

MEDIA RELEASE

Stage set for inaugural conference on fetal alcohol spectrum disorder in Saskatoon

(November 7, 2023, Saskatoon) The first-ever Canada FASD Conference will be hosted at TCU Place in Saskatoon from November 7 to 9. This sold-out event brings together over 500 researchers, caregivers, individuals with FASD, policymakers and professionals to share what they know about fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD).

The conference's unique program connects those with lived experience of FASD with renowned researchers and practitioners in the field. The final program has been released, with presentations covering a wealth of topics that intersect with FASD, including justice, diagnosis, and prevention. The demand for this event has exceeded its capacity, with tickets selling out more than 100 days before the event.

An estimated 4% of Canadians have FASD – more than autism, cerebral palsy, and Down syndrome combined. It is a lifelong disability that affects the brain and body of people exposed to alcohol prenatally. Support for and awareness of this disability varies significantly across the country. The conference will unite people from all across Canada and internationally, with the goal of transforming evidence into action.

Saskatoon's local FASD organization, the FASD Network of Saskatchewan, is providing a local perspective in the support and preparation of this event. It is being hosted in partnership with the Canada FASD Research Network, the Canada Northwest FASD Partnership, the Governments of Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Quotes

“As one of the founding partners of the Canada Northwest FASD Partnership and the CanFASD Research Network, the Government of Saskatchewan recognizes how vital it is to have a coordinated, integrated approach to FASD prevention and supports,” **Saskatchewan Health Minister Everett Hindley said.** “This conference is an excellent opportunity to bring together those with lived experiences, caregivers, researchers and professionals. I know the insight and knowledge shared at the conference will benefit residents across our province and our country.”

Saskatoon local, Niall Schofield said: “I'm a 60 scoop Indigenous man who has FASD. I am definitely a dreamer I shoot for humongous goals - as of right now I'm developing the first ever triple discipline indoor cycling facility in Canadian history. I'm looking forward to this event being in Saskatoon as this is where I live, but I also think this would be great for Saskatoon as it brings international attendees and international attention. It'll be good for our local community and it will create more awareness of FASD for the people of province.”



Audrey McFarlane, B.CR, MBA, Executive Director, the Canada FASD Research Network said: “We are thrilled with the response to this conference, clearly people are wanting to reconnect and to learn more about what is happening in the field of FASD. This conference will bring together the voices of researchers, service providers and clinicians, and those with lived experience to provide the attendees with a broader understanding of the issues and opportunities in many areas such as complex youth, diagnosis and assessment, prevention, justice system, school based supports, health care, and so much more.”

About 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. [Find out more](#) about the disability on the CanFASD website.

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For more information, please visit: <https://canfasd.ca/canada-fasd-conference/>