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**EXPERIENCE AS A MOTHER OF A "CRYING BABY" :  
A SINGLE COLLABORATIVE CASE STUDY**

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the Education Department  
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For my family,  
Clyde, Daniel, Jeremy and Jessica

## ABSTRACT

A single collaborative case study was conducted to document a woman's experience as a mother of a "crying baby". Social constructionism provided a guiding framework for answering the foreshadowed problem and question of "why does this mother define her infant as a crying baby?". This problem provided the initial focus for the study, which commenced when the infant was thirteen weeks old and concluded shortly after his first birthday. The problem developed into four major questions regarding the mother's definitions and expectations of motherhood, her desire for a close relationship with her infant, her definition of the infant's crying as "colic", and finally a question of how a developing relationship between a mother and a "crying baby" can be supported. The study draws the conclusion that the prevailing western construction of motherhood is a difficult role to fulfill. Women in western societies carry responsibility for the welfare of their children, essentially in isolation, and this leads to unrealistic demands on their ability to cope when difficulty is experienced. Alternatives to the present construction are proposed, along with suggestions for helping mothers in difficulty to re-evaluate their roles as mothers, and to come to a personally meaningful definition of their commitment to motherhood.

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