scale art project as a group, while channeling the message of “growing together with PCAP” and reflecting on the past and future. Participants were given 2 wooden circles to depict their past on one and their future on the other. The result is a beautiful canvas filled with small paintings of individual past experiences and hopes for the future.

“After the isolation of the pandemic, it was really lovely to see our participants and staff come together, share space, have lunch and engage in a creative project. At one point, as we were nearing the end of the event, a participant was asked if she wanted to share her paintings with the group. Without guidance or instruction, she stood up, showed each of her painted cookies and began to explain the significance of the colors and images she had used and how they related to her past and future. When she was done, everyone clapped and cheered. It felt like such a safe, supportive environment that each participant also took a turn sharing their paintings as well!”



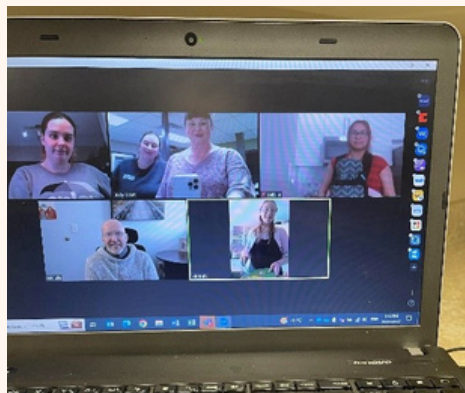
Driftpile Cree Nation

Calming the Storm Training

The staff person at Driftpile Cree Nation PCAP program organized 14 attendees to take the My Anxiety Plan anxiety management training. The "majority of the PCAP participants have undiagnosed anxiety to the level of not wanting to be around anyone else or even in crowds. This impacts doing group activities and limits the Clients day to day lifestyle." The staff person distributed kits to participants and a pre-training survey and is supporting the participants to complete their certification.

Family Services of Central Alberta

Virtual Cooking Class



PCAP staff in Red Deer worked alongside their participants to learn the basic skills of cooking nutritional and budget-friendly meals from home.

Using the Basic Shelf Cookbook from the Canadian Public Health Association, the team held a virtual cooking class for 4 participants. They were joined by a guest speaker on nutrition to provide more information on creating balanced meals.

This project was able to provide the participants with some basic kitchen tools, ingredients, and a class to increase their capacity to continue creating meals beyond the class. The virtual class allowed participants to join from their own home and practice cooking and making adaptations using the resources they already have.

Attendees felt "so successful in completing it, promoting enhanced self-esteem and sense of community.

Grand Prairie Family Education Society

Fun and Food Security

The Grand Prairie Family Education Society partnered with the Women's Shelter for a "Fun and Food Security" workshop. This workshop got participants together, created a grocery list, purchased the items and created 5 freezer meals within a budget.

This was a great skill to learn and was tailored in a way that participants can replicate the exercise beyond this event.



Participants "practiced their emotional regulation skills as they were in a new and busy place with people they did not know; many were overwhelmed at the beginning of the day but managed to regulate throughout the day and, at the end of the day, asked when they get to do this again!"

This activity also strengthened the connection between PCAP and the Women's Shelter.

Hinton HELP

PCAP Paint Night



The PCAP group in Hinton out of the Employment and Learning Place hosted a PCAP Paint Night where each participant painted a portion, putting them all together to create a final art work.

During painting, participants and staff had time to chat, connect, and feel more comfortable in group settings. The team provided transportation, childcare and had music on where each participant had a chance to “DJ” to make the session collaborative and fun. This event “opened the door for our PCAP participants to be more engaged with coming to group settings” in the future. The final painting is on display at the Hinton office along with PCAP brochures.

McMan Calgary

Cooking Class

The staff in Calgary were able to partner with another program through McMan to use an industrial kitchen and access to a Red Seal Chef to host a cooking class that would teach participants how to cook a meal that can use some common food bank items and other affordable groceries. Participants shared a meal after cooking, having time to connect over food.

Staff share they “will use the success from this group to show the community about the importance of building connections, and to highlight the work the PCAP in Calgary is doing to promote healthy living and this continued exposure to group events helps us foster increased attendance going forward.”

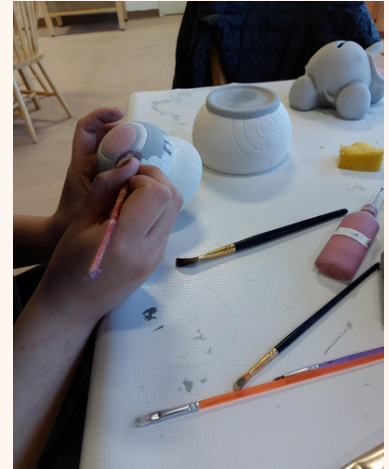


McMan Pincher Creek

Creative Art Project

The staff person and 6 PCAP Participants went to Color Me Mine for a Group Party. Color Me Mine is a paint-it-yourself pottery studio, where the participants can choose their own project and paint it to their liking. The project is then cured, and participants can bring it into their home as a happy memory spent with other women in the program.

McMan provided the transportation, and snacks and juice during the party and supported the natural conversations and connections between the participants.



“Since the time they went painting all of the participants have fondly spoke of their experience and the memories they gained by doing the activity. This opportunity gave them an opportunity to connect with each other without any external pressures.”

NWR FASD Society Makenzie Network

PCAP Lunch and Learn



Staff held a PCAP information session over a lunch for participants, the mentors, and the community to learn more about the PCAP program and make connections.

The agency provided a grocery gift card raffle prize that was very appreciated by the lucky winner.

The Network’s Executive Director, Wanda Beland, gave a presentation on PCAP and then attendees had time to get to know each other over lunch.

Thank you!

To the 11 participating agencies, and 120 attendees that made the PCAP Small Project:
Fostering Community in 2023 a success!