

what we know about alcohol and pregnancy

Women want to know about alcohol and pregnancy but may not have the information and support they need to make decisions about drinking.

Alcohol use in pregnancy can increase risk for miscarriage, stillbirth, premature birth, or result in Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), a disability and diagnostic term which refer to lifelong brain and body related impacts related to prenatal alcohol exposure.

No alcohol during pregnancy is safest.

women's alcohol use during pregnancy



- Most women stop or reduce their alcohol consumption when planning a pregnancy, or when they learn they are pregnant.
- Women who continue to drink alcohol in pregnancy come from all different socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds.
- Some women may face challenges when trying to reduce or stop using alcohol because of experiences of violence and trauma, health, or substance use problems.

what can make it challenging for women

- Stigma makes it difficult for women to seek support from healthcare providers or friends.
- Alcohol is embedded in our day-to-day lives
- Alcohol advertising targets women, especially mothers.



how service providers can support women

share informational materials that...

- provide clear information on risks of alcohol use during pregnancy
- encourage shared responsibility for change among women, families, partners, and communities
- link women to non-judgemental support



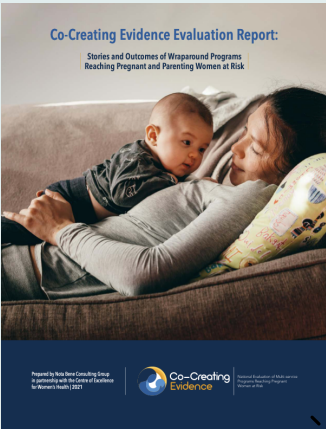
engage in non-judgemental conversations that include...

- goals for stopping/reducing alcohol use in pregnancy
- pregnancy planning and contraception
- information about standard drink sizes and low-risk drinking



link to community-based programs that offer holistic support

- Programs are available that provide nutritional support, prenatal care, assistance with reducing substance use, and other forms of health and social support
- Some programs help mothers and their infants together, supporting health and early attachment
- Women with substance use concerns who participate in these programs are more likely to access substance use treatment and are more likely to maintain custody of their child



Women deserve information to make decisions to reduce alcohol in pregnancy and support to take the steps needed for their health and safety, and the health of their families.