

NEAFAN

Northeast Alberta FASD Network

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Bill S-253 National Framework on FASD Act



National Framework on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Bill S-253. An Act respecting a national framework for fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.

FASD, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder is a lifelong disability that impacts an individual's brain and body and results in varying degrees of challenges in their daily living. An estimated four percent of the population has Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, making it the leading cause of neurodevelopmental disability in Canada.

This month, Parliament recognized the need for appropriate supports to reduce the incidence of alcohol-exposed pregnancies, enacting Bill S-253. The Minister of Health must develop a national framework on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

The national framework must include measures to address the training, education and guidance needs of health care and other professionals regarding the prevention and diagnosis fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and support measures for those who are impacted by it.



It must identify measures to promote research and intergovernmental information-sharing in relation to the prevention and diagnosis of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and support measures for those who are impacted by it.



The bill must set out national standards for the prevention and diagnosis of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and for support measures for those who are impacted by it.

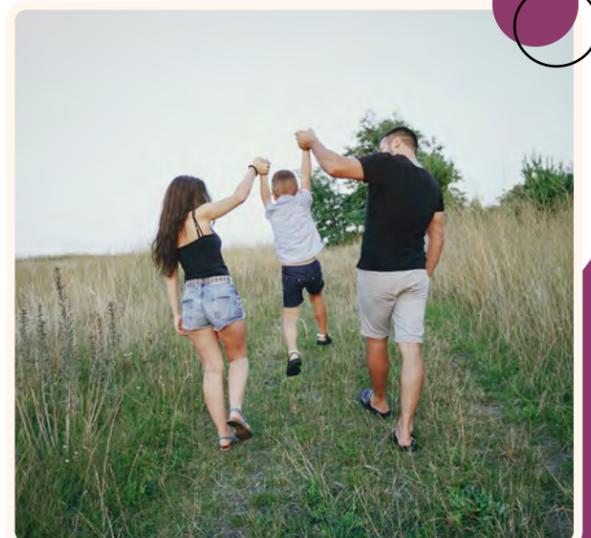


“Parliament recognized the need for appropriate supports to reduce the incidence of alcohol-exposed pregnancies.”

It must set out a strategy to increase awareness of the risks of alcohol consumption during pregnancy and the consequences of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, including by recommending changes to legislative and policy frameworks related to alcohol consumption and marketing.



S-253 must also identify any other measures that the Minister considers appropriate to prevent fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, ensure that individuals with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder are properly diagnosed, and promote better outcomes for those individuals, their families and their caregivers.



Update of Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines

There is now overwhelming evidence that shows the impact of even small amounts of alcohol on our health and well-being. Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health will replace Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines with accurate and current information about the risks and harms associated with the use of alcohol.

Alcohol is legally used by about three-quarters of people living in Canada. For some, alcohol use is intertwined with their lifestyle. It is often used in connection with social events or to mark special occasions. However, alcohol can cause harm to the person who drinks and sometimes to others around them.

Few people recognize that alcohol is a leading preventable cause of death and disability, injuries, accidents and social problems. In 2017, alcohol contributed to 18,000 deaths in Canada. That same year, the costs associated with alcohol use in Canada were \$16.6 billion, with \$5.4 billion of that sum spent on health care.

The updated guidance should help people to make well-informed and responsible decisions about their alcohol consumption. The new document will help Canadians determine where they fit into the continuum of risk associated with alcohol consumption.



"It is safest not to drink alcohol during pregnancy."

Alcohol is the leading preventable cause of death and disability.

Regular alcohol consumption can increase your risk of cancer, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, mental health challenges and other injuries or disease. Alcohol consumption is also linked to death and injury, violence, and abuse.

Alcohol use also impacts reproductive health.

Alcohol use in pregnancy can lead to lifelong impacts including brain injury, birth defects, behavioural problems, learning disabilities, and other health problems. It is safest not to drink alcohol during pregnancy. Experts also recommend not using alcohol while breastfeeding or during the preconception period.



The risks of alcohol consumption are wide-ranging and your personal risk falls somewhere on a continuum.

Your risk depends on different factors like your gender, age, and socio-economic status.



SEVEN KEY TAKEAWAYS

Canada's Guidance on Alcohol & Health

01.

All levels of alcohol consumption are associated with some risk, so drinking less is better for everyone.

02.

Among healthy individuals, there is a continuum of risk for alcohol-related harms whereby the risk is:

- Negligible to low for individuals who consume two standard drinks or less per week;
- Moderate for those who consume between three and six standard drinks per week; and
- Increasingly high for those who consume more than six standard drinks per week.

03.

On any occasion, any level of consumption has risks, and with more than two standard drinks, most individuals will have an increased risk of injuries or other problems.

04.

Disproportionately more injuries, violence and deaths result from men's drinking.

05.

Above low levels of alcohol consumption, the health risks increase more steeply for women than for men.

06.

It is safest not to drink alcohol while pregnant and during the pre-conception period.

07.

For women who are breastfeeding, it is safest not to use alcohol.

Shining a Light on FASD Awareness

NEAFAN'S FASD Day Activities

This year various Canadian monuments and landmarks were rocking red for FASD Awareness Day to shine a light on and raise public awareness and discussion of this disability. Key landmarks across the country were lit up red on September 9th in honour of FASD Awareness Day. In Fort Mac, the highly visible Saline Creek Bridge was lit up

red to honour FASD Awareness Day and the Red Shoes Rock campaign. At night NEAFAN staff gathered on the bridge sporting their red shoes and smiles. Also, NEAFAN requested that the mayor and council of Fort McMurray publicly proclaim and recognize Sept 9th as FASD Awareness Day in the municipal region.



A highly visible key landmark in Fort Mac, the Saline Creek Bridge, was lit up red for FASD Awareness Day.



Etta and Ike from WJS who run NEAFAN's Bridges Program showing support on FASD Awareness Day.



A couple of furry friends sporting red shoes on FASD Day brought a lot of smiles to NEAFAN's annual event to help raise FASD Awareness.



Red Shoes were on display by staff of the Center of Hope, who carry out NEAFAN programs Women's Wellness and Captains Place, when they paid NEAFAN a visit on FASD Awareness Day.



At NEAFAN'S FASD Awareness Day event, team members of NEAFAN programs for Assessment & Diagnosis, Outreach, PCAP, Wrap2.O, Bridges and Prevention Conversation stepped up in their red shoes to help raise FASD awareness.



Ginger's Bannock House catered NEAFAN's FASD Awareness Event. Ginger's passion for cooking is paying off in her busy catering business. Her bannock donuts really went over well at our event. Thanks Ginger.



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Links & Resources

- [Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines Update](#)
- [Contact NEAFAN](#)

