

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder FACTS

1. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) is an umbrella term, including Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), describing the range of effects that can occur in an individual whose mother consumed alcohol during pregnancy. An individual with FAS has the physical characteristics along with the brain damage. An individual with FASD may have all of the brain damage, but not exhibit any physical signs. This person often goes undiagnosed and is labeled the problem behavioral child or the child with parents that are too lazy to discipline their child.
2. FASD is 100% preventable - the only cause is consumption of alcohol while pregnant.
3. Alcohol use during pregnancy is the leading known *preventable* cause of mental retardation and birth defects in the US.
4. FASD affects an estimated 40,000 infants each year - more than Spina Bifida, Down Syndrome and Muscular Dystrophy *combined*.
5. Alcohol causes more permanent damage to the brain than any other substance of abuse including marijuana, heroin, cocaine, and methamphetamines.
6. Effects of FASD vary from individual to individual, but some of the common characteristics are: irritability, poor memory, hyperactivity, lack of fear, no sense of boundaries, poor impulse control, poor judgment and inability to generalize.
7. What this means to society:
 - 80% of adults with FASD do not live independently
 - 80% of adults with FASD have problems with employment
 - 61% of adolescents with FASD have been in legal trouble
 - 60 - 75% (estimate) of children in foster care are affected by FASD
8. FAS alone cost the US \$5.4 BILLION annual in direct and indirect cost.
9. An individual with FAS (not including the majority of FASD) can incur an average lifetime health cost of \$4.2 million.
10. The savings of preventing just *one* case of FAS would result in a \$300,000 reduction in medical costs alone.
11. This is why it is important to raise awareness to continue the prevention, screening, and intervention services of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders.

Thank you again for you time, help and concern regarding FASD.
If you need any more information, please call Denese Thetford at
The Parenting Cottage at 806-795-7552.