June 2024 | www.neafan.ca

Partners Role in FASD Prevention

NEAFAN

Northeast Alberta FASD Network

HOUSING PEOPLE WITH FASD

People need a safe place to live, which is essential for their health and well-being.

In Canada, finding stable housing is difficult for many, especially for those with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). FASD occurs when a baby is exposed to alcohol before birth, leading to problems with learning, behavior, and emotions. People with FASD often need extra help, which isn't always available, making it hard for them to find stable housing.

FASD affects about 4% of Canadians. People with FASD can have trouble with thinking, emotions, and everyday tasks, making it challenging to live independently. Many adults with FASD live in special housing situations or have experienced homelessness. They often face additional challenges like mental health issues, substance use, and past traumas, which complicate their housing needs.

Many housing programs don't consider the specific needs of people with FASD. This can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts, like breaking housing rules by accident. For example, someone with FASD might forget rules or have trouble understanding them, leading to issues with landlords or housing staff. They may also struggle with substance use, increasing the risk of losing their housing.

Despite these challenges, people with FASD can succeed with the right support. Research shows that person-centered and integrated approaches work best. This means creating housing and support services tailored to each person's needs, involving them in decisions, and focusing on their strengths.

A person-centered approach recognizes that people with FASD have unique needs and strengths. It involves making individualized plans that consider their preferences and goals. This helps them feel more in control and engaged, leading to better outcomes. For some, living independently may not be the best option. Instead, living with support when needed can be more effective.

An integrated systems approach involves coordination among different support services, like healthcare, education, employment, and community services. This ensures that people with FASD receive consistent and comprehensive support. Collaboration among service providers helps address all aspects of their lives, making housing stability more achievable.

Building strong relationships with family, caregivers, and trusted adults is crucial for people with FASD. These support networks provide valuable insights and ongoing help, assisting them in navigating challenges and maintaining stable housing. Positive relationships with service providers also make a big difference. Providers who understand FASD can offer more compassionate and effective support.

It's essential for housing and support service providers to receive ongoing education about FASD. This training helps them understand the condition better and offer appropriate support. Educated providers are better equipped to help people with FASD succeed in their housing and other life goals.

To improve housing stability for people with FASD there is a need to increase housing options, ranging from emergency shelters to long-term supported housing. Integrating housing programs with other social and community services is also essential to provide comprehensive support. Adopting person-centered and integrated approaches in housing policies ensures that the specific needs of individuals with FASD are addressed effectively.

Additionally, fostering and leveraging relational support networks can significantly enhance housing stability by providing a strong foundation of support. Finally, providing ongoing education for all service providers about FASD is crucial to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to offer appropriate support and interventions.

People with FASD face significant challenges in finding and keeping stable housing. However, with person-centered, integrated, and supportive approaches, they can achieve housing stability and thrive in their communities. It's crucial for policymakers and service providers to understand their unique needs and strengths to develop effective interventions and support systems.

Read Issue Paper here.

> "People with FASD face significant challenges in finding and keeping stable housing."

Partners Role in FASD Prevention

Partners have a significant impact on whether pregnant women drink alcohol or not. The amount of alcohol a woman drinks is greatly affected by her partner. A woman's risk of drinking while pregnant increases, for example, if she lives with a partner who drinks excessively. Her likelihood of abstaining from alcohol increases, however, if her partner also abstains. This demonstrates how successful it may be to include partners in preventing FASD.

Women who report high levels of relationship satisfaction and partner support are less likely to partake in alcohol use when pregnant. Women, on the other hand, are more prone to drink when they are upset or have trouble communicating their issues to their partners. In order to avoid FASD, it is crucial to have effective communication and support systems in place.

Unfortunately, some women endure domestic abuse, which can make abstaining from alcohol much more challenging. Substance abuse is a common coping mechanism for women who experience assault. Partners may also discourage them from getting treatment or even push them to drink. Effective FASD prevention requires an understanding of this connection.

it is important for partnes to pitch in when making plans for a safe pregnancy. Because of their lack of knowledge and potential embarrassment, many men avoid health programs that pertain to preconception care. A successful pregnancy is a team effort, and men can do their bit when they know how to assist their partners and get engaged.

Partners in health programs should be included in FASD prevention efforts. One approach is to develop materials and initiatives targeted at partners, teaching them about FASD and providing them with information on how they may lend a hand. Programs that encourage partners to talk to each other about their drinking and health can have a significant impact. Partners can be helped to make good changes by approaches that are encouraging and helpful, such as motivational interviewing. These methods encourage healthy habits in a way that is unique to each person and may be highly effective.

It is crucial to include partners in the prevention of FASD. We can enhance pregnancy outcomes, decrease alcohol consumption during pregnancy, and foster better relationships by educating and supporting partners. Better maternal and infant health can be achieved through an all-encompassing strategy for preventing FASD. Making progress in avoiding FASD and ensuring healthier futures for children and families may be achieved by concentrating on the effect of partners and offering support.

Understanding Client Needs Toolkit

The comprehensive "Service Provider Human-Centred Design Toolkit" helps service providers identify and meet client needs. Empathy Maps, Journey Mapping, Personas, and Feedback Grids are included in this toolkit to help you connect with clients and learn about their objectives, experiences, and issues.

The toolkit's beginning emphasizes listening and engaging clients to improve service delivery. It stresses the need of meaningful discussions that yield actionable data to improve services and meet client needs.

Service providers should be trauma-informed and respectful of clients' autonomy and dignity when having conversations. Service providers use sensory empathy maps to comprehend clients' views. This tool guides client talks about what they see, say, do, think, hear, and feel in various scenarios. Empathy Maps encourage empathy and assist client-centered service design by showing clients' whole experiences.

Journey Mapping records each client interaction to identify areas for improvement and intervention. Service providers can gather specific insights and generate new ideas to improve service delivery by partnering with clients to chronicle their experiences in real time. Trip Maps cut down the client's trip into digestible steps, highlighting previously missed details.

Client parts are fabricated as personas. They are based on interviews, workshops, and observations. Personas assist service providers visualize and understand customers. Personas help providers build services and solutions that address clients' different requirements and viewpoints.

Feedback Grids enable rating a service or solution. Feedback Grids encourage honest and constructive feedback by asking clients what they enjoy, what they would change, what questions they have, and what new suggestions they have.

This technology helps service companies gain information to improve their offers. Qualitative data interpretation is covered in the toolbox. It guides data transcription, analysis, synthesis, and reporting from multiple engagement modalities. Be flexible and receptive to new findings, recognize when data collecting is saturated, and ensure research rigour and reliability.

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Let's Talk

The Prevention Conversation

It's time to talk about alcohol and pregnancy

Amy Tobin, B.Ed, is the FASD Prevention Conversation Facilitator with NEAFAN (Northeast Alberta FASD Network) and an adoptive mother of two. Prior to motherhood, she was an elementary school teacher with the Fort McMurray Public School District for six years. Her passion for FASD, and its prevention, began nine years ago when she became a mother through adoption and was introduced, personally, to the beauty and perplexity of parenting those with prenatal alcohol exposure. Since then, she has dedicated much of her time to learning about, and educating others, on the effects of alcohol during pregnancy and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. Her approach is one that takes into consideration the complexities that adoption, generational, and cultural trauma can play within FASD.

Prevention Conversation

The Prevention Conversation program aims to raise awareness of FASD and Prevention among target populations including Healthcare and Social Service Providers, Women of Childbearing Age(18-45), Partners, Families and Friends.

The Project is geared towards highlighting the importance of screening all women in child bearing age for alcohol use and risks associated with FASD, improve supports for these women and promote involvement of community members and primary care providers.

The Prevention Conversation is aimed at encouraging a community wide awareness of FASD and prevention, developing the skills within the community to engage in non-judgmental, empathetic conversations about alcohol use during pregnancy. The Prevention Conversation is centered around increasing our knowledge of FASD, training service providers on the use of screening tools to engage women in the Prevention Conversation.

To book a Prevention Conversation presentation, please contact:

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