

SUMMER NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2026

Read the Alberta PCAP Council's Annual Report

Alberta PCAP Council is proud to present the annual report for 2025-26. This report details Council events, PCAP success and much more!



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Do You Have Any Resources You'd Like to Share?

The Alberta PCAP Council ensures that staff have the necessary support and tools they need for their work. If you know of resources, tools or programs you'd like to share, fill out this form:



[Resource Sharing Form](#)

PCAP DAYS 2026



NOVEMBER 5, 2026

8:30AM-4PM

REGISTER HERE!



**HILTON GARDEN INN WEST
EDMONTON**

The Alberta PCAP Council is excited to announce **PCAP Days 2026!** This 1-day event will give programs an opportunity to network and learn from programs across the province. Join us for engaging discussions, knowledge sharing, and community-building as we celebrate the amazing work you have all done!



Lakeland FASD Conference 2026

To help staff save on travel, PCAP Days will happen right after the Lakeland Centre for FASD's two-day conference. *Stronger than Stigma: Reframing FASD* will be at the Double Tree by Hilton from **November 3-4, 2026** in Edmonton. Registrations are now open: site.pheedloop.com/event/EVEFTPAZPJPOQ/home



ALBERTA PCAP COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

Recent Updates

On June 18, we held a virtual Annual General Meeting via Zoom, which brought together 17 attendees from 13 members, which included Board members, Supervisors and Mentors. During the meeting, we presented the Annual Report and Penelope Outcomes Report, reviewed financials, and elected directors. Following the meeting, Jennifer Wiles with the Prevention Conversation presented on the Towards Healthy Outcomes 2.0 Framework and how it can be applied to our work.

The Board of Directors met on June 16 & August 28 to approve audited year end financials, receive reports from operations, financials, and committees, review governance matters, and set priorities including more engagement with FASD Networks. The Board has also welcomed 4 new Board members: Wanda Beland, Tanya Dehmel-Neving, Christie Newton and Hayden Brandle!

The Data Oversight Committee met on July 9 to review the recommended changes to the Governance Agreement. The Committee also reviewed an analysis of Penelope Cohort data, which provided a snapshot of differences in participants' journeys based on the year they enrolled. The Committee will continue its work to further explore the impact of the PCAP on participants across other areas of their lives.

Events Calendar

PCAP CORE TRAINING- NEW!

 October 5-6 & January 19

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE- MENTORS

 September 29/October 27/November 24

PCAP DAYS 2026

 November 5

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE- SUPERVISORS

 November 17



In Memoriam- Pamela Van Vugt

It is with great sadness that we share the passing of our dear friend and colleague Pam Van Vugt. Pam played a significant role in the development of Alberta PCAP. She was one of the earliest committee members of Alberta PCAP Council and one of the first Alberta PCAP Trainers. Pam's contributions, kindness, and commitment to others will always be remembered. Her dedication and passion for PCAP was a true inspiration. We extend our deepest condolences to Pam's family, friends, and loved ones during this difficult time.





UPCOMING IN SEPTEMBER

FASD Awareness Month

September 9th is **International FASD Day!** The theme for 2026 is “Everyone Plays a Part: It Takes a Community.” In 2020, the Government of Canada officially recognized September as FASD Awareness Month as one day of recognition is not enough. Throughout the month of September, events are held all across Canada to raise awareness to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and to improve prevention efforts of FASD.



Red Shoes Rock is a global awareness campaign giving voice and support to those affected by prenatal alcohol exposure.

FASD Across the Lifespan: Understanding, Support and Strength Conference 2026

Central Alberta FASD will be hosting their conference in Red Deer on **September 24th, 2026!** Enjoy a full day of real stories, connection and presentations from speakers Myles Himmelreich, Shannon Butt and Dr. Monty Nelson. For more information and to reserve your spot, visit: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/fasd-across-the-lifespan-understanding-support-and-strength-tickets-1987203422932>



Truth and Reconciliation Day

September 30th marks **National Day for Truth and Reconciliation**, a day to remember the children who were lost, those who never returned home, and the survivors of Indigenous Residential Schools. Established in 2021, this day acknowledges the intergenerational trauma inflicted on Indigenous communities and encourages reflection on the ongoing path to healing and reconciliation.

Canadians are encouraged to wear **orange shirts** as a symbol of the loss and resilience experienced by survivors. The tradition stems from the story of Phyllis Webstad, whose orange shirt was taken away on her first day at a residential school. This simple gesture raises awareness about the profound impacts of residential schools and honors the strength of Indigenous communities.



National Centre for
Truth and Reconciliation
UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA



Truth and Reconciliation
Commission



Truth and Reconciliation
Week 2026

SPOTLIGHT STORY

Board Director: Tanya Dehmel-Neving

Let's Get to Know Tanya

Tanya Dehmel-Neving currently works as an Outreach Support Team Lead with Central Alberta FASD Network. She is also a board member for the Alberta PCAP Council. She loves the adventure of a good road trip and exploring the hidden gems tucked away in Alberta's smaller communities. She also enjoys discovering new places, taking in the scenery and making memories with her husband and their two dogs.

How long have you worked with PCAP?

I moved to Alberta in 2022 and began working as a PCAP Mentor/FASD Mentor that same year. In 2024, I transitioned into a role focused primarily on FASD Community Outreach, and since 2025, I have been working as an Outreach Support Team Lead, where I support PCAP Mentors in their work while continuing to champion the relationship-based approach of PCAP. Although my role has evolved over the years, I'm grateful to remain connected to the program and contribute to supporting individuals, families, and the mentors who walk alongside them.

What drew you to this type of work?

I've always been passionate about supporting people through life's challenges and helping them recognize their own strengths. I was drawn to PCAP because its relationship-based, non-judgmental approach reflects my belief that everyone deserves to be met with dignity, compassion, and respect. I also understand the importance of having a strong support system because I rely on my own supports in my life. That understanding has shaped how I show up for others and reminds me that meaningful change often happens through connection, trust, and feeling supported.

What do you enjoy most about being a part of PCAP?

It was a privilege to walk alongside participants as they worked toward their goals, celebrated their successes, and navigated difficult moments together. Even small steps represented significant progress, and it was incredibly meaningful to witness the resilience and strength of the people we supported. Those experiences continue to shape how I approach my work today.

**"THE RELATIONSHIPS WERE
THE MOST REWARDING PART
OF THE WORK."**

What has your role taught you?

This role has strengthened my empathy, patience, and ability to listen without judgment. Professionally, it's deepened my understanding of trauma-informed and relationship-based practice, while personally it's reminded me that trust is built over time and that meaningful change often happens through consistent, compassionate support rather than quick solutions.



SPOTLIGHT STORY

Board Director: Tanya Dehmel-Neving

Can you explain some challenges you have encountered?

The work was emotionally challenging because many of the people I supported were navigating the impacts of trauma, systemic barriers, and complex life circumstances that are not resolved quickly. I learned that meaningful support often meant walking alongside people through challenges connected to larger systems and circumstances beyond their immediate control. There were also times when navigating systems felt difficult and frustrating, but those experiences reinforced for me the importance of advocacy, persistence, and creating spaces where people felt heard and supported.

What Keeps You Motivated?

What keeps me motivated is seeing the impact that genuine relationships can have on someone's life. I've had the privilege of witnessing participants overcome incredible challenges, celebrate milestones big and small, and discover strengths they didn't always see in themselves. Those moments stay with me. I'm also inspired by the passion and dedication of the PCAP community. Whether I'm supporting mentors in my current role or collaborating with colleagues across Alberta, it's motivating to be surrounded by people who truly believe in meeting individuals with compassion, respect, and hope.

"BALANCING BEING PRESENT FOR OTHERS WHILE MAINTAINING HEALTHY BOUNDARIES AND PRACTICING SELF-CARE IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF THIS WORK."

Any Advice for New or Future Mentors?

Go into the role with an open mind, curiosity, and a willingness to learn from the people you support. You don't have to have all the answers. Building trust, listening without judgment, and showing up consistently are some of the most valuable things you can offer. Lean on your team, ask questions, and celebrate the small wins—they matter more than you might realize.

Being part of PCAP has been one of the most meaningful experiences of my career. It has challenged me, helped me grow, and continually reminded me of the power of compassion, trust, and connection. I'm grateful for the opportunity to have supported participants directly as a mentor and now to support the incredible mentors doing this work every day. More recently, serving as a Board Member with the Alberta PCAP Council has given me an even greater appreciation for the collaboration, advocacy, and shared commitment that strengthens PCAP across the province. It's an honour to contribute to a community that believes in meeting people where they are and walking alongside them as they work toward their goals.

Share your Spotlight Story

We love hearing about PCAP programs across the province! The work you do matters and deserves to be celebrated. Whether big or small, we would love to share your stories in hopes that another program may benefit or learn.



SHARE YOUR STORIES

PENELOPE'S CORNER

Measuring PCAP Success

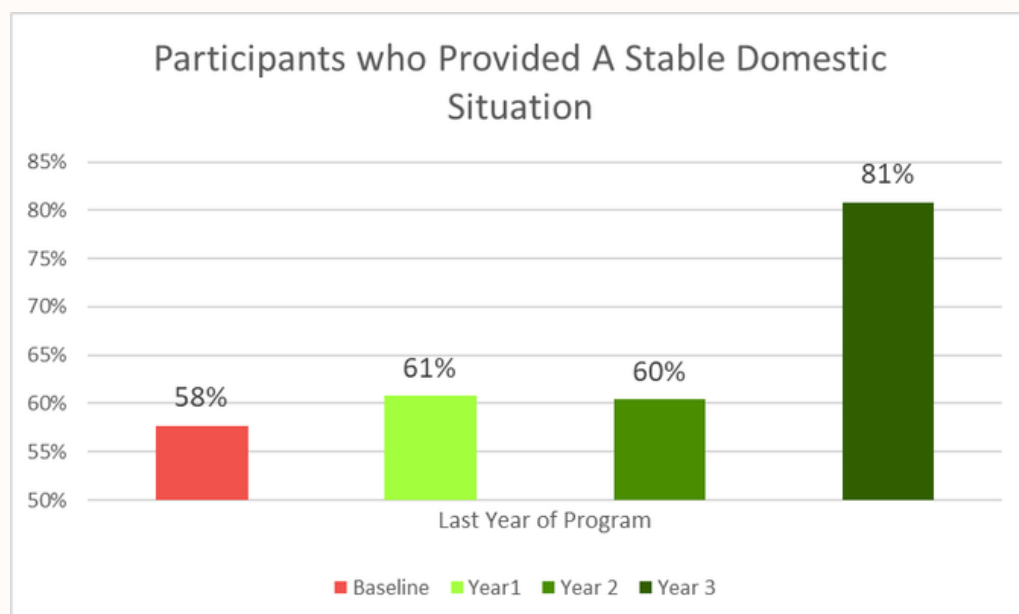
In this analysis, we compared how participants measured on a number of variables at intake and exit from PCAP. We identified when participants exit the program and compared outcomes at different exit points from PCAP. Through this comparison, we can see what changes happen during the PCAP services and the **effects of longer service provision**. The results show the positive effects for participants in PCAP for even a year. Longer PCAP participation demonstrated even greater benefits.

A note on methodology: Each journey through PCAP is unique as participants come with different backgrounds and create their own self-determined goals for wellness. In order to demonstrate positive outcomes from the program while accounting for these differences, we created rough constructs by grouping variables from the Biannual Document. The constructs for this analysis, “Stable Domestic Situation”, “Positive Relations with Others”, and “Personal Development”, were created for the purpose of demonstration and experimentation and have not been tested for their validity. Nevertheless, the development of constructs can be expanded upon for showing aggregated PCAP successes. We welcome your feedback on what changes you’d make or what you’d like to see!

Contributing to a Stable Domestic Situation

This metric tries to determine if participants were able to contribute to the *stability of their home situation*, related to parenting and economic situation. This included participants who met at least one of the following conditions:

- **WERE LIVING IN PERMANENT HOUSING.**
- **WERE RECEIVING INCOME FROM EMPLOYMENT.**
- **DID NOT NEED CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES (CFS)**
- **HAD TAKEN A PARENTING CLASS.**



PENELOPE'S CORNER

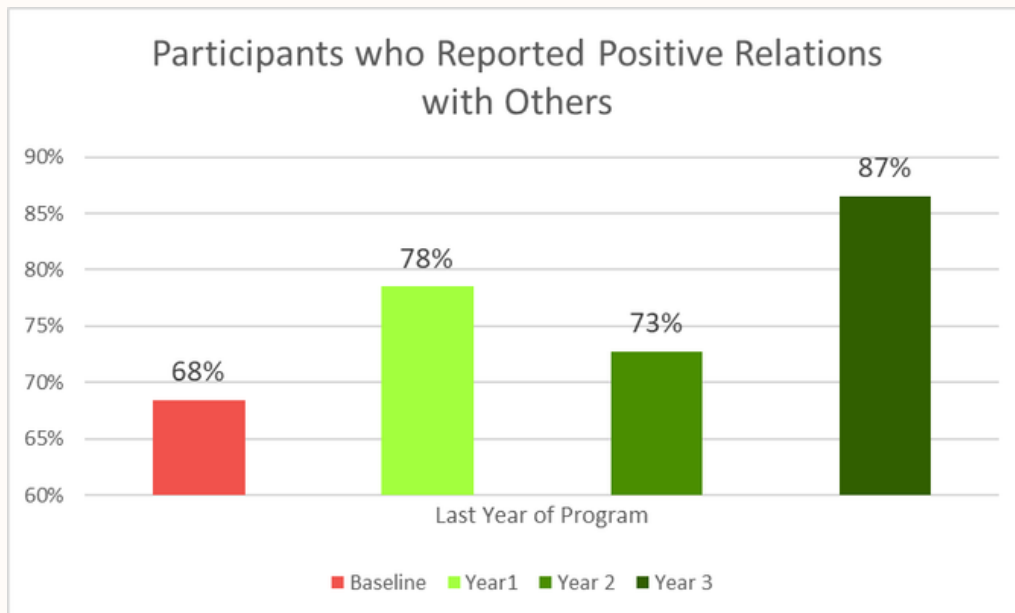
Measuring PCAP Success

At program entry (baseline), 58% of all participants reported at least one of these factors. By year three, 81% of participants reported at having at least one of these factors. Outcomes were substantively higher if they stayed the full duration of the program.

Improving Positive Relations with Others

This metric provides insights into participants' personal lives and their *ability to maintain stable relations with their family and others*. This included participants who met at least one of the following conditions:

- **HAD AT LEAST ONE SUPPORTIVE SOCIAL CONNECTION.**
- **WERE NOT IMPACTED BY VIOLENCE.**
- **WERE LIVING WITH THE TARGET CHILD.**



Participants clearly showed an increase in positive relations with others. At intake (baseline) 68% of participants had at least one factor. For participants who stayed in the program for 3 years, **87% reported positive relations – a 19% increase**. Even after only one year within the program there was a 10% increase with 78% of participants reporting positive relations. This demonstrates PCAP's ability to help participants build relationships with others and connect with their communities.

PENELOPE'S CORNER

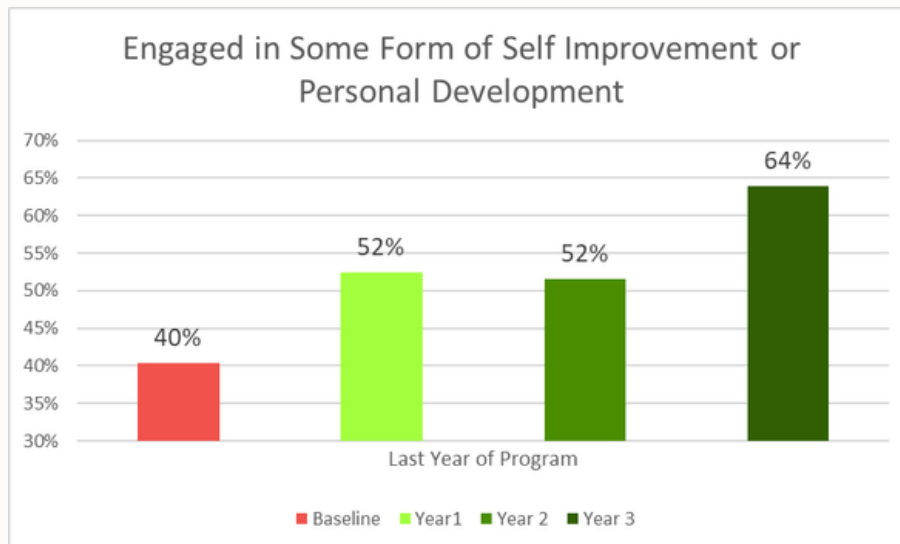
Measuring PCAP Success

Engaging in Self Improvement or Personal Development

This metric tracks participation in some kind of program for *self-improvement or personal development*. This included participants who met at least one of the following conditions:

- **TOOK ANY CLASSES.**
- **WERE IN A COUNSELLING PROGRAM.**
- **ATTENDED A SUPPORT GROUP.**
- **WERE IN A TREATMENT PROGRAM.**
- **PARTICIPATED IN SOME FORM OF POSITIVE RECREATION.**

Results show that, even by year one, **more than half of participants were involved in some program or service that contributed to their personal growth.** While these programs have their own intrinsic value they also have collateral benefits by building community connections. At program entry (baseline) only 40% of participants reported one of these factors. By year three, 64% were engaging in some form of self improvement or personal development.



Conclusion

It is important to measure across a variety of domains to assess PCAP's true impact. While measuring abstinence from substances is an important component of our programming and reporting, it is just as important to investigate stability in other areas of participants' lives. This analysis clearly shows that PCAP staff support participants in improved wellness in many areas. **Furthermore, the ability to stay longer in the program improves the chances of positive outcomes.**



Article written by guest contributor:

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Data Analyst

Alberta PCAP Council

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Frequent links for staff:

- [Update on a staff change](#)
- [Add a new Participant to Penelope](#)
- [Submit support or other requests](#)
- [PCAP Forms and Documents](#)
- [Take the Penelope 101 webinar](#)



ALANA PETERS

When the Water Comes All At Once

It has been a strange season for us in Alberta. For years we were in drought, hoping for rain. This year the rain arrived; way more than the ground could hold. The same water we needed became the water we were bracing against. It is a fitting picture of how uncertainty tends to arrive. Not as a steady, absorbable stream, but faster than we can take in, and rarely on our schedule.

There is one thing that stays ours, even when very little else does. We get to *choose* where we place our attention, and what we do next. Not the weather, not the news, not the crises that land on a Tuesday with no warning. This does not mean choosing quickly, or choosing past what hurts. It means that even in the most challenging times, something still belongs to us.



You know this better than most. The families you walk beside are deeply familiar with a life filled with the unexpected. *When things feel out of control, attention narrows.* We focus on what is wrong, on who should have done what, on the fire in front of us. That narrowing is human and protective. It is also exhausting, and shrinks our sense of what is possible.

This is where I keep returning to a framework created by David Emerald, called TED* (*The Empowerment Dynamic™). I will not lay it out in full here. In short, it offers a way to move out of the reactive, problem-focused stance we tend to fall into under stress, and toward a more creative one, where we ask what we actually want and take one small step toward it. That shift begins with where we place our attention.

There is an important caution here, and your work makes it obvious. **Shifting our focus is not the same as skipping the feeling**, and it is not something we can usually do quickly. This is where Susan David's book, *Emotional Agility* matters. We are not trying to push our emotions down, and we are not trying to stay stuck circling in them. We acknowledge what we feel and we let it move through us. Only then do we turn toward what we want to create.

That middle part deserves real respect. The flooded basement. The lost job. The financial strain that keeps you up at night. The honest grief of something that is not coming back. These are not problems to be reframed away. They are losses, and they ask to be felt. Sometimes moving through them takes an afternoon. Often it takes much longer. Reaching for a fix before we have felt the weight of the loss is often a way of avoiding the feeling. *That avoidance rarely lasts.*

**THIS KIND OF SHIFT IS NOT A FAST PIVOT, AND IT DOES NOT ASK YOU TO
PRETEND THINGS ARE FINE. PAIN IS REAL. CHOICE IS ALSO REAL.
BOTH ARE TRUE AT THE SAME TIME**



ALANA PETERS

When the Water Comes All At Once

The invitation is this: once we have given a hard thing the time it needs, we still get to decide where we go from here. Some days that decision comes quickly. Often it takes a while, and there is nothing wrong with taking the time you need.

There is a piece of this that points inward too. The same steadiness and compassion we try to offer others, we can turn toward ourselves. In work that asks so much of you, your own capacity is not endless, and it refills when you let it, slowly, a bit at a time. Rest is not a reward you earn once the crisis passes. It is a choice made on purpose, so there is something to draw from.

Here is a small and unhurried invitation....when you have given a hard moment the time it needs, you might try these two questions:

WHAT DO I WANT TO CREATE HERE? WHAT IS ONE STEP TOWARD IT?

Some days that step is obvious. Other days the honest answer is rest, and that's good too. Ask any athlete...performance and rest work together.

If this way of working speaks to you, there is a chance to go deeper this fall. As a Certified Dare to Lead™ Facilitator, I am offering a **three-day Dare to Lead™ workshop in Red Deer on October 23, 24, and 26**, the courage-building program developed by Dr. Brené Brown and her team. Together we spend time with the four skill sets of courageous leadership: rumbling with vulnerability, living into our values, braving trust, and learning to rise. We also work with the basic framework of The Empowerment Dynamic™, so you leave with practical language for the very shifts described here.

The group is kept small by design. You can find the details and [register on Eventbrite](#). If you would simply like to know whether it is a fit for you, you are welcome to reach me at discover@alanapeters.com.

With respect for the work you do,

Alana



Article written by guest contributor:

Alana Peters

Leadership &

Executive Coach

Dare to Lead Facilitator

www.alanapeters.com

RESOURCES

This grant supports local ideas and initiatives across the province and the Northwest Territories to turn projects into reality. This also provides an opportunity for creative ideas and voices to access support they need to provide for their workspace or life.

Applications close on October 9, with public voting opening October 13. To submit your application, visit www.fieldlaw.com/community-fund-program/about



Looking for addiction treatment, detox, or recovery services? The Addiction Bed Exploration Dashboard helps individuals, families, and service providers find available addiction beds across Alberta. Search by service type, age group, gender, and region to find programs that may meet your needs. Availability is updated Monday to Friday.

Visit: <https://findaddictionbeds.alberta.ca/> for more information



The Orange Shirt Society provides resources and learning opportunities to support understanding of residential schools, honour Survivors, and promote truth and reconciliation. Their website includes educational guides, activities, videos, Survivor stories, and information about Orange Shirt Day and the Every Child Matters movement.

Visit: <https://orangeshirtday.org/> to learn more!



Hosting events in your community is a great way to connect with others to raise awareness about FASD. Previously, communities have planned awareness walks, hosted community barbecues, painted rocks red, and posted lawn signs or billboards. If you are planning an event, be sure to follow all the rules and regulations of your local municipality.

Check out the exciting events already lined up for FASD Awareness Month 2026!

<https://canfasd.ca/fasd-awareness-month/fasd-month-events-in-canada/>

FIELD LAW

Community Fund
Program



CanFASD
CANADA FASD RESEARCH NETWORK

YOUR CURRENT PCAP COUNCIL DIRECTORS

Executive Officers

Chair Sandra Rorbak, Human Resources Leader in the Public Sector, Calgary

Vice-Chair Velvet Buhler, Program Manager, Healthy Families Healthy Futures, Westlock

Treasurer & Secretary Maggie Heavy-Head, Program Supervisor, Blood Tribe Department of Health

Directors

Beth van den Elst First Steps Supervisor, Catholic Social Services, Edmonton

Candice Sutterfield Mothers-to-Be Mentor Supervisor, Lakeland Centre for FASD

Wanda Beland Executive Director, Northwest Regional FASD Society- Mackenzie Network, High Level

Tanya Dehmel-Neving Outreach Support Team Lead, Central Alberta FASD Network, Red Deer

Christie Newton PCAP Team Lead, Catholic Social Services, Wetaskiwin

Hayden Brandle FASD/PCAP Mentor, Hinton Employment & Learning Place, Hinton

Banker

Brandy Berry Executive Director, Healthy Families Healthy Futures, Westlock

Staff

Kristin Bonot Executive Director

Kathleen Hounsell Administrative Assistant

Robert Jagodzinski Data Analyst

Are you interested?

The Alberta PCAP Council is currently inviting new applicants to join its Board of Directors. Visit the link below to find out more!

[Join the Board of Directors](#)

Let's Connect!



main@alberta-pcap.ca



780-701-5113



alberta-pcap.ca



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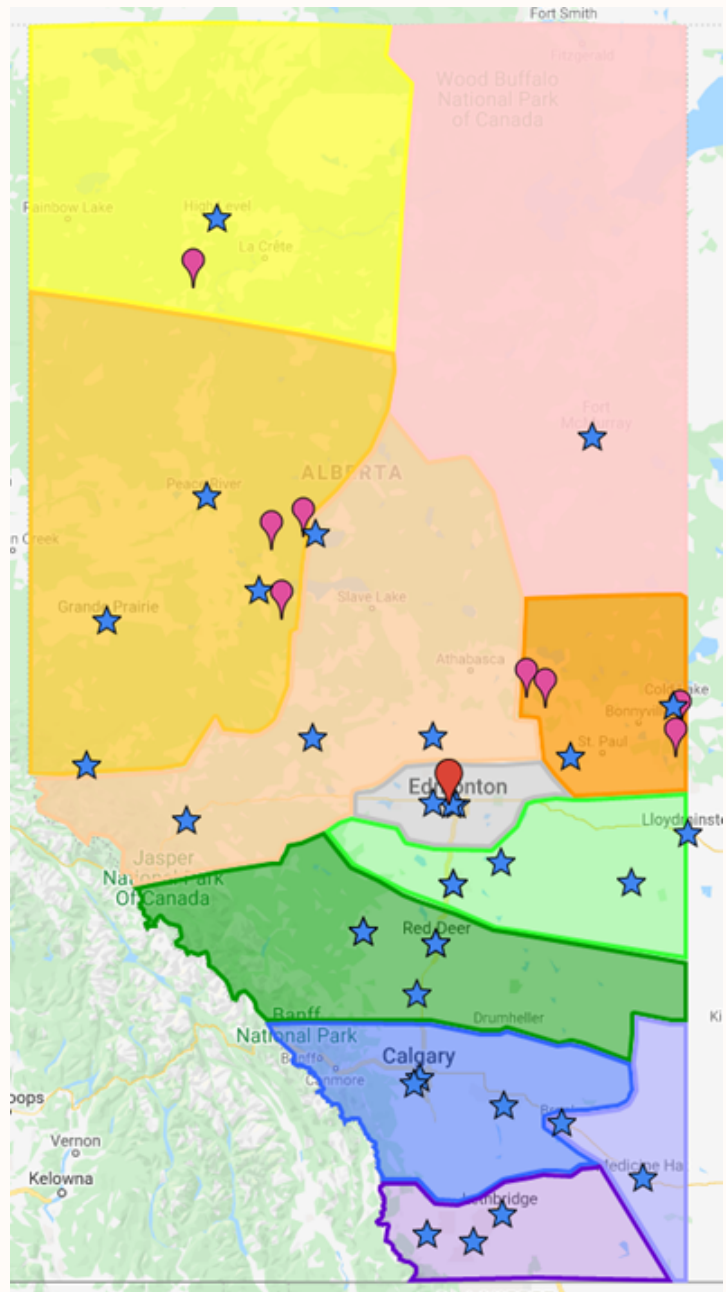
[@albertapcap](https://twitter.com/albertapcap)



[@albertapcap](https://www.instagram.com/albertapcap)

ALBERTA PCAP NETWORKS & PROGRAM MAP

- Mackenzie Regional FASD Network**
 - Northwest Regional FASD Society
- Northeast Alberta FASD Network**
 - McMan Fort McMurray
- Northwest Peace FASD Service Network**
 - Aseniwuche Winewak Nation
 - Drift Pile First Nation
 - East Prairie Métis Settlement
 - Gift Lake Métis Settlement
 - Grand Prairie Family Educational Society
 - Peavine Métis Settlement
 - Whitefish Lake First Nation
 - Taproot Community Support Services
- Willow Winds Support Network**
 - Healthy Families Healthy Futures
 - Hinton Adult Learning Society
 - Taproot Community Support Services
- Lakeland FASD Society**
 - Lakeland Centre for FASD
- Edmonton Fetal Alcohol Network**
 - Catholic Social Services Edmonton
- Prairie Central FASD Network**
 - Camrose Association for Community Living
 - Catholic Social Services Wetaskiwin
 - Ermineskin Brighter Futures*
 - Midwest Family Connections
 - Samson Healthy Families*
- Central Alberta FASD Network**
 - Central Alberta FASD Network
 - Family Services of Central Alberta
 - O'Chiese Health Centre*
- Calgary Fetal Alcohol Network**
 - Calgary Fetal Alcohol Network
- South East Alberta FASD Network**
 - Bridges Family Program
 - The SPEC Association for Children and Families
- South Alberta FASD Network**
 - Blood Tribe Department of Health*
 - McMan SCIF
 - Recovery Alberta



* : Indicates First Nation Health Departments with PCAP model programs geographically located in the listed FASD Network

Locations >