

September 9th is FASD Awareness Day



Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a disorder that is preventable. There is no safe amount or safe type or safe time to drink alcohol during pregnancy. If pregnant, or planning to become pregnant, zero alcohol is safest.

FASD is a term that describes the full range of harm that is caused by alcohol use in pregnancy. Over 130,000 Ontarians have FASD. Less than 10% of people with FASD have facial features of the disability. Babies with FASD may have brain damage that results in life-long learning difficulties and behavioural challenges. Babies with FASD may have physical damage such as bones and organs that are not properly formed. Screening for alcohol use before pregnancy and during pregnancy by health care providers can help

prevent FASD. Diagnosing FASD early will help parents and all caregivers to better support the needs of the child and family. Supportive connections, including school programs, counselling services and community based programs are essential.

Many people may not understand why a woman drinks alcohol during her pregnancy. Some reasons may include: not knowing she is pregnant; alcohol use is the norm in her life; hiding her pregnancy for social or professional reasons; addictions; using alcohol to cope with difficult life situations such as abuse or poverty; lacks resources to cope and to support her; unaware of the risks of drinking for the fetus; unaware of the lifelong consequences of drinking alcohol on her child's life.

Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit Sexual Health Clinic

Sexual health clinics offer non-judgemental and youth-friendly information and support. Services provided are strictly confidential. All ages, genders and sexual orientations are welcome.

Talk to a Public Health Nurse about your sexual health needs:

- Free/low-cost birth control
- Condoms at no cost
- Emergency contraceptive pill (Plan B)
- Free pregnancy testing
- Pregnancy counselling and referrals
- Pap tests (ages 25 to 29)
- Sexually transmitted infection testing and treatment at no cost
- Counselling about relationships and sexual health decision-making
- Immunization if eligible (HPV, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B)

For more information, or to book an appointment, call 1-800-660-5853.

FASD | ONE

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
Ontario Network of Expertise

