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Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders:  
A Guide to Resources

Alcohol use during pregnancy is a leading preventable cause of birth defects and intellectual and neurodevelopmental disabilities. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD)—the general term that encompasses the range of life-long adverse cognitive, behavioral and physical effects associated with prenatal alcohol exposure—affects up to 1 in 20 children in the U.S., and is disproportionately present among youth in foster care and juvenile justice systems.

Given the prevalence of FASD and its far-reaching impact across the lifespan, social workers across the spectrum of health, education, child welfare and criminal justice settings have a role to play in the identification, referral, and delivery of services to individuals and families affected by FASD. Social workers may also participate in the critically important tasks of primary prevention: screening women for alcohol use; performing evidence-based interventions to reduce risky alcohol use; and making referrals or delivering treatment for problem drinking.

NASW, The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work, Baylor College of Medicine and the University of Missouri are working together to represent social work as part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) cross-discipline partnership targeting FASD prevention and care. Social work is collaborating with leaders in the professions of family medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, medical assistants, and nursing to prevent FASDs by improving healthcare practice, education, and awareness among healthcare professionals.

Recent resources for social work practitioners to enhance their understanding, competency and practice skills around FASD are listed below.

## Overview of FASD

Williams, Janet F., Smith, Vincent C. & AAP Committee on Substance Abuse (2015). Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders. Clinical Report. *Pediatrics*, 136(5). e1395-e1406. DOI: 10.1542/peds.2015-3113.

## Downloadable PDF:

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/early/2015/10/13/peds.2015-3113.full.pdf>

*Clinical overview summarizing FASD, its impact, identification and prevention.*

Alcohol use during pregnancy is a leading cause of preventable birth defects and intellectual and neurodevelopmental disabilities.

Charness, M.E., Riley, E.P., & Sowell, E.R. (2016). Drinking During Pregnancy and the Developing Brain: Is Any Amount Safe? *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 20(2), 80-82. doi:10.1016/j.tics.2015.09.011

*Brief overview of new research indicating potential adverse outcomes of light-to-moderate drinking during pregnancy.*

Hagan, J.F., Balachova, T., Bertrand, J. et al. (2016). Neurobehavioral Disorder Associated With Prenatal Alcohol Exposure. *Pediatrics*, 138(4), e20151553. DOI:10.1542/peds.2015-1553

**Downloadable PDF:**

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/early/2016/09/23/peds.2015-1553.full.pdf>

Hoyme, H.G., Kalberg, W., Elliott, A.J., et al. (2016). Updated Clinical Guidelines for Diagnosing Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders. *Pediatrics*, 138(2), e20154256. DOI: 10.1542/peds.2015-4256.

**Downloadable PDF:**

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/early/2016/07/25/peds.2015-4256.full.pdf>

Edwards, W. J. (Ed.). (2010). Special Issue: Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. *Journal of Psychiatry & Law*, 38(4), 367-618.

*Articles on FASD on criminal justice, forensic assessment, diagnosis of juvenile offenders, neurology and adaptive behavior, and interventions. Check library for availability.*

## Alcohol & Women's Health

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016, February 2). CDC Vital Signs: Alcohol and Pregnancy.

[www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/fasd/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/fasd/index.html)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016). Vital Signs: Alcohol-exposed pregnancies—United States, 2011-2013. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)*, 65(4); 91-97. doi: 10.15585/mmwr.mm6504a6

**Online article:**

[www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6504a6.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6504a6.htm)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2013, October 11). CDC Vital Signs: Binge Drinking: A Serious, Under-recognized problem among women and girls.

[www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/bingedrinkingfemale/](http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/bingedrinkingfemale/)

**Downloadable PDF:**

[www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/pdf/2013-01-vitalsigns.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/pdf/2013-01-vitalsigns.pdf)

## General Resources on FASD

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs)" – [www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/)

*CDC's FASD website provides research-based information, tools, patient education and training materials.*

*Download or order CDC's free materials (posters, brochures, fact sheets, and practice resources) about FASD, drinking and pregnancy: [www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/freematerials.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/freematerials.html)*

National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (NOFAS) – [www.nofas.org/](http://www.nofas.org/)

*NOFAS offers a national/state-by-state resource directory with information on FASD diagnostic specialists, support groups; support for birth mothers; materials for educators, mothers, persons with FASD, and patient advocates.*

## FASD Prevention: Practice and Implementation Resources

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists [ACOG]. (2015). *Drinking and Reproductive Health: A Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Prevention Toolkit*. Washington, DC: ACOG.

**Downloadable PDF:**

[www.acog.org/-/media/Departments/Tobacco-Alcohol-and-Substance-Abuse/FASD-Clinician-Guide.pdf](http://www.acog.org/-/media/Departments/Tobacco-Alcohol-and-Substance-Abuse/FASD-Clinician-Guide.pdf)

Levy, S.J., Williams, J.F. & AAP Committee on Substance Use and Prevention. (2016). Substance Use Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment. *Pediatrics*, 138(1), e20161211. doi: 10.1542/peds.2016-1211.

**Downloadable PDF:**

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/138/1/e20161211.full.pdf>

*This "Clinical Report: Guidance for the Clinician in Rendering Pediatric Care" specifically addresses SBIRT for adolescents; provides excellent overview on the issue of adolescent substance use and clinical response.*

Velasquez, M.M., Ingersoll, K., Sobell, M., & Sobell, L.C. (2016). *Women and Drinking: Preventing Alcohol-Exposed Pregnancies*. Series: Advances in Psychotherapy – Evidence-based Practices, vol. 34. Boston, MA: Hogrefe Press.

**Describes promising prevention practices and provides implementation resources.**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015). *Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders: Competency-based Curriculum Development Guide for Medical and Allied Health Professionals*. Atlanta, GA: CDC.

**Downloadable PDF:**

[www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/curriculum/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/curriculum/index.html)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014). *Planning and Implementing Screening and Brief Intervention for Risky Alcohol Use: A Step-by-Step Guide for Primary Care Practices*. Atlanta, Georgia: CDC, National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities.

**Downloadable PDF:**

[www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/documents/alcoholbsiimplementationguide.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/documents/alcoholbsiimplementationguide.pdf)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016, February 2). CDC's Alcohol Screening and Brief Intervention Efforts.

**Website with downloadable resources:**

[www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/alcohol-screening.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/alcohol-screening.html)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2011). *CHOICES: A Program for Women about Choosing Healthy Behaviors*. Atlanta, Georgia: CDC, National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities.

**CHOICES Curriculum CD package and/or Counselor manual, client workbook and facilitator guides are available to order/download at: [www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/freematerials.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/freematerials.html)**

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2014). *Addressing Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD)*. Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) Series 58. Rockville, MD: SAMHSA.

**Downloadable PDF:**

<http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content//SMA13-4803/SMA13-4803.pdf>

U.S. Preventive Services Taskforce. (2013, May). *Alcohol Misuse: Screening and Behavioral Counseling Interventions in Primary Care*.

[www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Document/UpdateSummaryFinal/alcohol-misuse-screening-and-behavioral-counseling-interventions-in-primary-care](http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Document/UpdateSummaryFinal/alcohol-misuse-screening-and-behavioral-counseling-interventions-in-primary-care)

**Provides screening instruments, clinical summary for physicians, evidence summary, and consumer guide.**

## Service Provision to Individuals & Families Affected by FASD

Adubato, S.A. & Cohen, D.E. (Eds). (2011). *Prenatal Alcohol Use and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders: Diagnosis, Assessment and New Directions in Research and Multimodal Treatment*. Oakpark, IL: Bentham eBooks.

Paley, B. & O'Connor, M.J. (2009). Intervention for Individuals with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders: Treatment Approaches and Case Management. *Developmental Disabilities Research Reviews*, 15(3), 258-267. doi: 10.1002/ddrr.67

**Downloadable PDF:**

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ddrr.67/epdf>

Petrenko, C.L. (2015). Positive Behavioral Interventions and Family Support for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders. *Current Developmental Disorders Report*, 2(3), 199-209. doi:10.1007/s40474-015-0052-8

**Evaluates sources of information, theoretical and Lived Experience models, empirical evidence on existing programs, and best practice guidelines, to guide clinical practice.**

Senturias, Y., & Burns, B. (2014). Managing Children and Adolescents with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders in the Medical Home. *Current Problems in Pediatric and Adolescent Health Care*, 44(4), 96-101. doi:10.1016/j.cppeds.2013.12.009

**Brief overview of key clinical resources and validated interventions for individuals affected by FASD.**

**Downloadable PDF:**

[www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1538544213001508](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1538544213001508)

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD)—the general term that encompasses the range of life-long adverse cognitive, behavioral and physical effects associated with prenatal alcohol exposure—affects up to 1 in 20 children in the U.S., and is disproportionately present among youth in foster care and juvenile justice systems.

Social workers may also participate in the critically important tasks of primary prevention: screening women for alcohol use; performing evidence-based interventions to reduce risky alcohol use; and making referrals or delivering treatment for problem drinking.

## Position Statements on FASD

American Academy of Pediatrics. (no date). Joint Call to Action on Alcohol and Pregnancy: Eliminating the Risk for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders.

### Downloadable PDF:

[www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorders-toolkit/Documents/FASD\\_AAP%20Joint%20Statement\\_FINAL\\_1.pdf](http://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorders-toolkit/Documents/FASD_AAP%20Joint%20Statement_FINAL_1.pdf)

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Committee on Ethics. (2015). Alcohol Abuse and Other Substance Use Disorders: Ethical issues in obstetric and gynecologic practice. Committee Opinion No. 633. *Obstetrics & Gynecology*, 125:1529–37.

### Downloadable PDF:

[www.acog.org/-/media/Committee-Opinions/Committee-on-Ethics/co633.pdf?dmc=1&ts=20161205T1801448418](http://www.acog.org/-/media/Committee-Opinions/Committee-on-Ethics/co633.pdf?dmc=1&ts=20161205T1801448418)

Office of the Surgeon General, U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services. (2005). Advisory on Alcohol Use in Pregnancy.

### Downloadable PDF:

[www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/documents/sg-advisory.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/documents/sg-advisory.pdf)

## FASD & Stigma

National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. (no date). NOFAS Statement on the Stigma of FASD.

[www.nofas.org/2015/08/24/nofas-statement-on-the-stigma-of-fasd/](http://www.nofas.org/2015/08/24/nofas-statement-on-the-stigma-of-fasd/)

Circle of Hope: A Mentoring Network for Birth Mothers (NOFAS).

[www.nofas.org/circleofhope/](http://www.nofas.org/circleofhope/)

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# We need you NOW MORE THAN EVER

The social work profession faces constant challenges from program cuts, competition in the workplace, and policy makers who don't value social work or the clients we serve.

For more than 60 years, courageous social workers have worked together through NASW to defend human rights and achieve well-being for all people. **Now more than ever we need your help to continue this proud legacy.**

When social workers unite as NASW members, the profession has a larger, stronger voice to influence elected leaders, policy makers, and employers. **Show that you believe in the collective power of social work to improve lives and communities!**

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