Building an Alliance:
Preventing Prenatal Alcohol

Shauna Feine, Senior Training Coordinator
shauna.feine@proofalliance.org
Our **mission** is to eliminate disability caused by alcohol consumption during pregnancy & to improve the quality of life for those living with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders.

Our **vision** is a world in which women do not drink alcohol during pregnancy & people living with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders are identified, supported, & valued.
What is FASD?

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

• Condition caused by prenatal alcohol exposure that includes a wide range of potential birth defects.

• Each person on the fetal alcohol spectrum is unique

• Permanent disability however FASD is 100% preventable

• Effects are lifelong and irreversible

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Research shows as many as 1 in 20 children in the U.S. have an FASD.
Factors that impact fetal vulnerability:

- Dosage/BAC
- Resiliency of the fetus
- Mother’s health, age, etc.
- Genetics
- Other substance exposure
- Timing of the exposure

Remember:

- PAE does not always result in an FASD
- FASD is not generational
- Manifestations are unique in each individual
Fetus Developmental Timeline

Fetal Development Chart

This chart shows vulnerability of the fetus to defects throughout 38 weeks of pregnancy.*

* = Most common site of birth defects

Period of the ovum
Weeks 1-2
Week 3
Week 4
Week 5
Week 6
Week 7
Week 8
Week 12
Week 16
Weeks 20-36
Week 38

Period of early embryo development and implantation:
CNS
heart
eye
heart
eye
heart

Period of the embryo:
limbs
teeth
palate
ears
external genitals

Period of the fetus:
brain

Central Nervous System (CNS) - Brain and Spinal Cord

Heart
Arms/Legs
Eyes
Teeth
Palate
External Genitals
Ears

Adapted from Moore, 1993, the National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (NOFAS), 2009, and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), 2018.*

* This fetal chart shows the 38 weeks of pregnancy. Since it is difficult to know exactly when conception occurs, health care providers calculate a woman’s due date 40 weeks from the start of their last menstrual cycle.
Effects of Alcohol during Pregnancy

- Pregnant person drinks alcohol
- Alcohol enters the placenta & passes from maternal blood supply to fetal blood supply
- Fetus excretes alcohol into the amniotic fluid
- Fetus swallows amniotic fluid
- Alcohol is perpetually reabsorbed by the fetus
Ending the Stigma

Why do people drink alcohol during pregnancy?
I wish my tolerance for my children would increase as much as my tolerance for wine.

someecards

Surviving Motherhood
ONE SIP AT A TIME

Daddy Needs a Beer
Where are you getting your medical advice from?

Abstaining completely from alcohol during pregnancy - from conception through birth - is recommended by all major medical groups, including:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- U.S. Surgeon General
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)
- National Institutes of Health
- World Health Organization
In the United States, 11.5% of women drank alcohol during pregnancy and 4% engaged in binge drinking.
According to IOM, out of opioids, cocaine, methamphetamines, marijuana and alcohol, alcohol causes the most serious effects on a developing fetus.
# Impact of Prenatal Exposure

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Effects of alcohol during pregnancy

Decades of research have shown:

• Even low levels of alcohol can affect the fetus
• The risk increases with more alcohol
• The healthiest and safest choice is to avoid drinking any alcohol during pregnancy.
Facial features

It's a common myth that all people with an FASD have a specific set of facial features.

- The fact is only 10-15% of people with FASD have these facial features.
Behaviors associated with FASD can be challenging & try the patience of the most experienced, dedicated professionals & caregivers.

Photo courtesy of Dr. Jeffery Wozniak, University of Minnesota, 2019
Common Symptoms

- Impairment in memory & attention span
- Poor judgment & impulsive
- Easily influenced by others
- Difficulty generalizing knowledge
- Difficulty understanding abstract concepts
- Difficulty understanding cause-&-effect relationships
- May struggle with transitions
- Verbal receptive language is more impaired than verbal expressive language
Developmental Skills: Case Example

- Physical maturity: 18 years old
- Comprehension: 6 years
- Emotional maturity: 6 years
- Social Skills: 7 years
- Concept of money, time: 8 years
- Reading level: 16 years
- Expressive language: 20 years
Remember these three things:

You are now empowered with the information to help prevent a child from having a life-long and irreversible disability. That’s huge! Remember,

• Safer alcohol choices and planned pregnancies both help prevent FASD

• FASD is a brain-based, permanent disability with wide-ranging effects that impacts 1 in 20 children in the U.S.

• During pregnancy, there is no known safe amount of alcohol, no safe type of alcohol, and no safe time to drink alcohol
Proof Alliance Resources

- Public awareness & prevention
- Community grants & partners
- Family engagement & support
- Diagnostic clinic & screening
- Youth & young adult program
- Public policy work
- Professional education
- Proof Alliance website resources
PRoF Alliance

Website: www.ProofAlliance.org
Email: info@ProofAlliance.org
Phone: 651.917.2370
Address: 1876 Minnehaha Ave W.
           St. Paul, MN 55104
Sources

- Canada FASD Research Network. Basic information. https://canfasd.ca/topics/basic-information/

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Sources

Sources

- National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. What is a standard drink? https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/alcohol-health/overview-alcohol-consumption/what-standard-drink?fbclid=IwAR03xz3GvzURM5AqTlzK5q0KWy6o5_5AZiET8xlqQe8vH_OIe5B50rNnxzY
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