



Did You Know? September 2020

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Awareness Day: All September long we will be raising awareness for Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS). There is no cure, but FAS is completely preventable. FAS represents the most involved end of the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD). When we raise awareness regarding FASD and educate our community members, we collectively move closer to an end of prenatal alcohol exposure.

- **The National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome reports:**
 - No amount of alcohol use is known to be safe for a developing baby.
 - Exposure to alcohol in any form, poses a risk to developing babies at every stage of pregnancy.
 - A developing baby is exposed to the same amount of alcohol as the mother.
 - An estimated 40,000 infants are born each year with FASDs, which can result in birth defects.
 - Up to 1 in 20 U.S. school children may have an FASD.
 - FASD-related disorders lasts throughout a person’s lifetime.

- **The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shares:**
 - The average lifetime cost for one individual with FAS in 2002 was estimated to be \$2 million.
 - About 1 in 9 pregnant women reported drinking alcohol in the past 30 days.
 - About one third of pregnant women who reported consuming alcohol engaged in binge drinking.

- **Signs and symptoms of FAS and FASD include but are not limited to:**

Low body weight	Poor coordination	Hyperactive behavior	Difficulty with attention	Abnormal facial features
Poor memory	Learning disabilities	Speech/language delays	Poor reasoning/judgment skills	Small head size

What You Can Do:

- **Plan Ahead:** If you are or plan on becoming pregnant, do not consume alcohol. Talk to your partner regarding the risks of FAS, and create supportive boundaries to help maintain sobriety during (prior to if planning a pregnancy) a confirmed pregnancy.
- **Protection:** If you are engaging in recreational sexual activity, wear protection. Know that no form of protection works 100%, so watch for warning signs of pregnancy and test yourself when needed. If you or your partner suspects a possible pregnancy, abstain from all alcohol until pregnancy can be confirmed or disproven.
- **Be Honest:** If alcohol was consumed during pregnancy, notify your doctor. Letting your physician know that prenatal alcohol exposure occurred can allow for early diagnosis and intervention services for a child suffering from FAS and related disorders.



Information obtained from: www.cdc.gov; www.nofas.org