

MEDIA RELEASE

International FASD Awareness Day shines light on the need for Bill S-253

(September 5, 2023) Landmarks across Canada will be lighting up red on September 9th to raise awareness of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) as *Bill S-253: an Act Respecting a National Framework for fetal alcohol spectrum disorder* sits in committee.

FASD one of the leading causes of neurodevelopmental disability in Canada, affecting 4% of the population. Not solely a healthcare issue, FASD intersects with homelessness, substance use, education, criminal justice, mental health, child welfare, social services, family health, and more.

FASD is a complex and lifelong disability. The FASD community relies heavily on both informal and formal supports, whose effectiveness and availability are dependent on the knowledge of FASD across professions and within communities.

In October 2021, Bill S-253: A National Framework for FASD was introduced into the Senate of Canada. This legislation is a great step forward to support equitable access to prevention, diagnostics, and support services across the provinces and territories.

To ensure that people with FASD have the support they need, the Canada Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Research Network (CanFASD) has been working closely alongside senate representatives to encourage the passing of Bill S-253. The Bill is currently under consideration in committee.

September 9th is recognized as International FASD Awareness Day. On this day, and throughout the month of September, landmarks across Canada will be lit up red to bring attention to this disability and to celebrate all those impacted by it. There are over 45 landmarks throughout the country participating.

About CanFASD:

CanFASD is Canada's first national Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) research network. CanFASD works collaboratively with researchers and partners across the nation to address complexities of FASD. Our mission is to produce and maintain national, collaborative research for all Canadians, leading to prevention strategies and improved support services for people affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

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For more information this campaign, please visit: www.fasdmonth.ca