

# Youth, Alcohol and FASD

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The Northwest Alberta FASD Service Network is one of 12 Networks created in the province.

This Region encompasses Northern Communities

Grande Prairie, Peace River, High Prairie, Manning and Grande Cache AB.



# What is Alcohol Really?



Alcohol is a **depressant**, meaning it slows down how you react to your environment.



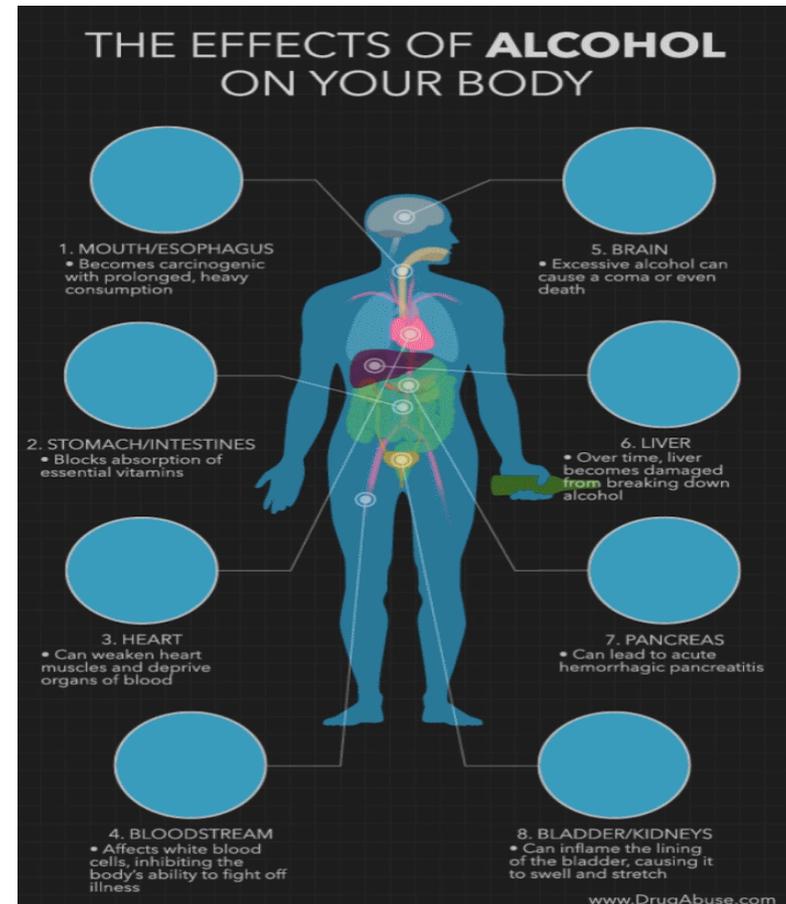
Teens experience stress and anxiety and may use mood altering substances such as alcohol in an attempt to feel better or to help them **fit in with friends**.



Alcohol **blocks some of the messages trying to get to your brain**. This changes how people feel and move, as well as their vision and hearing.

Alcohol and Adolescents. (2014). *Alberta Health Services*

Alcohol. (2017). *Kids Health Web site*



# How Does Alcohol Affect the Brain?

What part of the brain is affected when you drink alcohol?

When you are cold should you drink alcohol to warm up?

How long before one drink has gone through your body?

Does alcohol affect your emotions and inhibitions?



Alcohol and Your Brain – Get the Facts. YouTube, uploaded by Bob Sto Domingo 28 May 2013

# Drinking; When, Where, Why and How



# The Alberta Scene

- ❖ Currently Alberta has 2,156 private liquor retailers in Alberta ...prior to 1993 when liquor distribution was controlled by the government there was 208 liquor stores. (Alberta Gaming & Liquor Commission, March, 2017)
- ❖ Currently British Columbia has 914 private liquor retailers, and government run stores (British Columbia Liquor Control Board, Dec.2013)
- ❖ Currently Saskatchewan has 75 government run stores, 600 private liquor stores. (Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority, 2017)
- ❖ As of Mar,2017 there are 22,815 alcohol products available. In 1993 there were 2,200 alcohol products available. That is an annual average increase 39% over a 24 year period.

(Government of Alberta, 2017)

# Teenage Drinking Trends

- ❖ Age 11 is the average when boys have their first drink
- ❖ Age 13 is the average when girls have their first drink
- ❖ Courts are encountering more youth charged with drinking and driving, criminal activities under the influence, assaults (physical and sexual)
- ❖ Emergency rooms are seeing more alcohol poisoning, drug overdoses with alcohol involvement
- ❖ Very few youth consciously control the amount they drink, but drink to get drunk to have fun

# Alcohol in Canadian Schools

Percentage of students **who** report drinking beer & liquor at least once a week.

GRADE 6 **MALES**

**BEER: 1%**

**LIQUOR: 1%**



GRADE 8 **MALES**

**BEER: 4%**

**LIQUOR: 3%**

GRADE 10 **MALES**

**BEER: 16%**

**LIQUOR: 10%**



GRADE 6 **FEMALES**

**BEER: 1%**

**LIQUOR: 1%**

GRADE 8 **FEMALES**

**BEER: 2%**

**LIQUOR: 3%**

GRADE 10 **FEMALES**

**BEER: 6%**

**LIQUOR: 10%**

# Misuse, Abuse, Addiction Know the Difference

**Misuse** – any youth drinking under the age of 18, drinking is usually offered or introduced by others, unfortunately it is common to be initially introduced by family or friends.

**Abuse** – If a parent walks into a bedroom and finds a bottle(s) that they have not purchased. If the youth is getting someone to buy alcohol for them on a regular basis. Misuse drinkers don't bring alcohol home.

**Addiction or Potential Dependency** – When the relationship with alcohol becomes more important than any other relationships (family, friends, events). Also, if the youth thinks they cannot engage with others without the use of alcohol.

# 7 Trends Shaping the Alcohol Industry in 2016-17

- ❖ Annual increases, Hard Ciders (up 9.6%) Hard Sodas (up 6.7 %) Tequila (up 4.4%)
- ❖ Fireball Cinnamon Whiskey grew 65% in sales in 1 year.
- ❖ Approximately 40% of Irish whiskey consumers are female. Part of this owes to the spirit being sweeter and smoother than most other whiskeys.
- ❖ The number of breweries in America grew 19% 2015 to 3,464
- ❖ Millennials (ages 18 to 35) consumed 36% of all wine purchased, 3.1 glasses per occasion or 159.6 million cases produced annually.

# STRAIGHT TALK:

The Truth About  
Alcohol and Sex



"Straight Talk: The Truth about Alcohol and Sex." Human Relations Media, (2011).

# But Everyone Does it

## OR DO THEY?



In our culture, mixing alcohol and sex is made to look normal but it doesn't mean everyone actually does it.

About **50%—70%** of sexual assaults can be linked to alcohol use.

Most alcohol-related sexual assaults occur between people who know each other.

Alcohol is the number one 'date rape' drug.

Sexual Assault and Abuse. (2016). Government of Alberta

# Would You Like a Cup of Tea?

Video Explaining Consent





# HARM REDUCTION IF YOU CHOOSE TO HAVE SEX

- ✓ Make sure you and your partner are **ready**. ALWAYS ask!
- ✓ Don't be afraid to ask your partner about their **sexual health history**. It is your right to know!
- ✓ **Use protection**
  - ✓ Protection for both STIs (i.e. condoms) as well as a form of back up birth control just in case!
- ✓ If you're unsure if your method of birth control worked, consider an emergency contraception pill (Plan B.)
- ✓ Talk to an adult you trust.



# SEX

- is both **physical** and **emotional** in nature
- **carries some risk** - you can become pregnant, receive an STI, or have it affect your emotional well-being
- **is a milestone** - you only get one chance to lose your virginity
- **is not** to be taken lightly - males and females
- **is best** when it is a personal expression of caring between two people



# SEX IS NOT

- a way to make somebody love you or make a commitment to you
- a test of your love for your partner
- a measure of how grown up you are
- a good way to get back at your parents
- a way to assert your independence
- a way to measure up to your peers
- always fun or enjoyable—sometimes you will wonder if it was really worth it



# HOW WELL DOES BIRTH CONTROL WORK?

**Really, really well**

Works, hassle-free, for up to...

The Implant (Nexplanon)	IUD (Skyla)	IUD (Mirena)	IUD (ParaGard)	Sterilization, for men and women
3 years	3 years	5 years	12 years	Forever

*No hormones*

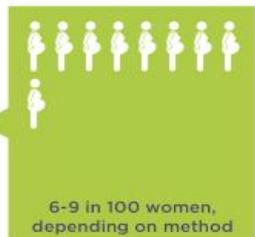
What is your chance of getting pregnant?



**O.K.**

For it to work best, use it...

The Pill	The Patch	The Ring	The Shot (Depo-Provera)
Every. Single. Day.	Every week	Every month	Every 3 months



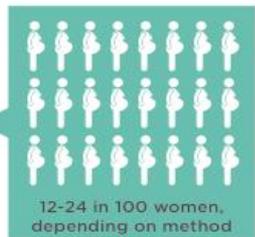
**Not as well**

For each of these methods to work, you or your partner have to use it every single time you have sex.

Pulling Out	Fertility Awareness	Diaphragm	Condoms, for men or women

*Needed for STD protection!*

*Use with any other method*



**FYI, without birth control, over 90 in 100 young women get pregnant in a year.**

# What about the guys OR FUTURE DADS?

**When a father drinks he influences the mother's drinking.** Women most often drink with their partners.

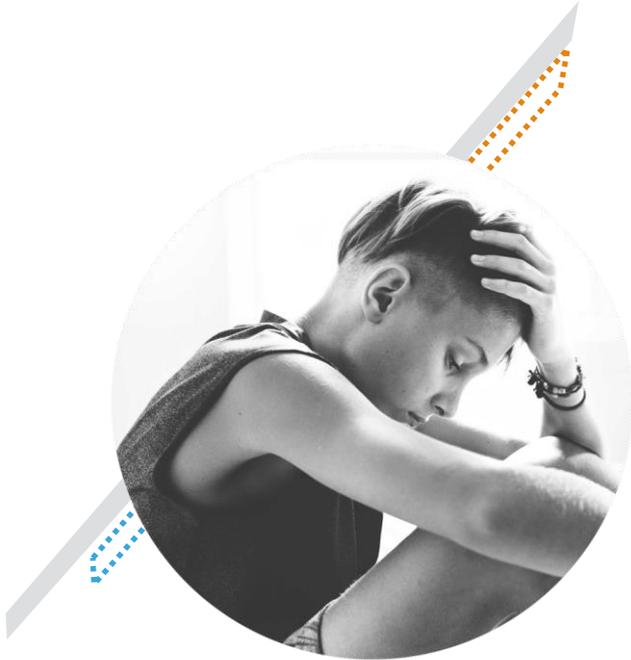
Men who drink heavily are unlikely to provide the necessary emotional support and care during pregnancy.

A man's drinking after the baby is born, could impact the child in a negative way.



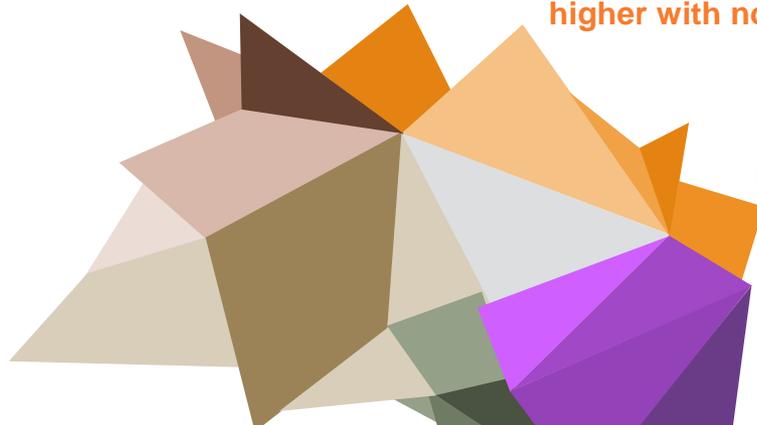


# HOW IMPORTANT IS THE ROLE OF THE FATHER?



- your support and the sharing of responsibilities is important to the health of mom and baby
- your support and listening skills can help to reduce stress
- ask what you can do to support

**The role of the father is a lifelong commitment and helps provide healthy, confident children that form positive friendships. Children are less likely to engage in high risk behaviours, teen pregnancies (13% higher with no father present) or grow up in poverty (47% higher with no father present).**



Knezovich, J., & Ramsay, M. (2012, February).  
McLanahan, S., Schneider D. & Tach L. (2013). The Causal Effects of Father Absence. *NCBI*.



# Healthy Pregnancies

Take care of your mental health



**Emotional changes are normal during pregnancy**

If mood changes are extreme or interfering with your normal activities, you may be suffering from depression.

**Being pregnant can be stressful**

Do you have support systems – friends, family, partner?

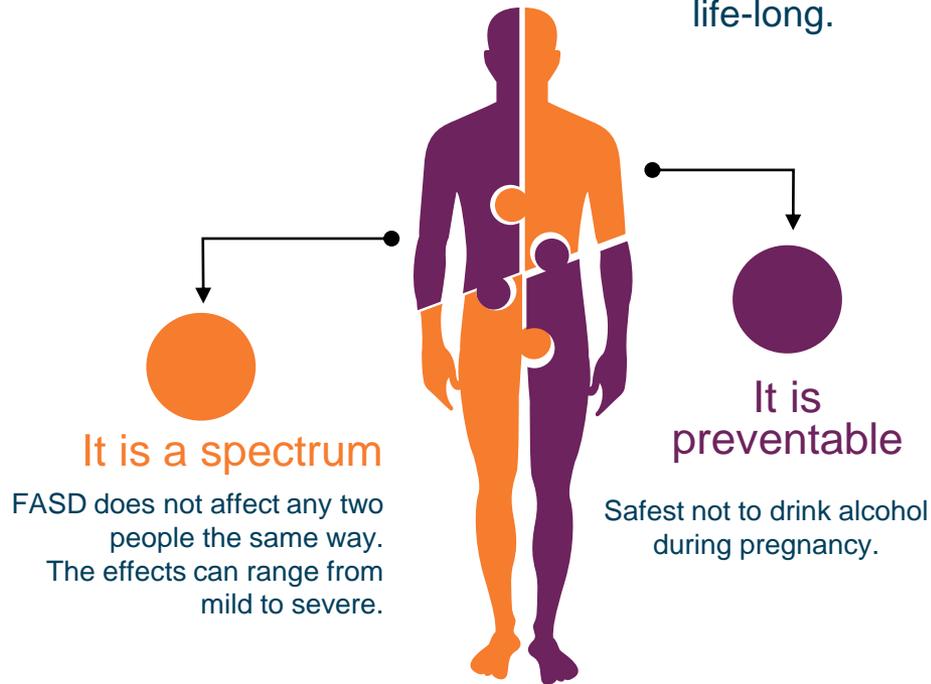
**See your doctor**

Consult a doctor if you have concerns about your emotional health during your pregnancy.

# FASD FACTS

## It is not curable

Drinking alcohol during pregnancy can cause the baby to be born with permanent brain damage; the effects are life-long.



# FASD Statistics in Alberta



- ❖ **FASD is the umbrella term** -a range of disabilities that may include: **physical birth defects , developmental delays, learning disabilities, memory problems,** as well as **difficulties in communicating feelings and understanding consequences.**
- ❖ Individuals with FASD **may require extensive support** and services related to health, mental health, social services, education and training, justice, addictions, and family supports **throughout their lives.**
- ❖ Historically men would drink 5 times more the amount of alcohol per occasion than women. Current stats indicate that the alcohol ratio men versus women consumption is 1.4 to 1.

**FASD numbers continue to rise**

# Alberta FASD Statistics

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## Statistics on FASD in Alberta

93%

Of individuals with FASD suffer with mental health problems.

162,687

Approximately how many Albertans currently have FASD.

\$400

Millions of dollars spent per year on long-term FASD costs.

78%

Of individuals with FASD have problems with employment.

800

Babies are born every year in Alberta with FASD.

\$5.3

Billions of dollars per year spent to support FASD for Canadians aged 0-53 years.

23%

Of our inmate population are individuals with FASD.

80%

Of women, of childbearing age who drink alcohol.

83%

Of individuals with FASD who cannot live independently.

# What can happen to the developing baby if it is EXPOSED TO ALCOHOL?

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When a woman drinks alcohol during pregnancy, it affects the normal growth and development of the baby.

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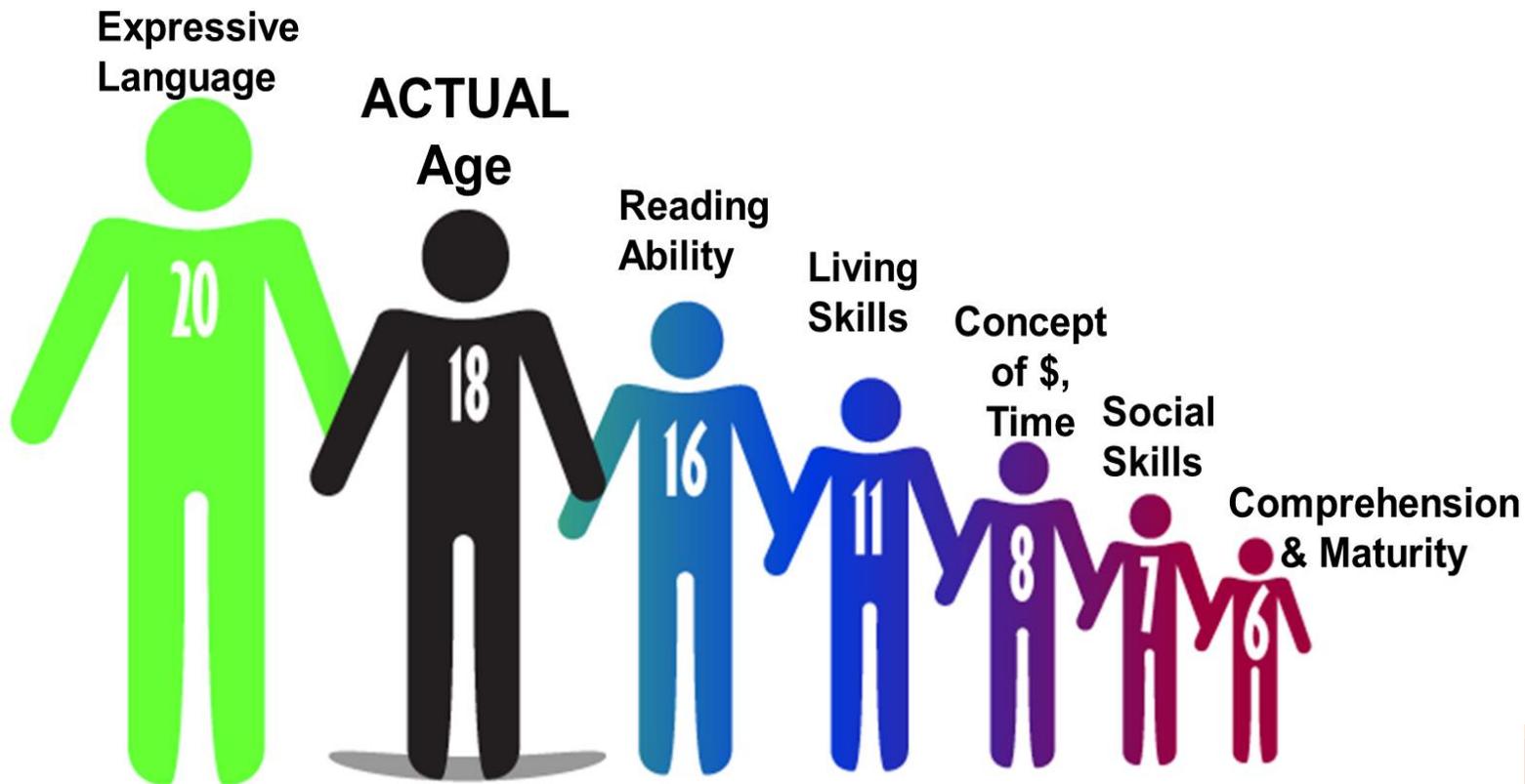
Alcohol is a **teratogen**, affecting the size of the brain, the forming of brain structures, and how the brain and body functions after the baby is born.



IYM Health

# Developmental vs chronological age

Example of a Developmental Timeline for 18-year-old with an FASD



# Primary Disabilities

*Typical brain-based, primary disabilities of FASD includes:*

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Inconsistent **MEMORY** and **RECALL**

- Decreased **MENTAL STAMINA**
- Difficulty interpreting, and applying **ABSTRACT CONCEPTS**
- **IMPULSIVITY** and poor **JUDGEMENT**
- **RESISTANT** to change
- Inability to **PREDICT OUTCOMES**
- Inability to see **ANOTHER PERSON'S** perspective
- Inability to recognize indirect **SOCIAL CLUE**

# Secondary Disabilities

*Secondary challenges are those not present at birth, but occur later in life as a result of the primary disabilities.*

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- Poor **ACADEMIC** achievement
- Disrupted **SCHOOL** and **EMPLOYMENT** experiences
- **ALCOHOL** and/or **DRUG** problems
- Trouble with the **LAW**
- **INCARCERATION** or **CONFINEMENT**
- **MENTAL HEALTH** problems.
- Involvement with various **GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, ORGANIZATIONS**

# Academic Achievement

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Ability to keep up with grade level reading, writing and math skills

- Often **visual learners** instead of verbal learners – so the teacher’s talking doesn’t register all the time
- Tries hard in class but **doesn’t always get** all of the information.
- **May follow behind** quickly and need extra support with developing study habits

Academic skills brain domain

# Social Skills

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Ability to communicate effectively, make and keep friends, respond to social cues and cope with change

- **Impulsive**, may blurt out things inappropriately,

**May Lack empathy**

- **Easily led and manipulated**, eager to please, which could lead to compulsive story telling

- **May seem immature** or plays with younger kids

Living and social Skills domain



# Communication

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Ability to speak and use grammar and proper sentence structure and put thoughts and feelings into words

- **Delays in speech**
- **Stories or thoughts** don't make sense or are repetitive.
- **Can't always follow** multi-step instructions.

Language – Brain domain





# Executive Functioning

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Ability to set realistic goals, get organized and the ability to see the consequences of your actions.

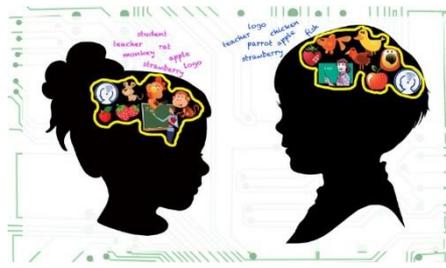
- **Doesn't** always **know right from wrong**.

For e.g. “ doesn't know the difference **between stolen, borrowed or found**” .

- Often needs **step-by-step instructions** for tasks most people find intuitive, like doing the dishes.

- Seems willfully **disobedient or spiteful**.

Executive functioning brain domain



# Memory

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Ability to remember and retrieve short and long term information

- **Can't remember simple things**, like how to do chores or where an item is
- Can't do more than **one thing at a time**
- **Slow to come up with answers**, so they may make them up

Memory Brain domain

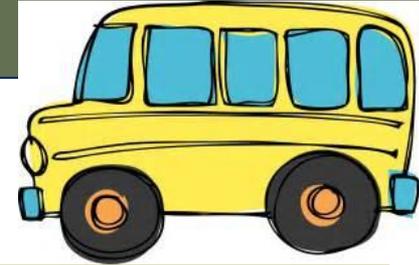
# Working with someone with FASD

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- Change the environment not the person
- Shake up your thinking – unique strategies
- Remember the individual's **developmental** age
- Be clear with expectations and be consistent (no “just this time” events)
- Just state the rule, do not explain the rules
- Be proactive not punitive (playgrounds lead to malls)
- Have consistent routines

**EMBRACE YOUR UNIQUENESS.**  
*Time is much too short to be living someone else's life.*  
~ Kobi Yamada





## Diagnostic Clinic

Our clinic is mobile, reaching out to  
High Prairie, Grande Prairie, Grande Cache & Peace River.

Over **40 children/ adults** are diagnosed each year

- **Multi- disciplinary team** – medical doctor, phycologist, speech and occupational therapists.
- **Case Teams** may include teachers, social workers, elders, key workers etc.

# Prevalent Medical Symptoms Seen in Diagnostic Clinic

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- Chronic Ear Infections
- Sleep Disorders
- Vision and Hearing Problem
- Anxiety, Depression, & ADHD
- Sensory problems
- Scoliosis

# Barriers to Women Getting Help

- Personal
  - Shame and guilt
  - More immediate life issues: caretaker
  - The expectation of abstinence for life
- Interpersonal
  - Fear of losing their children
  - Lack of low cost, reliable child care
  - Lack of family or partner support
  - Victims of violence &/or trauma
- Structural
  - Costs associated with treatment
  - Lack of flexible services
  - Fear of losing job/career  
(being seen as weak)



# How To Support A Healthy Pregnancy

## FOR EXPECTING MOTHERS

- Become educated on a healthy pregnancy
- Take a pregnant pause and take a break from alcohol
- Take care of yourself - it gives you more energy to be helpful



## FOR EVERYONE

- Know your support is important to the health of mom and baby
- Listening can help to reduce stress
- Sharing responsibilities
- Ask what you can do to support

# Is There Hope for People with an FASD?

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**Absolutely**

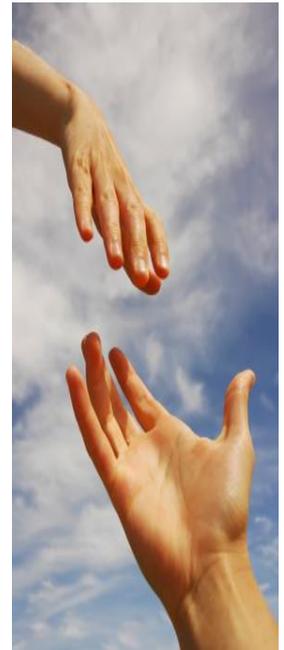
We know that FASD has no cure but there is hope. With effective resources and supports and understanding, people with FASD can lead meaningful and happy lives.

# How can we make a difference?

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- Promote FASD learning in your community
- Advocate for planned pregnancies and healthy lifestyle choices
- Keep learning about the complexities of FASD and how it affects people
- Help when and how you can

**Remember: FASD affects us all!**



If you think you are  
**too small**  
to make a difference,  
try sleeping with  
**a mosquito**



- Remember to trust the process, and realize the impact YOU can have on someone by simply starting to understand them differently, and starting to do things differently to support them.



Please contact the NW FASD Network for support and information about FASD [www.nwfasdnetwork.com](http://www.nwfasdnetwork.com)



# FASD

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## RESOURCES

[Strategies Not Solutions](http://www.child.alberta.ca/) is a booklet designed by The Edmonton and Area Fetal Alcohol Network. Copies can be downloaded here or ordered through [www.child.alberta.ca/](http://www.child.alberta.ca/)

Making a difference working with children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum disorders  
[http://www.education.gov.yk.ca/pdf/publications/fasd\\_manual\\_2007.pdf](http://www.education.gov.yk.ca/pdf/publications/fasd_manual_2007.pdf)

Eight Magic Keys  
[http://www.education.gov.yk.ca/pdf/publications/fasd\\_manual\\_2007.pdf](http://www.education.gov.yk.ca/pdf/publications/fasd_manual_2007.pdf)