

2026 Toolkit



FASD IS AN AND CONVERSATION

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September is FASD Awareness Month

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs) are a group of diagnosable medical conditions that can occur in a person who was exposed to alcohol before birth.

Effects are lifelong and can include mental health conditions, learning disabilities, sensory issues, and physical health issues such as heart defects, hearing, visual impairments, and more.

As many as **1 in 20** Americans live with FASD.



FASD &
FASD IS AN AND CONVERSATION

FASD IS AN & CONVERSATION MEANS



WHAT IS AN & CONVERSATION

An "& conversation" means that when we talk about something like FASD, we speak about "FASD &" instead of "FASD or." For example, rather than ask "Is it FASD or is it mental health?" we frame the conversation as "FASD & Mental Health" because FASD touches so many other issues. FASD does not exist in a vacuum. To speak honestly and effectively about FASD, we need to have an "& conversation."

WHY IS FASD AN & CONVERSATION

FASD is very much an "& conversation" because FASD relates to many other areas in complex & nuanced ways. FASD is a wide spectrum and each person is unique.

We need to talk about FASD & Neurodiversity (not FASD or neurodiversity), FASD & Disability, FASD & Policy, FASD & Healthcare. FASD is integral to the conversation in these areas and more.



JOIN THE MOVEMENT



Our Mission:

We need to shift the conversation around FASD to make it clear that it's not "FASD or" it's "FASD AND!"

This is how we get FASD discussed in more places and spaces, expand public awareness, and build FASD-informed systems.

Our Objectives:

- Empower those with living experience
- Reduce stigma
- Increase understanding and acceptance
- Train systems of care

Join Us Today:

You can join the movement right now by deciding to make each of your own conversations about FASD an "& conversation." This begins with the people you know and interact with.

Top ways to join the movement:

- Join the Policy Center and become an advocate
- Engage with us on social media and share our content
- Register for Impact Week, the Research Conference, and other events
- Connect with an Affiliate organization in your area
- Sign up for our weekly email newsletter

SUPPORT THE **MOVEMENT** **& Get The Facts.**



What Everyone
Should Know About
FASD

Substance Use &

Child Welfare &

Education &

Employment &

Mental Health &

Justice &

Policy &

& Other Resources

& State Data Sheets

& Things to Do After
an FASD Diagnosis

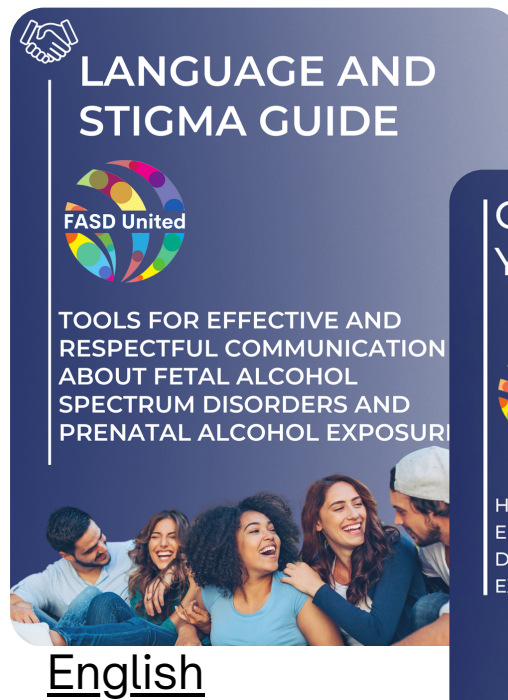
& The FASD National
Agenda

& Healthy
Pregnancies

LANGUAGE MATTERS.

FASD & Language

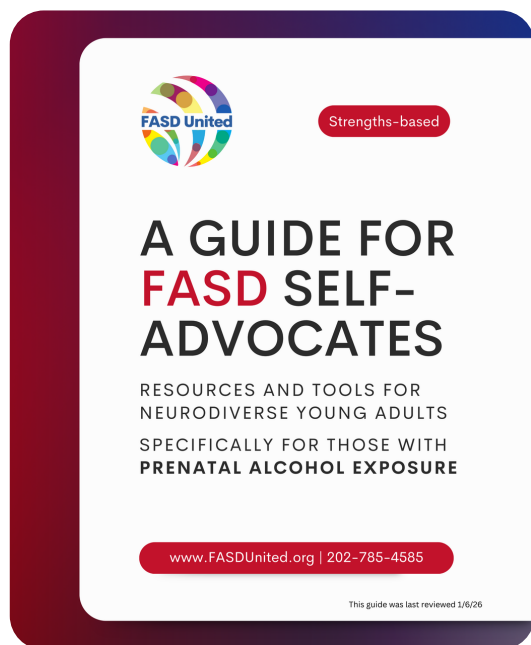
The Language Guide offers research-informed guidance for communicating about FASD in ways that advance health equity, reduce stigma, and center living experience.



The guide emphasizes accurate, respectful, and strengths-based language that upholds the dignity of individuals with FASD, their families, and birth parents, while promoting nuanced, non-politicized understanding grounded in evidence rather than blame.

FASD & The Self-Advocate Guide

The FASD Self-Advocate Guide is an evidence-informed, strengths-based tool developed to support individuals with prenatal alcohol exposure in understanding themselves, affirming their worth, and navigating life with FASD. Designed to be flexible and self-directed, the guide centers autonomy and lived experience, offering practical reflection and consolidated resources that support self-advocacy without deficit framing or prescriptive expectations.



FASD & SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE

Objective:

Media messaging around FASD is nuanced.

We encourage:

- Supporting and listening to those with FASD.
- Consider and minimize unintended consequences like reinforcing stigma or stereotypes about PAE and people with disabilities.

Summary:

To advocate for FASD is to advocate for the rights of those who are often unseen.

It's a movement for a world where neurodiverse individuals are not just accommodated but valued. It is about advocating for better maternal health support so that prevention and intervention can happen before stigma sets in. It's to improve a justice system that too often fails to understand people with disabilities.



#FASD #PAE #PSE #FASDAcceptance #NationalHealthPriority
#FASDisNeurodiversity #FASDRespect #FASDAwareness #FASDAwarenessMonth
#FASDInformed #FASDEducation #DevelopmentalDisabilities #Neurodiversity
#FASDDiagnosis #RespectAct #RespectFASD #LivingExperience #FosterFASD
#FASDCaregivers #FosterParents #PAE #EarlyIntervention #UniversalScreening
#AcrossTheLifespan #FASDLifespan #1in20 #NotRare #NotRareEverywhere

FASD & Social Media Examples



FASD is a whole-body health condition & FASD-informed medical professionals **support** people with FASD, **healthy pregnancies**, & healthy families.



For Affiliates:

[Click Here for Social Media Templates](#)

For Everyone:

[Click Here for Social Media Templates](#)



I have FASD & I am

For Self Advocates:

[Click here for the Template](#)

Awareness Day:

[Click here for the Template](#)



I turn challenges into growth, learning, & success.

FASD & Zoom Background Examples



Zoom
Background
Link



FASD & National FASD Impact Week

SEPTEMBER 27-30, 2026 | ARLINGTON, VA

Join FASD United at our nation's capitol September 29th or National FASD Impact Week to learn, collaborate and advocate with the FASD community.

FASD SYMPOSIUM

An Invitation to the Table

Gather with members of the FASD community from across the country to co-create solutions for the future of FASD Advocacy.



Celebrate and dine with FASD advocates, champions, and supporters for our largest fundraising event and ceremony of the year. [Register Here.](#)



Advocate at the United States Capitol! Register for Impact Week and FASD United staff will set up a meeting with your representative to share about FASD and the **FASD Respect Act!**

FASD
NATIONAL
PARTNER
NETWORK



- **CDC's National Partner Network** holds a working meeting to strengthen our collaborative project to reduce alcohol-exposed pregnancies and support people with FASD.
- **The Association of University Centers on Disabilities** holds a Trainee Mini Conference to build connections.
- An evening **Poster Reception** is a professional development opportunity.

Partner's Day



- **DOD's Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS)** holds a workshop to share research and data on PAE and FASD in the military health system.

Create a Press Release for FASD Awareness Month

Customize/Copy 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.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(phone) – or – (email)

Contact: (name of person submitting) September 9, 2026 \

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

FASD is lifelong, with impacts on physical and mental health, learning, communication, memory, sensory issues, and social behavior. FASD impacts each person differently and the effects are often non-apparent, with about 10% of people with FASD having the distinct facial features that are commonly associated with the condition. 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. That's a child in every classroom.

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 recognition, services and support.

Individuals with FASDs often benefit from support, understanding, specialized care, and most importantly, early diagnosis, early intervention, and FASD-informed health care. Reducing the stigma on FASD and 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.

Submit a Proclamation

FASD Supports Needed

You can submit a request to your Mayor or Governor to declare September as FASD Awareness Month. Insert your local information in the **placeholders** in the Sample Proclamation to customize it for your town or state. Go to [FASDUnited.org](https://fasdunited.org) for more information on how to submit a request to your Governor, or email melfi@fasdunited.org.

Background (do not include in your request): 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 alcohol during pregnancy.

WHEREAS, FASD affects 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 learning and memory, social interaction, 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 strengthen advocacy efforts and will help to advance research, professional training, and access to services and resources across the lifespan; and

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

WHEREAS, Early diagnosis and intervention tailored to individual needs can have lifelong benefits, easing the transition to adulthood and improving quality of life; and

WHEREAS, Each person and family should have access to reliable information, supports, and opportunities to thrive; and

WHEREAS, The United States Congress has reaffirmed its dedication to addressing FASD at all levels through the passage of FASD-informed provisions in the SUPPORT Reauthorization Act, signaling a renewed commitment to strengthening both national and state capacity to support individuals and families.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, **(Governor's name)**, Governor of the state of **(name of your state)**, do hereby declare **[September 9, 2026, 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.



GET IN TOUCH & SPREAD AWARENESS

FASDUNITED.ORG

**MEDIA SUPPORT:
SISSI@FASDUNITED.ORG**

CALL: 202-785-4585

Let's raise awareness this September & create something extraordinary together!