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FASD Prevention & Support

Beyond Describing the Problem

Level 1 FASD Prevention, the awareness part of the FASD Prevention four-part model, fits into a much larger effort to prevent FASD that is not only about raising awareness and policy action, but also about intervention with women and children at various levels.

FASD Prevention research indicates the need for a much broader focus than alcohol consumption alone to address the many adjacent problems that influence

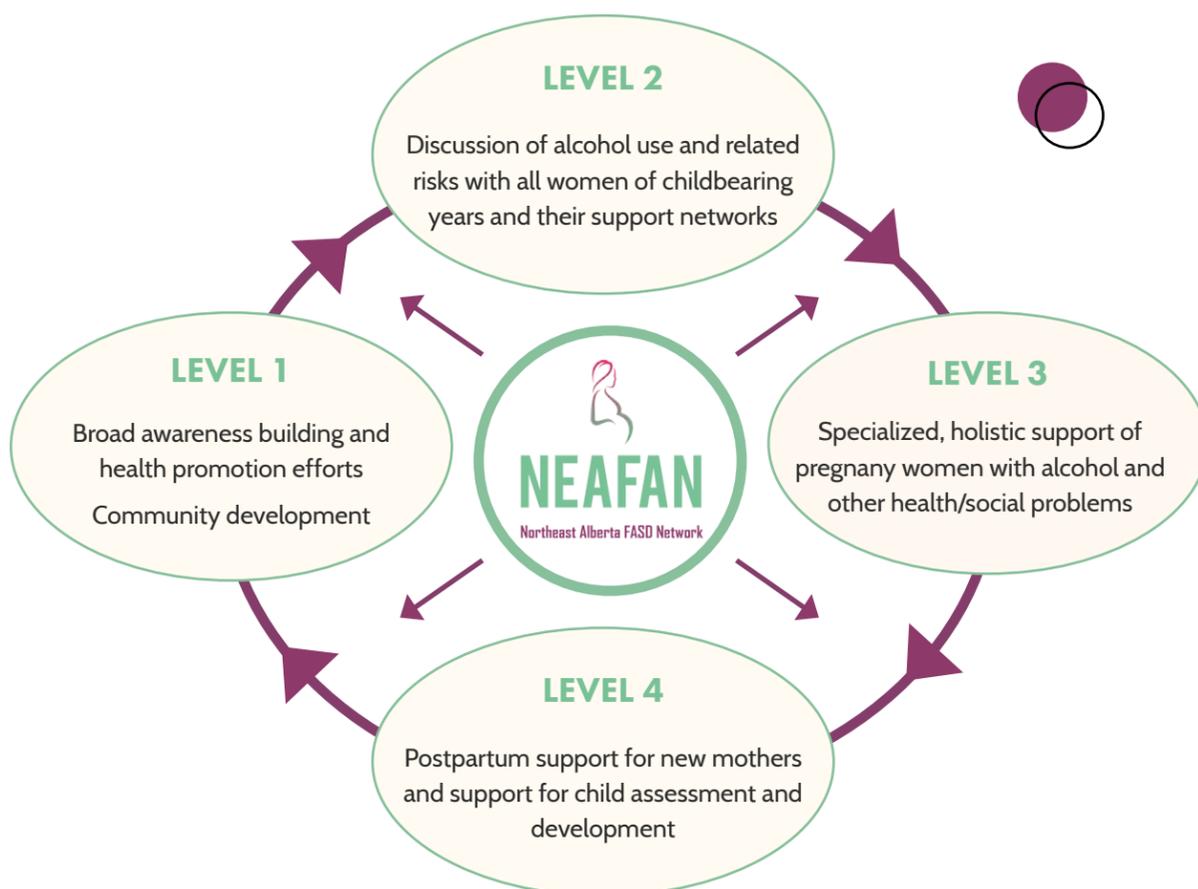
women's drinking and wellness. Focusing on the prevalence of drinking in pregnancy and the risks associated with alcohol use in pregnancy helps us understand who is at risk and how to engage with them. However, to prevent FASD, we also need to focus on interventions and supports for women.

A mothers' nutrition, access to prenatal care, use of other drugs, overall health, and stress levels exert enormous pressures on her life choices. Synthesizing intervention and support while taking into consideration poverty, experience of trauma and violence,

racial discrimination, genetics, age, resilience, experience of loss, context and isolation helps to inform the underlying reasons for the mother's alcohol use. Understanding the indirect origins and triggers of substance abuse seeds the growth of compassion, not judgement, of acceptance and support, not isolation.

"It's not only about alcohol."

The 4 Part FASD Prevention Model



FASD stands for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. It is a lifelong disability that affects the brain and body of people who were exposed to alcohol in the womb. Each person with FASD has both strengths and challenges and will need special supports to help them succeed with many different parts of their daily lives. Canadian prevention specialists have identified four mutually reinforcing prevention approaches as effective in delivering FASD Prevention linked to overall policy strategies focusing primarily on the critical areas of prevention, intervention, and diagnosis.

Level 1 of the 4-part FASD prevention model is about broad awareness building

and health promotion efforts and community development to advance social support and change. FASD awareness campaigns do not necessarily change behaviour, but they can influence peoples' knowledge, encourage information gathering, and identify where to locate and how to access support. Successful FASD campaign initiatives focus on comprehension, noticeability, recall and integration. Along with these strategies, FASD awareness campaigns follow the prevention principles of doing no harm, taking a gender transformative approach, tailoring initiatives to the audience, and aspiring to quality practice.

Level 1 initiatives include Awareness/Health Education, Health Promotion, and Alcohol Policy.

- Awareness/Health Education includes health education materials like pamphlets, posters, web banners and radio public services announcements.
- Health Promotion includes materials for facilitators of girls' empowerment groups and other promotional efforts, plus community wide strategies that focus on health and wellness promotion. These initiatives talk about how alcohol fits into the lives of childbearing age women and how they can choose to make positive life decisions around alcohol use.
- Alcohol Policy includes low risk drinking guidelines, warning labels and other alcohol policy initiatives.



"FASD is the leading developmental disability in Canada."



Lifespan Intervention

Many individuals with FASD require life-long daily ongoing assistance to support physical, cognitive, behavioural, and social-emotional functioning. As individuals with FASD grow and develop they frequently interact with multiple systems. Children and families often receive support from many sources so that communication is essential and critical to system navigation. Success requires coordinated responses, collaboration and cooperation between service providers and individuals with FASD and their families.



“Healthy Outcomes reflects the integration of research with wisdom from communities and caregivers, as well as the lived experiences of those with FASD.”

The nature of FASD as a lifelong disability will commonly differ depending on the individual. Pathways to successful outcomes often need to be tailored to be the right fit for each person to promote well-being and generate opportunities for meaningful success. The complexity of FASD creates obstacles for systemic approaches to targeting skill growth and development and finding and putting a custom pathway in place can be challenging.



FASD AWARENESS MONTH

Building Strength and Abilities.

September is FASD Awareness Month. FASD Awareness Day is held on the 9th day of the 9th month to highlight the importance of going alcohol-free during the full nine months of pregnancy.

The theme for FASD Awareness Month 2022 is Building Strengths and Abilities. This theme goes beyond celebrating the strengths of those with FASD. It also recognizes the strengths and successes of

families and communities and those who are pregnant and parenting.

Our goal for FASD Awareness Month 2022 is to recognize and celebrate the strengths, abilities, and talents of those with FASD. Only focusing on challenges associated with FASD can result in stigma and stereotypes. Talents, strengths, and abilities should be recognized and always celebrated, especially during FASD Awareness Month.

Healthy Outcomes is founded on core beliefs that reflect integration of research with wisdom from communities and caregivers, as well as the lived experiences of those with FASD, reminding us that meaningful outcomes arise from meaningful understandings.

The Healthy Outcomes model supports FASD intervention approaches across the lifespan. The model is aligned with three assumptions. A developmental lifespan perspective is necessary at all ages and stages; interactive systems have additive and ongoing influences; and our approaches must always be strength-based, empowered, and goal-oriented.

From this prospective we build on existing strengths, and we address areas of challenge to help move toward healthy outcomes. We ensure that interventions are implemented appropriately, in a timely and proactive manner, and tailored to the individual and their community. Thinking carefully about healthy pathways we engage communities and individuals with FASD in developing intervention approaches that are meaningful and feasible.



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Links & Resources

- [Healthy Outcomes](#)
- [FASD Prevention](#)
- [A Multilevel Supportive FASD Alcohol Policy](#)
- [FASD Awareness Month](#)
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