

September is FASD Awareness Month

This year, as we celebrate 50 years since the first FASD diagnosis in the United States, we ask you to join us in spreading hope and acceptance for people with FASD.

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF RESEARCH, POLICY AND PRACTICE

FASD



RESPECTING THE PAST, EMBRACING OUR FUTURE

FASD is an umbrella term for a range of diagnosable conditions that can occur with prenatal alcohol exposure (PAE). As many as 1 in 20 Americans may be affected.

This Toolkit Contains

- Social media guide
- Content to help spread awareness about FASD, promote acceptance and support of anyone living with an FASD, and share key resources
- Best practices for engaging in discussions about FASDs
- Promotional materials for FASD Awareness Month

How to Use the Toolkit

- Copy, download, and share our social messages, graphics, and promotional materials in ways that fit the needs of your audiences and channels.
- Use our hashtags, including #FASDUnited when sharing any FASD Awareness posts.



FASD United
THE NATIONAL VOICE ON FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDERS
Formerly NOFAS

Take action and get involved

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF RESEARCH, POLICY AND PRACTICE

FASD

@50

RESPECTING THE PAST. EMBRACING OUR FUTURE.

FASD Awareness Month is an opportunity for you to take action to help raise awareness of individuals with FASD.

Engage in Advocacy: Check out our policy center for the latest on the FASD Respect Act. **Learn More by [Clicking Here!](#)**

Show Support: Send a [Stars for Starla](#) Youth Recognition Award to any youth with Prenatal Alcohol Exposure or [donate](#) to the cause.

Raise Awareness: Get your city, state, or local government to create a proclamation for FASD Awareness Month.

Spread the Word: Share FASD content via your social media channels. Publish a letter to your local newsletter or issue a [press release](#).

Build Community: Participate in the virtual [Run FASD 5K](#) or volunteer with your local FASD United Affiliate.



Join FASD United this September and engage in advocacy, give support, build community to raise awareness of FASD.

What are you doing this September? Scan the code and let us know.



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Social Media Guide

As you roll out social media messaging for FASD Awareness Month, we suggest you:

- Pair PAE prevention and FASD awareness messages together.
- When choosing images, it's important to consider and minimize unintended consequences like reinforcing stigma or stereotypes about people with FASD.
- Use "person first" language like
 - Person with FASD
 - Children with FASD

Phrases to Avoid:

- Words and terms like:
 - Suffering from FASD
 - Damaged by FASD
 - Innocent Victims
- Implying that pregnant people who drink don't care about their children.

FASD is a complex and nuanced topic, and it is important to ensure that our efforts to reduce the incidence of PAE are aligned with and supportive of our work to increase the **visibility, recognition, and support** of all people with FASD in our communities.

Stigma matters. The language we use around PAE can help pregnant people feel safe asking questions about alcohol use during pregnancy or asking for help if they are having difficulties stopping their use.

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Awareness Month 2023 Themes

Learn

A facet of celebrating and advocating for FASDs are knowing what they are, who they impact, and how you participate. This is why week one of FASD Awareness Month is themed **LEARN**. Be it within your hometown or even our nation's capital, there are meaningful and impactful things you can learn to create a more knowledgeable ally. Increasing your familiarity with FASD and its community will allow you to move through Awareness Month with ease!

Be

Being there for individuals with FASDs allows the FASD community to feel seen and heard. This neurodiversity may feel isolating, but it's important to remember that one is never alone! To aid in this reminder, FASD United's week two theme is **BE**. There are ways to connect with others, build community, and be yourself from wherever you are throughout Awareness Month and after.

Do

FASDs and those with them need recognized support in legal, communal, and familial spaces. Understanding the experience of people living with FASD helps us navigate the realities of this neurodiversity. To become more involved in FASD action, specifically during National Impact Week, FASD United presents **DO**. While week three is when the FASD community travels to the US Capitol, there are plenty of efforts to be made in every type of setting.

Say

Words have power — which is why week four of Awareness Month is themed **SAY**. The ways we interact with people set the tone of our movement. Be it someone with an FASD, a community member, a politician or legislator, or even yourself — speak with passion, intelligence, and kindness. When we purposefully direct speech and voice, to be heard rather than just acknowledged, we can accomplish big things!

Share

Despite the prevalence of FASDs, it is still thought of as rare. By raising the profile of FASD and prenatal alcohol exposure in a non-stigmatizing way, we can promote communal awareness of FASDs while increasing the level of support and understanding for people diagnosed. There are individuals with FASD or prenatal alcohol exposure in all of our communities. FASD United presents Awareness Month's final theme **SHARE** for ideas on how you can help reach others and spread the word about FASDs to create a more just society.

Weekly Themes

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
Learn	Be	Do	Say	Share
How to issue a State Proclamation!	An Advocate	Show your appreciation with Stars for Starla	I'm Proud of You!	Our FASD Awareness social media suite!
What those with living experience are saying about FASD.	A Friend	Use our Family Navigator Program	You Do ____ Really Well!	What you've experienced as an individual with an FASD, caregiver, or professional.
How to advocate for The FASD Respect Act!	An Ally	Join the Affiliate Center	My Favorite Thing about You is ____.	Your Run FASD results and photos!
What Strengths-based research means for those with FASDs.	A Light	Make a Donation	FASD does not define you.	The importance of The FASD Respect Act.
What FASD United donations work towards.	A Reason	Participate in Run FASD however you can!	I respect you.	What someone with an FASD means to you.



Sample Social Media Posts

Week 1 Theme: Learn



- Welcome to September- It's #FASDAwareness Month! This is a time for advocacy, support, and community as we celebrate the 50th year of diagnosis in the US. #FASD50
- Week one of #AwarenessMonth begins with learning. In order to best address the needs of the #FASD community, we must familiarize ourselves with the what, why, and how. #LearnFASD
- FASD #canlooklike other disabilities. Although ASD, ADHD, and mood disorders are forms of neurodiversity, FASDs are unique in their presentation and require specific treatments. #earlyintervention

Week 2 Theme: Be

- It's #FASDAwareness Day, the 9th of September. Join the movement towards inclusive legislation, expanded information, and strengthened community for FASDs. #FASD50
- Week two of September #AwarenessMonth is about what we can be! Being there for individuals with FASD and their communities can help ensure committed respect and support. #BeFASD
- FASD is a #NationalHealthPriority. 2023 is the 50th year since FASD #diagnosis in the US & we continue to fight for individuals and populations living with developmental disabilities.



Sample Social Media Posts

Week 3 Theme: Do



- Week three of #FASDAwareness Month highlights the ways interested individuals & communities can participate and take action. This will allow for recognized efforts politically, socially, and familially. #DoFASD
- Support and services for those with #FASDs are crucial! We continue to urge legislators to learn more about this developmental disability. The #FASDRespect Act 2.0 does too, find out more @ nofaspolicycenter.org.
- Although it's the 50th year since #FASD was first identified in the US, we believe political, social, and economic resources should be available to this resilient population. Want to join this movement? Find out how you can @ fasdunited.org.

Week 4 Theme: Say

- FASDs are #NotRare. 1 in 20 school-children is not rare. What IS rare are adequate resources and services that allow individuals with FASDs to thrive w/o stigma and misunderstanding. #1in20 #FASDMisconceptions
- Week four of FASD #AwarenessMonth is based on voice. It's important to say encouraging and helpful things to those in the #FASD community. Speak up and speak kindly! #SayFASD
- FASD is a societal issue- #Notawomensissue. This September Awareness Month, let's emphasize the narrative that #FASD is about disparities in resources, services, and support. #StopTheStigma



Sample Social Media Posts

Week 5 Theme: Share



Hashtag Bank:

#FASD50 #FASD #FASDUnited
#NationalHealthPriority #RespectthePast
#EmbracetheFuture
#FASDisNeurodiversity #FASDRespect
#FASDAwareness
#FASDAwarenessMonth #FASDfuture
#Socialworkers #Educators #Education
#DevelopmentalDisabilities
#Neurodiversity #Diagnosis #FASDat50
#RespectAct #RespectFASDs
#LivingExperience #FosterFASD
#Adoption #Caregivers #FASDcaregivers
#FosterParents #PAE #EarlyIntervention
#ThroughTheLifespan
#AcrossTheLifespan #StopTheStigma

- The final week of September and beyond #AwarenessMonth is dedicated to sharing what we've learned and inspiring others to do so. There are numerous ways to show your support! #ShareFASD
- It's the 50th anniversary of #FASD! We've come a long way since the first U.S. diagnosis in 1973, but we still have a ways to go. Join the nationwide movement for FASD services, support, and strengths-based evaluation. #RespectThePast #EmbraceTheFuture
- Living experience is a special and impactful piece of advocacy. Whether you have an FASD, are a caregiver, or professional involved in the field... #shareyourstory.
- Celebrate #FASDAwarenessMonth & beyond with me! FASDs may impact one in every twenty youth in the U.S. so we continue to advocate for disability rights throughout the country. #FASD50
- September is #FASDAwarenessMonth! This year we celebrate the 50th year of U.S. FASD diagnosis originally from The University of Washington. Join me in continuing to advocate for disability rights!

Download Additional Social Media Images

Things you can LEARN during FASD Awareness Month

1. How to issue a State Proclamation!
2. What those with living experience are saying about the FASD field.
3. How to advocate for The FASD Respect Act!
4. What Strengths-based research means for those with FASDs.
5. What FASD United donations work towards.



THINGS YOU CAN SHARE 

FASD STATE PROCLAMATION MAP



YOU CAN GET A PROCLAMATION FOR YOUR STATE!


 RESPECTING THE PAST. EMBRACING OUR FUTURE.

IT'S FASD AWARENESS MONTH

SEPTEMBER 2023

Things you can BE during FASD Awareness Month

1. An advocate- be there, listen to, and respect those with FASDs!
2. A friend- compliment or love on someone with an FASD!
3. An ally- stand up for those with FASDs and learn more about them.
4. A light- remind those that fall into negativity why we're HERE!
5. A reason- for those who are struggling to keep fighting!



FASD AWARENESS DAY

SEPTEMBER 9TH

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF RESEARCH, POLICY AND PRACTICE

FASD @50

RESPECTING THE PAST, EMBRACING OUR FUTURE

 www.FASDUnited.org

THINGS YOU CAN DO


STAY UPDATED WITH FASD UNITED'S POLICY CENTER!



FASD AWARENESS MONTH

Things you can DO during FASD Awareness Month

1. Show your appreciation for someone with an FASD via our Stars for Starla program!
2. Utilize our Family Navigation service & point others in that direction!
3. Join our affiliate center to be more closely involved in the world of FASD.
4. Consider making a donation to FASD United!
5. Participate in Run FASD however you can!



THINGS YOU CAN BE

ALLYSHIP IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF ADVOCACY.

AN ALLY



SUPPORT YOUR PEERS WITH AN FASD



 www.FASDUnited.org

THINGS YOU CAN LEARN

QUOTE FROM FASD UNITED'S AFFILIATE NETWORK



Over 50% of affiliate organizations are run by volunteers. The FASD United affiliate network can help connect the dots and magnify your voice.

FASD AWARENESS MONTH

Things you can SAY during FASD Awareness Month

1. "I'm proud of you."
2. "You do ____ really well."
3. "My favorite thing about you is ____"
4. "FASD does not define you."
5. "I respect you."




 www.FASDUnited.org

THINGS YOU CAN DO


JOIN FASD UNITED'S AFFILIATE NETWORK. IT'S MAINLY VOLUNTEER RAN!




FASD AWARENESS MONTH

 www.FASDUnited.org

OUR FAMILY NAVIGATION PROGRAM RECEIVES THE MOST QUESTIONS ABOUT CAREGIVER INQUIRIES FOR YOUTH.



It's so important for parents to share the diagnosis with their child, allowing the child to be aware of strengths and challenges, but more importantly, to be a self-advocate and use their voice.

FASD AWARENESS MONTH 

Things you can SHARE during FASD Awareness Month

1. Our FASD Awareness social media suite!
2. What you've experienced as an individual with an FASD, caregiver, or professional.
3. Your Run FASD results and photos!
4. The importance of The FASD Respect Act.
5. What someone with an FASD means to you.



THINGS YOU CAN SHARE 

FASD UNITED AFFILIATE NETWORK MAP



OUR AFFILIATES ARE WIDENING THE CIRCLE

PEOPLE WITH FASDs ARE OFTEN RESILIENT, KIND, AND LOVING. TELL SOMEONE WITH A NEURODIVERSITY YOU APPRECIATE THEM THIS MONTH!




Advocacy Guide

Use wording and references that are non-stigmatizing & people-centered.

Tell YOUR story and how it fits into the topic's advocacy—if you do not have any firsthand experience listen to and learn from others who do.

Remember you are a part of a community, you do not need to advocate alone, we are stronger together!

Remember this disability is something that impacts people, not one's own political or socio-economic ideals, thus the way it is framed is important.

Lift up voices that do not have chances to speak regularly. It is important that those who are socially or publicly unconsidered have the opportunity.

Appreciate others' challenges. You may learn something imperative to your own advocacy.

While there are physical manifestations of developmental disabilities, working to understand impacted persons' mentalities is crucial!

Don't be afraid to ask for help or guidance.



Learn Something New

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF RESEARCH, POLICY AND PRACTICE

FASD

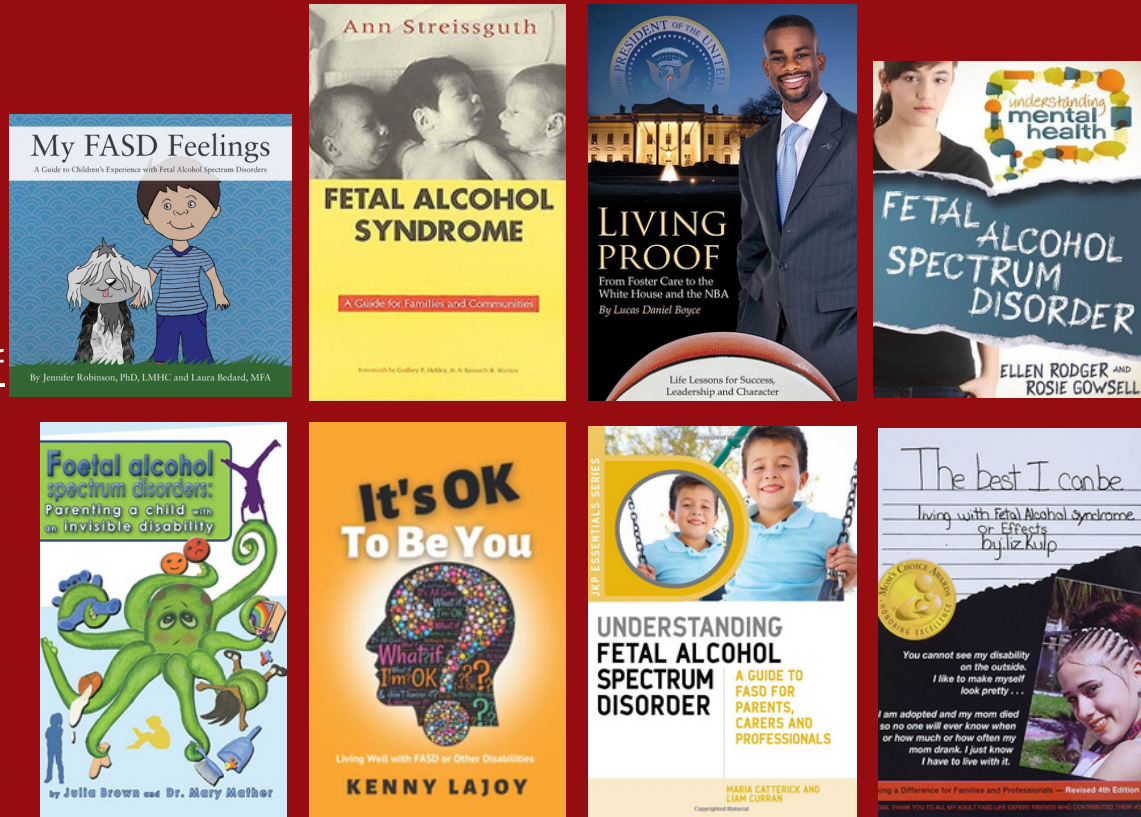
@50

RESPECTING THE PAST, EMBRACING OUR FUTURE

ARTICLES

- [U.S. Strengths-Based Research](#)
- [Canada Strengths-Based Research](#)
- [Conceptual Model](#)
- [Living Experience of Adolescents](#)
- [CDC FASD Stories](#)
- [Nature Reviews Article on FASD](#)
- [NIH Article on Polysubstance Use](#)

BOOKS



FOR FOSTER FAMILIES

- [We're The Lucky Ones](#), by Arnold Eby
- National Foster Care Month 2023: [A Powerful Interview with Arnold Eby of The NFPA.](#)
- Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder among [pre-adopted and foster children](#)
- Adoptive Caregiver experience: [When Rain Hurts: An Adoptive Mother's Journey with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome](#)

SCAN TO CONNECT
WITH YOUR FASD
UNITED AFFILIATE!



Join an Event

SEPTEMBER 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
27	28	29	30	31	1 	2
3	4	5 	6 	7	8	9 International FASD Awareness Day 
10 	11	12 	13 	14 	15	16
17	18 	19 	20 	21 	22	23
24	25	26	27 	28 	29	30

AWARENESS MONTH EVENTS

- [Sign Up](#) for the Virtual RUNFASD event!
- [Register](#) for the An Impactful Network: Widening the Circle Workshop
- Come to the [The Red Shoes Gala](#)
- Learn at the [National FASD Research Briefing: The State of the Science](#)
- Be apart of our [Advocacy Day](#) at the US Capitol

TO VIEW MORE EVENTS OR ADD AN EVENT, SEE OUR [ONLINE CALENDAR](#)



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National Impact Week

[Register
Here](#)

**SEPTEMBER 18-21, 2023
WASHINGTON, DC**

Advocates, Experts, Researches and Families will gather in DC for a week of workshops, information sharing, celebration and advocacy.

Join FASD United at our nation's capitol September 18th-21st for National FASD Impact Week to learn, collaborate and advocate with the FASD community.

Monday

Affiliate
Network
Summit



FASD United
Affiliate Network

Tuesday

Workshop:
An Impactful
Network:
Widening the
Circle



Wednesday

National
Research
Briefing:
The State of the
Science



Thursday

Hill Day:
Advocacy at our
Nations Capitol





September is FASD Awareness Month

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 9, 2023

Contact: (name of person submitting)
(phone) – or – (email)

(your city, your state) – (your organization) is joining the cause to celebrate September as FASD Awareness month and to increase awareness and support for people with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs). FASD is an umbrella term describing the range of effects that can occur in an individual who was exposed to alcohol before birth.

Prenatal alcohol exposure is associated with an increased risk of miscarriage, stillbirth, prematurity, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), and a range of lifelong physical, behavioral, and intellectual disabilities. FASDs can impact physical, mental, behavioral, or cognitive development as well as cause growth deficiencies, central nervous system disabilities, and, in only about 10% of people diagnosed, specific facial characteristics. Studies show that up to 1 in 20 U.S. school children may be on the FASD spectrum, a rate more than double that of autism.

Unfortunately, FASD is under-recognized, with supports and services not widely available and far too few diagnostic and treatment services currently available. In addition to public health messaging on the importance of avoiding alcohol while pregnant, it is crucial to bring recognition and awareness of children and adults with FASDs and their need for services and support.

Individuals with FASDs benefit from structure, support, understanding, and most importantly, early diagnosis, early intervention, and FASD-informed medical and mental health care. Recognizing the strengths, talents, and gifts that individuals diagnosed with FASD bring to our communities is a great way to celebrate FASD Awareness Month.

Human service organizations, health care professionals, educators, and the public are called to action to work together to support the FASD community by increasing awareness, becoming educated, and supporting broader efforts to bring FASD-informed services, interventions, and supports to those with this disability. For more information on FASD or alcohol use during pregnancy, visit www.fasdunited.org or www.cdc.gov/fasd.

Create a Press Release

Customize this Press Release template and submit it to your local paper.

Our hope is that letters like this encourage members of your community to raise awareness about FASD in September.

You can even add specific events taking place around the community to the letter.





Submit a Proclamation

PROCLAMATION TEMPLATE

Petition your mayor or governor to declare September FASD Awareness Month. Insert your local information in the placeholders in the Sample Proclamation to customize it for your town or state. Go online to find out how to contact your mayor or governor's office, and/or call or email to inquire where to submit the proclamation.

Human service organizations, health care professionals, educators, and the public are called to action to work together to better understand and support individuals with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD). This can be done by improving public health efforts to increase awareness on how FASDs may present in individuals across the lifespan and the ongoing need for services and support for individuals living with FASD while also spreading the message that there is no safe time during pregnancy to consume alcohol.

Whereas, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) affect as many as 1 in 20 school aged children in the US and are complex lifelong disorders that affect each person differently, resulting in unique strengths and challenges; and

Whereas, FASD is an umbrella term describing the range of disabilities that can occur in an individual who was exposed to alcohol before birth; and

Whereas, FASD can cause challenges with verbal and nonverbal communication, social interaction, growth, cognition, and adaptive function, and can affect anyone, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomic background; and

Whereas, FASD is often accompanied by medical conditions that impact quality of life; and

Whereas, A comprehensive, collaborative approach will help to advance research, providing a better understanding of the many forms of FASD, while strengthening advocacy efforts and ensuring access to services and resources throughout their life; and

Whereas, Although FASD can be prevented by supporting pregnancies free of alcohol, prevention efforts should be balanced with support and intervention for people with living with FASD; and

Whereas, Early diagnosis and intervention tailored to individual needs can have lifelong benefits, easing the transition to adulthood and fostering greater independence; and

Whereas, Each person and family affected by FASD should have access to reliable information, supports, and opportunities to live up to their greatest potential.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, **(Governor's name)**, Governor of the state of **(name of your state)**, do hereby declare **[September 9, 2022, as Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Awareness Day [or September as FASD Awareness Month]** and pledge to continue to partner with organizations, health care professionals, educators, and the public to raise awareness about FASD and support individuals living with this disability.

