

50/99 Days to FASDay

On a cold Canadian winter day in 1999, Bonnie Buxton had an idea: "What if, on the 9th minute, of the 9th hour, of the 9th day, of the 9th month of the year 1999, we ask the world to remember that during 9 months of pregnancy, women remain alcohol free?" With her husband, Brian Philcox, and Teresa Kellerman, they created a world-wide movement. #FASDay

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The Birth of FASDay

Life is short. Do stuff that matters

SEP 9

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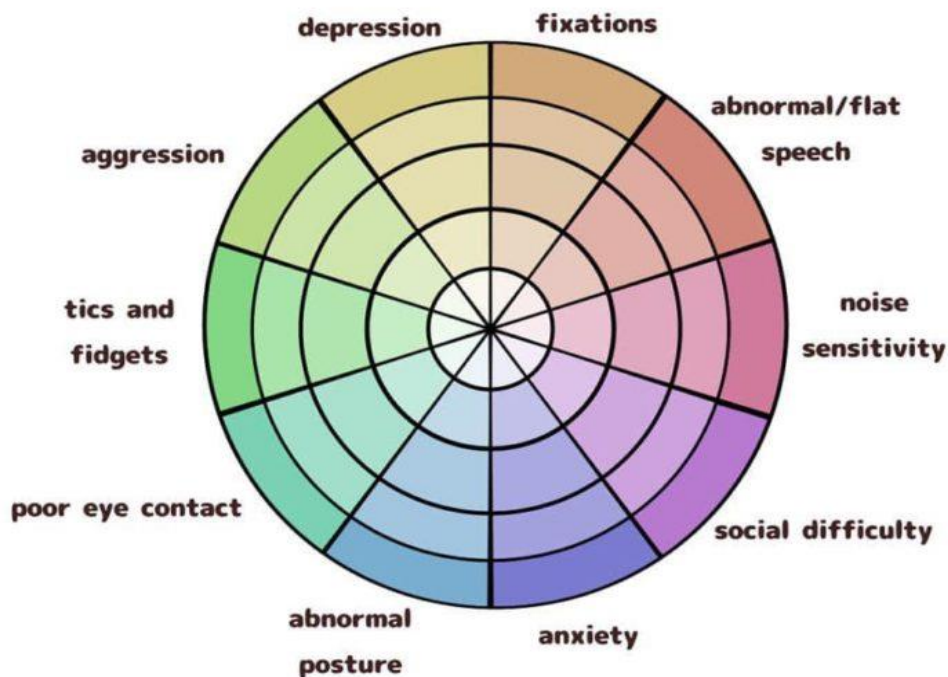


Happy FASD Awareness Day (September 9th) everybody!

We are celebrating the **50th** year of FASD diagnosis in the United States throughout September 2023. Here are **50 things** compiled cohesively with our CDC partners that the public should know about FASD/PSE. Welcome to **FASD Awareness Month 2023**.

1. The FASD spectrum is *not* a sliding scale in terms of functioning, but more like a color spectrum where each function has its own unique sliding scale.

what it can actually look like:



Source:

2. There is a medication algorithm which was developed to help those specifically with FASDs. While one does not exist in the US, there is a medical algorithm that was developed in Canada for the management of symptoms associated with FASD.

Source: [Medication Algorithm - CanFASD](#)

3. It's important to get the proper diagnosis, no matter your age. It can offer insight into the strengths and challenges of your past, and give you insight for your future endeavors; knowing it's okay to ask for support or to give yourself grace as you navigate life.

Source: [Diagnostic Guidelines - CanFASD](#)

4. With the right support and interventions, individuals with FASD can make significant progress in their cognitive, social, and life skills. They are not “destined” for a certain path or outcome.

Source: [“Trying Differently Rather Than Harder: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders”](#) by Diane Malbin

5. FASD costs the U.S. on average \$205B per year. A 2018 comprehensive review of studies on the economic impact of FASD found an annual average cost of \$30,000/person (includes health care, special education, residential care, productivity losses, and adjusted by 30% to include corrections costs) or \$205B per year in the US.*

Source: [A Multicountry Updated Assessment of the Economic Impact of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder: Costs for Children and Adults - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#)

6. 1 in 7 pregnancies are alcohol-exposed, yet FASD isn't regularly screened for in early childhood or school-aged youth.

Source: [Alcohol Use During Pregnancy | CDC](#)

7. FASD is often misdiagnosed as ADHD or Autism, which can hinder the treatment of the individual as the supports required for individuals with FASD are different from those for Autistic individuals or people with ADHD.

Source: [FASD diagnosis: Why is it important? | FASD Hub](#)

8. Many people with FASD demonstrate remarkable resilience and perseverance in the face of challenges, inspiring others with their determination.

Source: [untitled \(formedfamiliesforward.org\)](#)

9. Consideration of alternative approaches, such as diversion programs or treatment courts, can be more effective in addressing the needs of individuals with FASD than traditional incarceration.

Source: [Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and the Criminal Justice System: A Research Summary \(mentalhealthjournal.org\)](https://www.mentalhealthjournal.org)

10. Diagnosing FASD can be complex due to its wide range of cognitive, behavioral, and physical characteristics. It is essential for mental health providers to consider the possibility of FASD when assessing clients.

Source: [Common Diagnostic Approaches in Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder \(aap.org\)](https://www.aap.org)

11. A Disproportionate Number of youth with FASD are in Justice/Child Protection Systems. A 2015 review of studies on FASD in the justice system found that adolescents affected by FASD are 19 to 40 times more likely to become involved in the juvenile justice system. The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges FASD guide states 30% of school-aged children referred by child welfare agencies for assessment of behavioral problems met the diagnostic criteria for FASD. Significantly, 80% of those referred had no prior diagnosis within the FASD spectrum.

Source: [NCJFCJ FASD Guide Final 09_06_16](https://www.ncjfcj.gov)

12. A NIAAA-supported 2018 FASD prevalence study of 6,639 first-graders in four US geographically-separated communities found 222 (3.3%) had FASD. The study estimated the prevalence of FASD ranged up to 1-in-20 children. Only 2 youths had a previous diagnosis within the FASD spectrum.

Source: [Prevalence of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders in 4 US Communities | Antenatal Exposures and Child Outcomes | JAMA | JAMA Network](https://www.jama.com)

13. As many as 1 in 20 people in the United States have an FASD.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/1in20.html>

14. The social stigma surrounding FASD has implications on how much support is offered to the FASD community: one study showed that people were less likely to fund FASD related services compared to all other human service programs.

Source: [The Public Stigma of Birth Mothers of Children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov)

15. The AAP has assembled resources related to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) to raise awareness of individuals with an FASD, promote screening for prenatal exposure to alcohol, and encourage referral for diagnostic evaluations for an FASD.

Source: [Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders \(aap.org\)](https://www.aap.org)

16. Interdependence is the key for individuals with FASD. They can do so many things, but may need support along the way...expecting them to be fully independent is not the best method of supporting them appropriately.

Source: [\(PDF\) Building Strong, Interdependent Relationships between People with FASD and their Supporters \(researchgate.net\)](#)

17. People with FASDs are often not purposefully engaging in malicious behavior. They may not be able to learn from their mistakes the same way as their “normative” peers due to cognitive and executive function disparities.

Source: [Neurocognitive Profile In Children With Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#)

18. FASD is a lifelong brain based disability where individuals can succeed with proper supports in a safe, secure environment.

Source: [Fact Sheets - FASD United](#)

19. Stigma around substance use can prevent pregnant people from seeking the needed treatment. It's never too late to stop drinking alcohol during pregnancy.

Source: [Alcohol Use During Pregnancy | CDC](#)

20. Everyone plays a role in preventing FASDs. Complex factors contribute to the risk of prenatal alcohol exposures, such as incorrect or misleading information, adverse early life experiences, lack of social support, or alcohol use disorders. FASD is preventable when pregnant people are supported by partners, families, and communities.

Source: [2021 Proof Alliance Fact Sheets](#)

21. Within child welfare, children who experience permanency disruptions often have an undiagnosed FASD or an under-supported FASD. The lack of appropriate training for child welfare professionals and caregivers leads to placement disruptions and additional trauma to children. An informed FASD diagnosis, along with the appropriate education and support will reduce disruptions and lead to more secure permanency for our children.

Source: [PARTicle-Placement-Stability-in-Child-Welfare-FINAL.pdf \(oacas.org\)](#)

22. If you were exposed to alcohol during pregnancy and think there could be any FASD symptomology within your child, have your child evaluated for early intervention or similar services. Also, ask your doctor for a referral to FASD relevant specialists.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/facts.html>

23. You are not alone in this journey. The Family Navigation Program at FASD United can help connect you with resources, support and information.

Source: [FASD Family Navigator - FASD United](#)

24. FASD is a spectrum disorder, meaning that individuals can have a wide range of distinct cognitive, behavioral, and physical characteristics. Expecting traditional methods of behavioral correction to be effective on those with FASD is not ideal.

Source: [Dev and Behav Effects FASD 1-Page Resource FINAL no bleed.pdf \(aap.org\)](#)

25. FASD is often considered a hidden disability, as some challenges may not be immediately apparent. Teachers should be aware that students with FASD may require additional support.

Source: [FASDs: Information for Educators | CDC](#)

26. Visual aids, such as schedules, charts, and diagrams, can assist youth with FASD in understanding instructions and tasks.

Source: [Teaching and learning strategies to support primary aged children with FASD | Factsheets | Resources | Learning With FASD](#)

27. FASD can lead to challenging behaviors that may stem from difficulties in impulse control, social understanding, and frustration tolerance. Mental health providers should use strategies that address these underlying factors.

Source: [Basics about FASDs | CDC](#)

28. Teachers and caregivers should use clear, concise, and concrete language when giving instructions to help youth with FASDs understand and follow directions.

Source: [Strategies for supporting students with FASD - THE EDUCATION HUB](#)

29. Recognizing that each person with FASD is unique, teachers and caregivers should adopt an individualized approach that takes into account the student's strengths, challenges, and learning style.

Source: [Education & Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Toolkit, FADU, ADAI, UW](#)

30. Individuals with FASD often offer unique perspectives that can contribute to creating a diverse and vibrant community.

Source: [CanFASD: Strengths Among Individuals with FASD \(wrap2fasd.org\)](#)

31. Building strong social networks and connections can lead to a supportive and understanding community that values the contributions of individuals with FASD.

Source: [Researchers' Perspectives on Building Strengths and Abilities in FASD - CanFASD](#)

32. By sharing their stories and experiences, individuals with FASD can raise awareness, reduce stigma, and inspire others to support their journey.

Source: [“Trying Differently Rather Than Harder: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders”](#) by Diane Malbin

33. Prenatal alcohol exposure is the leading cause of developmental disability in the United States.

Source: [Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders prevalent in U.S. communities | National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#)

34. If someone is pregnant, or at risk for becoming pregnant, and needs help to stop drinking, health care professionals can provide information on local programs or refer them to organizations with access to alcohol/substance abuse resources.

Source: <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov>.

35. FASD is prevented by abstaining from alcohol during pregnancy. There are factors that contribute to people's inability to stop drinking like access to resources, substance misuse environments, and socioeconomic status.

Source: [Tip 58: Addressing Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders \(FASD\) \(samhsa.gov\)](#)

36. Early diagnosis and intervention can significantly improve the outcomes for individuals with FASD.

Source: [Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders | National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism \(NIAAA\) \(nih.gov\)](#)

37. Ongoing research is essential for better understanding the complexities of FASD and developing effective interventions.

Source: [NIAAA Spectrum \(nih.gov\)](#)

38. Many youth with FASD can struggle with social interactions. Teachers and caregivers should provide explicit instruction and opportunities for practicing social skills in a supportive setting.

Source: [Strategies for supporting students with FASD - THE EDUCATION HUB](#)

39. Individuals with FASD may have co-occurring mental health conditions. Mental health providers should be aware of the potential for dual diagnoses and tailor interventions accordingly.

Source: [FASDs and Secondary Conditions | CDC](#)

40. Many individuals with FASD have experienced early adversity and trauma. Mental health providers should approach care with sensitivity and use trauma-informed approaches.

Source: [Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and Adversity \(canfasd.ca\)](https://www.canfasd.ca)

41. People with FASD may struggle with communication, understanding abstract concepts, and processing information. Caregivers, mental health professionals, and educators should be FASD-informed in order to best aid this demographic.

Source: [Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders \(FASD\) | CAMH](https://www.camh.ca)

42. Structured and predictable environments can help reduce anxiety and challenging behaviors in individuals with FASD. It is recommended that mental health providers should collaborate with other professionals to create supportive settings.

Source : [“Trying Differently Rather Than Harder: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders”](https://www.camh.ca) by Diane Malbin

43. Family support is crucial for individuals with FASD. Mental health providers and educators should work closely with families to provide guidance, resources, and strategies for managing behaviors and challenges.

Source: [FASD: A guide for mental health professionals \(preventionconversation.org\)](https://www.preventionconversation.org)

44. Recognizing and building upon the strengths of individuals with FASD can enhance their well-being and sense of self-worth.

Source: [untitled \(formedfamiliesforward.org\)](https://www.formedfamiliesforward.org)

45. FASD is a dynamic field with ongoing research. Mental health providers should stay informed about new developments and best practices in supporting individuals with FASD.

Source: [NIAAA Spectrum \(nih.gov\)](https://www.niaaa.nih.gov)

46. Partners who stop drinking to support their partner during pregnancy, and who stop drinking when trying to get pregnant are helping support healthy pregnancy.

Source: [Fathers-Role-1-Issue-Paper-Final.pdf \(canfasd.ca\)](https://www.canfasd.ca)

47. Collaboration between criminal justice services, mental health professionals, and FASD experts can lead to better-informed decisions and more appropriate interventions that can genuinely benefit this population.

Source: [FASD: What the Justice System Should Know \(fasdunited.org\)](https://www.fasdunited.org)

48. Creating environments that embrace individual differences and provide structured routines can enhance the well-being of individuals with FASD.

Source: ["Navigating the Social World: A Curriculum for Individuals with Asperger's Syndrome, High Functioning Autism and Related Disorders"](#) by Jeanette McAfee

49. Some of the earliest recorded observations of the effects of alcohol exposure on the developing fetus date back to the 19th century.

Source: [A Brief History of Awareness of the Link Between Alcohol and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#)

50. Over time, researchers recognized a spectrum of effects beyond Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), leading to the term "fetal alcohol spectrum disorder" (FASD) to encompass a broader range of conditions and people.

Source: [Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders | Pediatrics | American Academy of Pediatrics \(aap.org\)](#)

*We hope you have learned some important, insightful things about **FASD** and **PSE** for the 50th year of diagnosis in the US and FASD Awareness Month, please share to promote increased education and information.*