

FASD AWARENESS MONTH/DAY 2016 PACKET

Working Together to Prevent Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD)

September is FASD Awareness Month
September 9th is International FASD Awareness Day



Pregnancy and alcohol don't mix - Funding provided in part by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The organizations that developed this packet are solely responsible for its content. The content does not necessarily represent the official views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Dear Colleague:

September 9th is celebrated annually as International FASD Awareness Day to promote education and awareness efforts on FASD. More recently, the month of September has been designated as FASD Awareness Month. FASDs are completely preventable by abstaining from alcohol while pregnant. Despite myths and misconceptions, there is no scientific evidence that confirms a “safe” amount of alcohol that will not affect the developing fetus.

To recognize FASD Awareness Month and Day this year, the National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (NOFAS) and its Affiliate Network; the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP); the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG); and the CDC-funded FASD Practice and Implementation Centers (PICS), National Partners, and CHOICES Partners; have joined together to produce this packet of materials to assist you in planning your activities and events.

Visit www.nofas.org/fasdmnth for updated details on FASD Month and FASD Day.

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If you have questions about the materials presented in this packet or about FASD Awareness Month and International FASD Awareness Day, please contact NOFAS Vice-President Kathy Mitchell at mitchell@nofas.org and/or NOFAS Communications Director Andy Kachor at kachor@nofas.org.

GET INVOLVED! HERE'S HOW

- Share the fact sheet information with your contacts to help raise awareness about the dangers of drinking alcohol during pregnancy.
- Use the press release/sample article in your media messages, and through your distribution lists, newsletters and other communication channels to raise awareness of FASD on September 9, 2016, International FASD Awareness Day and throughout September, FASD Awareness Month.
- Use the tips in this packet to get a proclamation from your elected official (Governor or Mayor) recognizing September as FASD Awareness Month and/or September 9 as FASD Awareness Day (sample proclamation included).
- Use the social media messages in the packet to raise awareness of this topic in September and particularly on and around September 9. Use the hashtag #FASDMonth and #FASDay to follow each other's messages.
- Join the FASD Month Twitter chat on September 13, 2016 (see page 10) using the hashtag #FASDMonthChat.
- Join the Thunderclap campaign through social media (see page 10).
- Participate in the collaborative video campaign organized by NOFAS, using an inflatable globe.
- Download or order new materials from CDC NCBDDD Website (<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/partners-tools.html>) on the risks of alcohol use during pregnancy and FASDs to use in community events.
- Order postcards from NOFAS featuring the image from the 2015 international "Too Young to Drink" campaign.
- Submit your FASD activity on the NOFAS FASD Month\Day Webpage: Let's work together to spread the word about FASDs and the risks of alcohol use during pregnancy by sharing our FASD Awareness Day activities! NOFAS will be posting all awareness activities and events on its website, so please upload information on what you are planning to do for FASD Awareness Month and Day through **this online form**. Your ideas can help others in their planning.

FACT SHEET

- No amount of alcohol use is known to be safe for a developing baby before birth.
- Exposure to alcohol from all types of beverages, including beer and wine, is poses a risk to developing babies at every stage of pregnancy.
- A developing baby is exposed to the same concentration of alcohol as the mother during pregnancy.
- FASDs are completely preventable if a developing baby is not exposed to alcohol before birth.
- Avoiding all alcohol while pregnant will absolutely guarantee that a child will not have a condition along the continuum of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs).
- An estimated 40,000 babies are born each year with FASDs, which can result in birth defects, intellectual or learning disabilities, behavior problems, and trouble learning life skills.
- Up to 1 in 20 U.S. schoolchildren may have an FASD.
- FASD-related difficulties last a lifetime.
- About half of the pregnancies in the U.S. are unplanned.
- A woman may not realize she is pregnant up to 4 to 6 weeks in pregnancy and expose her baby to alcohol before she knows she is pregnant.
- Make a plan for a healthy baby--don't drink any alcohol if you are pregnant or could become pregnant.
- If you become pregnant, stop drinking alcohol. Every day matters. The sooner you stop drinking, the better for your baby. If you need help stopping, talk to your doctor, contact an addiction specialist or contact Alcoholics Anonymous
- Pregnant women or women trying to get pregnant should talk with their obstetrician, pediatrician, nurses and other health care providers to understand the risks and to make the best choices for the health of their baby.

SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE/NEWSLETTER ARTICLE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 9, 2016

Contact: (name of person submitting release)
(phone) – or – (email)

(your city, your state) – (your organization) is joining the cause to increase awareness of the risks of drinking alcohol while pregnant. The U.S. Surgeon General advises pregnant women and women who are considering becoming pregnant to abstain from alcohol consumption to eliminate alcohol-exposed pregnancies,¹ yet it is estimated that 40,000 babies are born each year with Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD), an umbrella term describing the range of effects that can occur in an individual who was exposed to alcohol before birth.

A growing baby is exposed to the same concentration of alcohol as the mother during pregnancy. No amount of alcohol use is known to be safe for a developing baby before birth. Exposure to alcohol from any type of beverage, including beer and wine, is unsafe for developing babies at every stage of pregnancy. FASDs are completely preventable if a developing baby is not exposed to alcohol before birth.

FASDs can impact a child's physical, mental, behavioral, or cognitive development. The most visible condition along the continuum of FASDs, fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS), is characterized by growth deficiencies, central nervous system disabilities, and specific facial characteristics. The number of children born with FAS alone is comparable to spina bifida or Down syndrome.³ Prenatal alcohol exposure is associated with an increased risk of miscarriage, stillbirth, prematurity and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), as well as a range of lifelong physical, behavioral, and intellectual disabilities.

To prevent FASDs: make a plan for a healthy baby --don't drink any alcohol if you are pregnant or could become pregnant. A woman often does not know she is pregnant for up to 4 to 6 weeks after conception. In the United States, nearly half of all pregnancies are unplanned. If you become pregnant, stop drinking alcohol. Every day matters. Because brain growth takes place throughout pregnancy, the sooner a woman stops drinking the safer it will be for her and her baby. If you need help stopping, talk to your doctor, contact an addiction specialist or contact Alcoholics Anonymous.

Human service organizations, health care professionals, educators, and the public are called to action to work together to reduce the occurrence of FASDs by increasing awareness, becoming educated, and disseminating the message that women who are pregnant or who might be pregnant should abstain from alcohol.

For more information on alcohol use during pregnancy and FASDs, visit www.nofas.org or www.cdc.gov/fasd.

"Pregnancy and alcohol don't mix.

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROCLAMATION

What is a proclamation?

A proclamation is an official form of recognition issued by a state's governor or other elected executive to call attention to a specific cause or event. Anyone may request a proclamation, and when doing so it is recommended that you provide sample language. After review, the executive makes a decision about whether to issue a proclamation. Governors and Mayors throughout the U.S. have issued proclamations recognizing FASD Awareness Day. More recently, proclamations have been issued observing FASD Awareness Month.

How to Get a Proclamation from Your State Official^{1,2}

Step 1: Research the Proclamation Process in Your State or Community

- Find your state Governor's contact information on the Internet by searching for "Governor of (your state)". You can also check [this website](#) to find state contacts for proclamation requests.
- Find out the process to request a proclamation and determine your timeline. Many state offices need at least eight weeks to process a proclamation.
- If you know of other groups in your state interested in obtaining a proclamation, it might be helpful to work together. Only one proclamation per state will be issued.

Step 2: Create Your Documents and Contact Your Public Officials

- Write a cover letter to the Governor expressing your desire to have the proclamation issued and include sample language for the proclamation. You may use the proclamation template included in this packet or you may create your own. Once drafted, submit your proclamation. Depending on the process in your state, a proclamation might be submitted through the Governor's website, mailed via USPS, e-mailed, or hand delivered to your Governor's office.

Step 3: Follow-up

- Follow-up with an email or a telephone call one week after you send the original request.
- Offer to meet with the staff member or legislative aide who is handling the request . in-person to answer any questions they may have.
- Be sure to ask that the proclamation be placed on the Governor's web site. You can also request that the proclamation be placed on your state representatives' website as well.
- Write a thank you note to the Governor and your local representatives.

Publicize Your Proclamation³

- Write a press release and send it to the media (e.g. local newspapers, radio stations, and TV news channels). You may edit the press release included in this packet to incorporate information on why the proclamation was issued and who issued it. You may also want to include quotes from the government official signing the proclamation in the press release.
- Hold a news conference or public event when the proclamation is signed, inviting the media to cover this event.
- Share the proclamation with local organizations, government officials, colleagues, and other social networks and request that they display the proclamation on their websites, social media accounts, or in their offices.

Resolutions

A resolution is similar to a proclamation in that it calls attention to a cause or event. While proclamations are issues by executive officers such as the President, Governors, or Mayors, resolutions

are passed by legislative bodies. You can follow the same steps for seeking a resolution as you would for requesting a proclamation. For resolutions, contact your elected state representative and send your request to that person's attention. In some states, legislatures only meet for part of the year, so make your request early in the calendar year.

¹How to Get a Proclamation from your Governor - First Candle. (n.d.). *First Candle*. Retrieved June 16, 2014, from <http://www.firstcandle.org/october-is-awareness-month/awareness-month-action-center/advocacy/now-to-get-a-proclamation-from-your-governor/>

²Get an Official Proclamation. (n.d.). *RSS*. Retrieved June 16, 2014, from <http://www.freetobreathe.org/get-involved/educate-your-community/get-an-official-proclamation>

³Publicize Your Proclamation. (n.d.). *RSS*. Retrieved June 16, 2014, from <http://www.freetobreathe.org/get-involved/educate-your-community/publicize-your-proclamation>

SAMPLE PROCLAMATION

Human service organizations, health care professionals, educators, and the public are called to action to work together to reduce the occurrence of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs). This can be done by increasing awareness and improving public health efforts in the delivery of the preventive health message that women who are pregnant or who might be pregnant should abstain from drinking alcohol. In addition to this message, we must increase awareness on how FASDs may present in individuals across the lifespan and the ongoing need for services and support for individuals living with FASDs.

Whereas, Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD) is an umbrella term describing the range of effects that can occur in an individual who was exposed to alcohol before birth.; with fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) being the most recognizable condition along the spectrum; and

Whereas, Prenatal alcohol exposure is the leading preventable cause of birth defects and intellectual and developmental disabilities; and

Whereas, The exact number of people who have FASDs is unknown, but it is estimated that up to 1 in 20 U.S. schoolchildren may have an FASD and about 40,000 babies are born with effects of prenatal alcohol exposure annually; and

Whereas, The lifetime cost for one individual with FAS (does not include other FASDs) is estimated to be \$2 million, with a combined cost to the United States for FAS alone over \$4 billion annually; and

Whereas, 7.6% of pregnant women (or 1 in 13) and 51.5% of non-pregnant women (or 1 in 2) report drinking alcohol in the past 30 days; and

Whereas, About half of all pregnancies are unplanned, contributing to late entry into prenatal care and presenting a barrier to optimal pregnancy management, particularly during the crucial early weeks of embryonic development; and

Whereas, The good health and well-being of the people of **(name of your state)** are enhanced by the support of a national effort to educate about and prevent FASDs; and

Whereas, The **(organization)** and the **(organization)** join with the **(partner organization)** as well as many dedicated volunteers, health care professionals, educators, and parent groups by participating in this promotion.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, **(Governor's name)**, Governor of the state of **(name of your state)**, do hereby declare September 9, 2016 as Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Awareness Day [or September as FASD Awareness Month] and pledge to continue to partner with organizations, health care professionals, educators, and the public to raise awareness about our unified message:

"Pregnancy and alcohol don't mix. Why take the risk?"

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES

The following includes messages about fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs) that can be displayed via social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) on International FASD Awareness Day - September 9, 2016 and throughout the month of September. For other materials that can be used online, such as web banners and website buttons, please refer to the *CDC Materials* section of this packet.

The messages listed below are under 140 characters and can be used as a Twitter post. You may combine these messages for other social media sites that allow for longer posts, such as Facebook and Instagram. **Use the hashtag #FASDMonth on all posts in order to spread the message that alcohol and pregnancy don't mix.** For tips on using social media, refer to the CDC publication, *The Health Communicator's Social Media Toolkit*. For specific help on how to tweet, visit the [Twitter Help Center](#).

1. No amount of alcohol use is known to be safe for a developing baby before birth. #FASDMonth <http://1.usa.gov/Q7BNal>
2. Alcohol use during pregnancy can also lead to miscarriage, stillbirth, & SIDS. #FASDMonth <http://1.usa.gov/Q7hytl>
3. Prenatal alcohol exposure is associated with a range of lifelong physical, behavioral, and intellectual disabilities. #FASDMonth
4. The best advice is to stop drinking alcohol when you start trying to get pregnant. #FASDMonth <http://1.usa.gov/Q7hytl>
5. A developing baby is exposed to the same concentration of alcohol as the mother during pregnancy. #FASDMonth <http://1.usa.gov/1hCpMV2>
6. Baby's brain, body, & organs are developing throughout pregnancy & can be affected by alcohol at any time. #FASDMonth
7. Alcohol exposure is unsafe for developing babies at every stage of pregnancy. #FASDMonth
8. Exposure to alcohol from all types of beverages, including beer and wine, is unsafe for developing babies at every stage of pregnancy. #FASDMonth <http://1.usa.gov/Q7BNal>
9. FASDs are completely preventable if a developing baby is not exposed to alcohol before birth. #FASDMonth <http://1.usa.gov/1hCpMV2>
10. Identifying & intervening w/ children w/ FASDs early can help them reach their full potential. #FASDMonth <http://1.usa.gov/Q7hytl>
11. Alcohol screening & counseling is recommended for all adults, incl. pregnant women. #FASDMonth <http://go.usa.gov/ZvvQ>
12. If you become pregnant, stop drinking alcohol. Every day matters. The sooner you stop drinking, the better for your baby. #FASDMonth <http://1.usa.gov/Q7BNal>
13. If you need help stopping, talk to your doctor, contact an addiction specialist or contact Alcoholics Anonymous. #FASDMonth
14. Make a plan for a healthy baby --don't drink any alcohol if you are pregnant or could become pregnant. #FASDMonth

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

Twitter Chat:

NOFAS is planning to lead a Twitter Chat for FASD Awareness Month on Tuesday, September 13th at 1:00 p.m. Eastern.

The hashtag for the chat is #FASDchat

Everyone is invited to participate.

Thunderclap Campaign:

Go here to join the Thunderclap campaign: <http://thndr.me/THx9QB>

The Thunderclap campaign is for FASD advocates to tweet or post the same message at the same time. The Thunderclap campaign will take place on September 9th at 9:09am.

The Awareness Month/Day planning committee has decided on the following Tweet Message:

"Today is FASD Awareness Day! No alcohol is safe during pregnancy. #FASDMonth"

VIDEO CAMPAIGN

All information on this collaborative video campaign can be found on the NOFAS website at www.nofas.org/fasdmonth2016video/

Concept:

NOFAS will produce a video that is edited to create the impression that a (inflatable) globe is being passed between people from all over the nation and the world, representing all of the FASD advocates joining together to prevent FASD. Advocates, researchers, policy makers and families can participate by shooting a short (8 seconds or less) video of them catching the globe thrown from out of the frame, saying a few words, and “passing” the ball to the next person by throwing the globe out of frame.

NOFAS aims to include everyone that submits their video by September 2, 2016 in the final video, which will be released on FASD Awareness Day, September 9th.

Deadline: September 2, 2016 (end of day).

The more the better, everyone is welcome.

The final video will be released on FASD Day, September 9th.

Please visit the [dedicated webpage](#) for the following information:

- Watch the demo video
- How to receive an inflatable globe from NOFAS
- What you should say in the video
- How to send your video to NOFAS
- Detailed instructions

RESOURCES FOR PREVENTING FASD AND FOR FAMILIES LIVING WITH FASDs

The following list of resources offers a starting place for those seeking information and support.

National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (NOFAS)

Founded in 1990, NOFAS is an international nonprofit organization committed solely to FASD primary prevention, advocacy, and support. They have created many resources including resource directories, a weekly listserv, and the Circle of Hope Birth Mother's Network.

National and State Resource Directory

<http://www.nofas.org/resource-directory/>

Affiliate Network

<http://www.nofas.org/affiliates-partners/>

Weekly Roundup Listserv

<http://www.nofas.org/weekly-roundup/>

Circle of Hope Birth Mothers' Network

<http://www.nofas.org/circleofhope/>

Tools for Parents and Caregivers

<http://www.nofas.org/parents/>

Resources for Adults with FASD

<http://www.nofas.org/adults-living-with-fasd/>

Education and FASD

<http://www.nofas.org/education-and-fasd/>

FASD and the Law

<http://www.nofas.org/criminal-justice/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) works to prevent alcohol use during pregnancy by conducting research studies and implementing and disseminating evidence-based interventions (e.g., alcohol screening and brief intervention and CHOICES) for women at risk of an alcohol-exposed pregnancy. CDC also supports education and training activities for various audiences. For example, CDC funds FASD Practice and Implementation Centers and national partner organizations to achieve practice and systems-level change by improving the knowledge and skills of health care professionals regarding the prevention, identification, and management of FASDs.

CDC FASD Main Page

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/index.html>

Free FASD Materials

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/freematerials.html>

Alcohol Screening & Brief Intervention

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/alcohol-screening.html>

CHOICES Intervention

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/research-preventing.html>

FASD Practice and Implementation Centers and National Partners

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/training.html>

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)

NIAAA supports and conducts biomedical and behavioral research on the causes, consequences, treatment, and prevention of alcoholism and alcohol-related problems. This site has publications and information including the brochures, *Drinking and Your Pregnancy* and *Alcohol: A Women's Health Issue*, available in both English and Spanish.

<http://www.niaaa.nih.gov>

Collaborative Initiative on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (CIFASD)

The purpose of this consortium is to inform and develop effective interventions and treatment approaches for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD), through multidisciplinary research involving basic, behavioral and clinical investigators and projects. We hope to develop an infrastructure to foster collaboration and coordinate basic, clinical and translational research on FASD.

<http://cifasd.org/>

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) FASD Toolkit for pediatric primary care clinicians was developed to serve as the framework for the medical home management for children with FASDs. The toolkit provides tools and resources for primary care clinicians to equip them to better meet the special needs of these children and families.

FASD Toolkit for Pediatric Primary Care Clinicians

www.aap.org/fasd

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists has developed resources for women's health care providers in identifying women who drink too much and in providing brief educational counseling to reduce or eliminate alcohol use. Resources include a cell phone app, downloadable patient information sheets, current news articles, treatment referral information, and more.

FASD Informational Page

http://www.acog.org/About_ACOG/ACOG_Districts/District_II/Fetal_Alcohol_Spectrum_Disorders

iPhone App – Identifying Women Who Drink at Risk or Hazardous Levels

<http://www.womenandalcohol.org/>

The Arc of the United States

The goal of The Arc's FASD Prevention Project is to increase health care provider knowledge of the risks alcohol can pose to a fetus and encourage the use of FASD prevention strategies and provide educational opportunities to health care providers.

FASD Prevention Project

<http://www.thearc.org/FASD-Prevention-Project>

FASD Prevention Toolkit for Health Care Providers

<http://www.thearc.org/FASD-Prevention-Project/resources/toolkit>

Free Continuing Education Credit for Health Care Providers

<http://www.thearc.org/FASD-Prevention-Project/resources/courses>

March of Dimes

The March of Dimes helps expecting mothers to take charge of their health and to have full-term, healthy pregnancies.

Alcohol Use During Pregnancy

<http://www.marchofdimes.com/pregnancy/alcohol-during-pregnancy.aspx>

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome: Support, Training, Advocacy, and Resources (FASSTAR)

Offers training on all aspects of FASDs, including community awareness, prevention, and intervention. The FAS Community Resource Center (FASCRC), supported by FASSTAR, includes information on the history of FASD Awareness Day.

<http://fasstar.com/>

<http://www.come-over.to/FASCRC/>

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Outreach Project

<http://www.faseout.ca/eng/training.htm>

FASLink: Fetal Alcohol Disorders Society – Research, Information, Support & Communications

<http://www.acbr.com/fas/>

To Locate Addiction Treatment:

Recovery.org – Addiction Recovery Program Finder

<http://www.recovery.org/>

SAMHSA Substance Abuse Treatment Facility Locator

<http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION MATERIALS

Partners: Help us spread the word – Pregnancy and alcohol don't mix. Why take the risk?

Free materials are available to help you promote alcohol-free pregnancies to women in your communities. CDC has developed materials for women of childbearing age on alcohol use during pregnancy and FASDs based on formative research findings. The materials target women who are pregnant and women who are trying to get pregnant.*



The set of materials includes print products (a brochure and three posters) that are available to order and downloadable. Several social media tools, such as banners, badges, and e-cards are also available.

To learn more about all of the tools available from CDC that can be used in community efforts, and how to access them, please visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/partners-tools.html>

*For information and materials on preconception health for all women and men, whether or not they plan to have a baby one day, visit CDC's Preconception Health and Health Care website.