

Project Update:

Caregiver Approaches, Resiliencies, and Experiences Raising Individuals with FASD
Trends in Alcohol and Substance Use

Participant Snapshot

- 202 respondents as of April, 2023
- Average age of 54 years (range 25 to 78)
- 95% identify as women
- Most (58%) are adoptive parents; 17% biological parents; 12% other/extended family members; 6% foster parents, and 2% kinship carers
- The majority (67%) of respondents live in Canada; 21% live in the US; and 5% in Australia
- Caregivers reported on 407 children or adults (78% of whom have diagnosed or possible FASD)
- 39% of respondents are caregiving on their own



Substance Use Among Caregivers

8% of caregivers reported using alcohol/other substance to cope*

77% of these caregivers report using substances weekly or more

46% of these caregivers reported that it is *not* a helpful strategy

*Comparable to problematic substance use rates in the general population, though estimates range widely.

More Helpful Coping Strategies



25%

Talking/
expressing
feelings



24%

Movement



18%

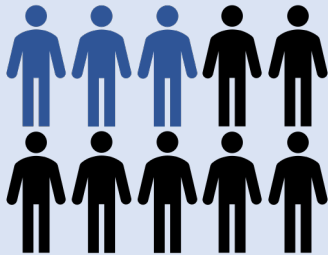
Spiritual
Practice

(% of caregivers who rated these strategies as the *most helpful*)

Key Findings

Substance Use Among Individuals with FASD

99 caregivers answered questions about substance use among their dependent(s)



28% reported that a loved one with FASD in their care has struggled with substance use

Among these individuals with FASD...

15
years

Average age of substance use onset

33%

Hospitalized for substance use crisis

87%

Use(d) more than one substance

Most Commonly Reported Substances of Concern

80%

cannabis

73%

alcohol

47%

tobacco

Areas for Improvement

Caregivers reported low levels of satisfaction around...

- X** Supports to **navigate** systems/resources
- X** Access to adequate treatment/support
- X** Appropriateness of **medical system** to address needs

...this highlights areas for improved care.

Words of Hope

“Both my children, despite their addictions are still alive. As long as they are alive, there is hope things will change for the better.”

“I think I understand my son well and know how to talk to him. I'm comforted that he's made it to twenty without any addictions.”

THANK YOU to those who have participated in this study! Email katy.flannigan@canfasd.ca if you have questions.

Access and share the survey [HERE](#).

Research & Resources

Relevant Studies

- Interventions to improve mental health and substance use outcomes ([Flannigan et al.](#))
- Women's perspectives on substance use treatment ([Rutman](#))

Other Resources

- [Guide for FASD-informed substance use treatment](#)
- [Environmental scan of substance use programs](#)
- [Substance use treatment webinar](#)