

WOVEN FOR HOPE:

How One Blanket Witnessed

THE RISE OF DRUG FREE MOMS AND BABIES

I may look like a simple baby blanket, soft and quiet, but inside the Pregnant and Postpartum Women's Unit at the Drug Abuse Foundation, the place where mothers heal with their babies by their side, I have learned something powerful. The gentlest things can carry the strongest truth. When a mother is met with compassion instead of judgment, she rises, and her baby rises with her. That is the message stitched into every part of who I am.

I have been held by mothers who entered treatment with fear in their eyes and shame pressing on their hearts. Many wondered if they were worthy of a second chance. If you have ever wished someone would believe in you before you believed in yourself, you already understand them. These women range from ages 21 to 40. They are White, Black, Latina, and from many different backgrounds.

Their stories differ, but their hope is the same. They want to keep their babies safe while healing themselves. Many arrived after years of judgment and misunderstanding. But when they pick me up, something shifts. They hold me like they are remembering what it feels like to be treated gently.



Since 2017, I have wrapped around 92 babies, including eight sets of twins, and I have rested in the arms of 122 mothers who chose to fight for their futures. I was present for 45 births during treatment, moments filled with relief and possibility as mothers delivered substance free infants because they finally received accessible and compassionate care.

Some of these babies were at risk for Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome, a condition marked by tremors, irritability, and feeding difficulties no newborn should face. Their mothers carried the weight of that fear. But inside the PPW Unit, through our Resiliency-Based Recovery Support Model, an integrated framework of prenatal support, parenting education, drug free delivery planning, residential care, life skills, and aftercare, their fear was met with information, stability, and hope.

I have been there during late night feedings, moments of quiet understanding, parenting classes, and deep breaths that signaled healing. Every stitch of me has witnessed the slow rebuilding of dignity in women who once felt they had lost it forever.

This work matters. Pregnant and postpartum women facing addiction deal with higher health risks, faster progression into substance use disorder, increased postpartum relapse, and layers of stigma that often silence them. Many fear punishment more than the symptoms of withdrawal. DAF interrupts that cycle. With no financial barriers and unconditional access to care, mothers receive the support they need to reclaim their lives.

Community generosity makes this healing possible. Blankets like me, diapers, formula, wipes, transportation assistance, and emergency essentials come from people who believe every mother and baby deserve a soft place to land.

I may be just a blanket, but I have held new beginnings in my stitches. Healing is not loud. It is steady, gentle, and made possible by hands that refuse to give up. If you want to support this mission, help keep mothers and babies wrapped in care. Even the smallest gift can become an unexpected messenger of hope, just like me.