

WHAT IS FASD?

FASD stands for **Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder**. It is a lifelong disability that affects the brain and body of people who were exposed to alcohol in the womb. Each person with FASD has both strengths and challenges and will need special supports to help them succeed with many different parts of their daily lives.

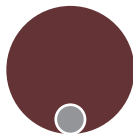
THE LEADING DISABILITY

FASD is the leading developmental disability in Canada. It affects 4% of Canadians. That's more people than:



Autism

1.52%



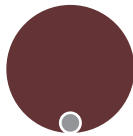
Cerebral Palsy

0.21%



Down Syndrome

0.14%



Tourette's Syndrome

0.10%

CONTACT YOUR PROVIDER

Connect with your local FASD service provider to learn more about FASD or to access supports and services.

FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER (FASD)



1,500,000 CANADIANS

have FASD



LEARN MORE

info@canfasd.ca • www.canfasd.ca

This resource was created by the Canada FASD Research Network, modelled after a similar document from NOFASD Australia.

Canada's Leading Developmental Disability

THE DISABILITY

FASD is a spectrum disorder. Each person with FASD has their own unique strengths and challenges. Their challenges may change throughout their life, but they will need lifelong supports to succeed.



FASD is a
**WHOLE BODY
DISORDER**

It affects both the brain
and the body.



FASD FACTS

The prevalence of FASD is higher in certain populations.

Up to
11%

of children in the child welfare system have FASD

You often can't tell if someone has FASD just by looking at them.

Less than
10%

of people with prenatal alcohol exposure have visible facial differences

People with FASD may experience many challenges

Approximately
90%

of people with FASD will experience mental health challenges at some point

LANGUAGE MATTERS

The language we use to talk about FASD is very important. Language shapes how we see a topic. It can contribute to negative stereotypes and stigma.

By changing the way we talk about FASD, we can reduce misinformation and stigma.

When we talk about FASD we want to make sure we use:

strengths-based language

USE

person with FASD or affected by FASD

AVOID

damaged by FASD or suffering from FASD

language that promotes dignity

USE

cognitive disability or neurodevelopmental disability

AVOID

mentally disabled

consistent messages

USE

FASD can be preventable

AVOID

FASD is 100% preventable

evidence-based information

USE

the safest option is no alcohol during pregnancy

AVOID

any alcohol will harm your baby

person-first language

USE

children with FASD
women who use alcohol

AVOID

FASD kids
alcoholic or addict

harm reduction approaches

USE

stopping alcohol use at any time will reduce your risk

AVOID

just one drink can cause FASD

PREVENTING FASD

There is no known safe amount of alcohol to drink during pregnancy. Experts recommend that the safest option is no alcohol at all.

ZERO ALCOHOL IS SAFEST

But there are a number of reasons someone may drink during pregnancy, including:

- Not knowing the risks of drinking during pregnancy
- Not knowing they are pregnant
- Using alcohol to cope with trauma or violence
- Pressure from a partner
- Substance use challenges

Go alcohol-free if you are pregnant, planning a pregnancy, or having unprotected sex.

PREVENTION FACTS

Use effective contraception if you don't want to be pregnant.

Up to
60%

of pregnancies are unplanned and many people do not know they are pregnant until several weeks along

Go alcohol-free if there's a chance you could be pregnant.

Up to
62%

of women drank alcohol within three months of their pregnancy

Get the facts about drinking alcohol during pregnancy.

Less than
50%

of doctors talk to their patients about the risks of alcohol in pregnancy