The prevalence rate of FASD is unusually high among the U.S. population in foster care. Studies show that the percentage of youth in foster care in the U.S. with an FASD diagnosis is as high as 28% (Popova, 2019). Because most children with FASD are unidentified or undiagnosed, estimates of the actual number of youth in foster care with FASD are significantly higher.

Children from households where substance use is present are more likely to spend more extended periods of time in foster care than other children (median of eleven months versus five months for others in foster care).

Secondary behavioral disorders associated with an FASD can further complicate a child’s transition into and out of foster care homes.

Children with FASD often have difficulty:
- Regulating emotions
- Translating body language and expressions
- Understanding boundaries
- Focusing their attention
- Understanding cause and effect or consequences
- Memory

The majority of children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) are not raised by their biological parents. Studies have found that among children diagnosed with FASD, 70% are or have been in foster care, (Burd, 2011).

Studies suggest that a rise in alcohol and drug use has resulted in more children coming into state care.