



Florida Atlantic University  
Phyllis & Harvey Sandler School of Social Work

Women in the waves: Learning from mothers in recovery through  
photovoice  
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## Agenda

- Background
- What is Photovoice
- Images and Our Stories
- Discussion

In Our Voices

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- 2016 mortality rate of opioid overdoses increased 507% for women and 321% for men.
- Between 2010 and 2017, opioid-related diagnoses documented at delivery increased by 131%.
- Between 2012 and 2016, there was a 10% increase nationwide in the number of children entering out-of-home care and a 50% increase in six states.
- During fiscal year 2019, at least 34% of children entering out-of-home care had parental drug use associated with their removal
- Loss of custody is associated with less family support, increased social isolation, and fewer interpersonal resources.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to the National Survey of Substance Abuse Treatment services in the U.S., only 22% have specialized programs for pregnant and postpartum women (13,585).</li> <li>• Integrative treatment demonstrates longer recovery.</li> <li>• Including infants promotes healthy attachment and is a strong motivation for the mother.</li> <li>• Medication-Assisted Treatment is used less with punitive state policies.</li> </ul> |
| In Our Voices   |

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| <p><b>PHOTOVOICE COMMUNITY PROJECT</b></p> <p>Howard, H. &amp; Colvin, M. (2021). Women in the waves: Learning from mothers in recovery through photovoice. <i>Child Welfare Journal</i>, 99(1).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Participants identify community needs</li> <li>2.Promote critical dialogue</li> <li>3.Reach policy makers to enact social change</li> </ol> |
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| <p>Research Question I:<br/>How do you perceive motherhood?</p> <p><b>Through your images, convey things like:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your perceptions of motherhood.</li> <li>Your experiences with motherhood.</li> <li>What motherhood means to you.</li> </ul> |
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Research Question II:  
What are your experiences with agencies and systems?

**Through your images, convey things like:**

Your experiences with the agencies involved in your life.

How you've felt encountering and navigating agencies and systems.

How did you feel you were perceived by others.

*\*This can include experiences with DCF, courts, treatment services, and community support services related to health, financial, educational, recreational, and/or other needs*

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### MATERNAL CONNECTION

**"GODSPEED LITTLE MAN"**  
I used to draw my son. There is a song that I used to sing to him always and I wrote it out, it is called "Godspeed little man". I used to sing that to him during the chaos. And I would just sing and I could sing that song and he would just fall asleep anytime I sang it. And I remember my mom brought him to see me when I was in jail and it was the most traumatizing thing ever. I wish that he didn't see me there, but he did. And I was singing to him on the phone and he fell asleep right there in my mom's lap. And I would sing to him whenever I would talk to him over the phone and he would fall asleep.

That is my heart literally being ripped, completely ripped. The hands are mine. Going through that was the most painful thing I have ever been through in my life. And I've been through some painful things. I have a very high tolerance for pain. But going through that was the most painful thing I've ever been through.

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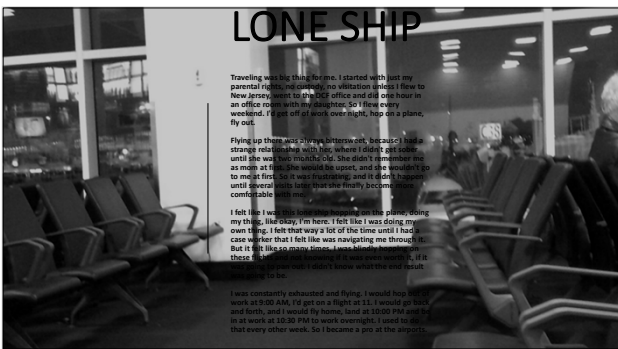
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# LONE SHIP

Traveling was the thing for me. I started with just my parental funds, no money, no situation when I flew to New Jersey, went to the D&D office and did one hour in an office with my daughter. So I flew every weekend. I'd get off of work over night, hop on a plane, fly out.

Flying up there was a little bit more work, because I had a strange relationship with her, where I didn't get close until she was 18. I think, like, she didn't want to be as close as much as I felt that she would be upset, and she wouldn't go to meet that. So I was frustrating, and I didn't know I until several months later that she finally became more comfortable with me.

I felt like I was doing the most in the plane, doing my thing, like okay, I'm here, I feel like I was doing my own thing. I felt that way a lot of the time until I had a case where that felt like she was rejecting me through it. But it felt like so many times, I was always thinking, if it's there, it's there. I didn't know what the end result was.

I was constantly exhausted and flying. I would be working at 9:00 AM, I'd get on a flight at 11, I would get back and forth, and I would fly home, land at 10:00 PM and be at work at 10:30 PM to work overnight. I used to be that every other week. So I became a pro at the device.

[illegible]

# ETERNAL DEVOTION

It was Ayla's and then it was Bryllee's. This is a depiction of the difference today, because instead of them wearing the shoe and being with me, it's just kind of hanging from my mirror. It's hard. But it is what it is, and at the end of the day they were all taken care of. But I'd rather have it this way, than with them in the back seat with my shooting dope like I was, because they don't deserve that.

My friend said, "It's fading from the sun. Why don't you take it down." And I said, "It's not coming down."




My friend said, "It's fading from the sun. Why don't you take it down." And I said, "It's not coming down."

[illegible]

# MISSING

That's me decorating the tree by myself in my halfway house, because I mean whenever you live in a woman's halfway house not many of them ... or at least in my house, they don't care. They're all sad during the holidays. But I'm excited because my life is happy. I get to see my daughter. We're going ... I get to take her to Georgia with me to visit my side of the family, because only his side of the family lives here. But she's not there helping me decorate the tree. Last year, she was only three months old. She couldn't. There's no help then. But now she's kind of old enough that I could have enjoyed that with her, and I couldn't. So this is the sad part of my life.

A close-up photograph of a Christmas tree. The tree is covered in dark green needles and is decorated with numerous small, warm-white lights. A large, shiny silver ball ornament is prominent in the upper right, and a smaller gold bell ornament is visible below it. A hand is seen in the lower left, holding a thin, light-colored branch or string, possibly part of the decoration process. The background is dark and out of focus, emphasizing the tree's details.[illegible]

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| <b>References</b>  |
| <p>Catalina, Caricia &amp; Minkler, Meredith (2010). Photovoice: A review of the literature in health and public health. <i>Health Education &amp; Behavior</i>, 37(3), 424-451.</p> <p>Howard &amp; Gastoferro (2019). Mothers with opioid use disorder: Moving toward justice, wellness, and empowerment. <i>Journal of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers</i>, 32 (1) 29-51.</p> <p>Radel, L., Baldwin, M., Crome, G., Ghertzen, R., &amp; Waters, A. (2018, March). <i>Substance use, the opioid epidemic, and the child welfare system: Key findings from a mixed-methods study</i>. Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <a href="https://aspe.hhs.gov/system/files/pdf/248836/SubstanceUseChildWelfareOverview.pdf">https://aspe.hhs.gov/system/files/pdf/248836/SubstanceUseChildWelfareOverview.pdf</a></p> <p>Sutton-Brown, C. (2014). Photovoice: A Methodological Guide. <i>Photography and Culture</i>, 7(2), 169-185.</p> <p>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. (2020). <i>The AFCARS report: Preliminary estimates for FY 2019</i>. <a href="https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/document/cy/cfarsreport27.pdf">https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/document/cy/cfarsreport27.pdf</a></p> <p>Wang and Barris (1997). Photovoice: Concept, methodology, and Use for Participatory Needs Assessment. <i>Health Education &amp; Behavior</i>, 24 (3), 369-387.</p> <p>Woodgate, Zarba, &amp; Tennent (2017). Worth a Thousand Words? Advantages, Challenges and Opportunities in Working with Photovoice as a Qualitative Research Method with Youth and Families. <i>Forum: Qualitative Social Research</i>, 18 (1).</p> |
| <b>In Our Voices</b>   |

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