

# 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.

## Give FASD a Seat at the Table.

### This Toolkit Contains:

- What We Mean by "Seat at the Table"
- Social Media Guide
- Advocacy Guide
- New Resources
- Proclamations/Press Releases

### How to Use the Toolkit:

- Inform your own social media and advocacy
- Get involved with upcoming events
- Promote FASD awareness and resources

# Giving FASD a Seat at the Table Means...

**We aim to secure a presence for FASD in decision-making and discussion forums across various fields, including areas of study, professions, and societal sectors.**

*For Example:*

- Education
- Policy
- Healthcare
- Child Welfare
- Neurodiversity
- Substance Use
- Maternal Health
- Mental Health



## A Well-Rounded Table Includes...

- Access to Early Identification and Intervention
- Enhanced Communal Support for both the person with FASD and their caregiver(s)
- Stigma-Free Prevention Messaging
- Accurate Diagnosis
- FASD-Informed Systems of Care
- Recognition and Accommodations
- Reduction of Stigma
- Strengths as well as Challenges



# Widen the Table

Picture a long table where decisions are made, policies are written, and futures are shaped. A table where the seats are taken by those advocating for Neurodiversity, Maternal Health, Juvenile Justice, Mental Health and countless other movements. These are all deeply connected. The experiences of individuals with FASD do not exist in isolation; they overlap with so many other lived realities.



For too long, conversations about FASD have been sidelined, voices ignored, and the impact overlooked. But not anymore. It's time to pull up a chair and claim a seat at the table.

FASD is an intersectional issue. Intersectionality is about recognizing that people with FASD don't face one barrier—they face many. We need more than one chair; we need a spectrum of them.



**It's time to  
pull up a chair**



# Join the Movement

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.



Your seat at the table may be one color, but it may also be streaked with the colors of mental health, justice reform, disability rights, and others—because advocacy doesn't exist in silos. It thrives in the spaces where movements meet, merge, and amplify each other.

So, pull up your chair. And if you see someone without one, make space. Because the movement for justice isn't about who gets a seat—it's about making sure there are enough for everyone.



## Remember!

# We are in this together.


# Stigma and Language

The language we use holds immense power, influencing how people think, act, and feel.

Our language can be a tool for fostering a more FASD-informed world.

Explore our new *Language and Stigma Guide* to learn how thoughtful communication can drive positive change.



Language  
& Stigma  
Guide   
FASD United

2024



[fasdunited.org/stigma-language-guide](https://fasdunited.org/stigma-language-guide)  
[bit.ly/FASDStigmaGuide](https://bit.ly/FASDStigmaGuide)



# Language and Stigma Guide

## Examples



- **Use Person-First Language**

Language in which the person is centered, rather than their disability.

*Example: "An individual with FASD"*

- **Acknowledge Challenges, Appreciate Strengths**

Using language and images that focus on strengths rather than limitations is empowering and reduces stigma.

*Example: Use positive images that show individuals thriving.*

- **Consider How We Talk About Prevention**

It is recommended to focus on preventing PAE, not FASD.

"100% preventable" language can be stigmatizing as it places blame on pregnant persons rather than on the social drivers of health that influence PAE.

- **Recognize FASD as Part of Neurodiversity**

Neurodiversity implies that society and levels of care should adapt to such disabilities as they are natural differences in brain functioning.

## Remember! We are in this together.



# Social Media Guide

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.



**Tag Us!**  
**@FASDUnited**



## Click to Download Our 2025 Logo

### Hashtag Bank:

#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



# Sample Social Media Posts

Click the link above for social media posts that you can use!



## For an Individual

- September marks FASD Awareness Month! Join me in giving FASD a seat at the table and advocating for increased education and supports for those living with this common disability. #1in20

## For an Organization

- The FASD community is stronger together, which is why (organization name) is shining a light on those living with this common yet under-recognized disability during FASD Awareness Month 2025.





# National FASD Impact Week

SEPTEMBER 15-17, 2025  
WASHINGTON, DC

Join FASD United at our nation's capitol September 15th-17th for National FASD Impact Week to learn, collaborate and advocate with the FASD community.

## FASD SYMPOSIUM

An Invitation to the Table

### Monday

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

**Poster Reception (Evening):** A professional development opportunity with attendees from many different background and career areas.

### Tuesday

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!

### Tuesday Evening

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

### Wednesday

Learn, engage, and discuss interventions for FASD. Sessions are led by FASD United partners at the Uniformed Services University.



## Partner's Day



# Join an Event

09

# SEPTEMBER

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat



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FASD Awareness Day



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10

11

12



14

Symposium

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16



Partner's Day

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## FASD Awareness Month Events

- Sign Up for Move FASD and join a community event.
- Register for FASD Impact Week 2025 in Washington D.C.
- Make a statement and mingle at The Red Shoes Gala.
- Be a part of our Hill Day at the US Capitol.
- Learn how an FASD United Affiliate near you is celebrating.

**To view more events or add an event to the calendar scan the QR code.**

# Move FASD

Join the movement,  
your way. **2025**



# Resources From / For the Community



## Online Tools

Scan To Connect with your  
FASD United Affiliate!

### Prevention-Based Messaging and Perspectives From Those with FASDs

Dec 6, 2023 — by Caroline Gonzalez in interviews, News

## The FASD Experience

## Language & Stigma Guide

FASD United

### FASD Legislation in the 119th Congress



Thank you Illuminate Colorado!



### FASD Unveiled: Shedding Light, Spreading Awareness, and Building...

Illuminate Colorado's video, "FASD Unveiled," educates on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders,...

Alcohol Awareness | Mar 25, 2024

[FASD United's Family Navigation service](#)  
[Meet Your Student: Fillable Tool for Educators](#)  
[Neurodiversity and FASD](#)  
[NIAAA: The Healthcare Professional's Core Resource on Alcohol](#)  
[FASD United's Resource Directory](#)

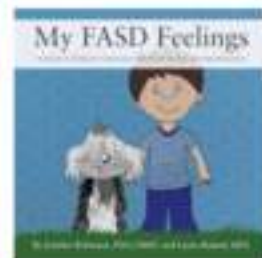
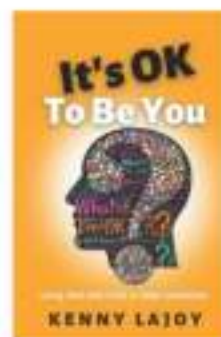
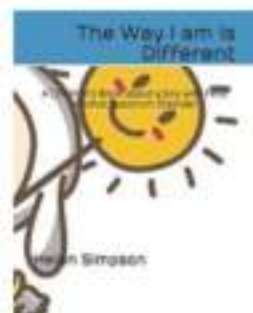


### FASDs: Online Trainings and Resources

This page has resources for healthcare professionals about fetal alcohol spectrum disorders.

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## Books







# September is FASD Awareness Month

## Create a Press Release

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

September 9, 2025 \

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 a spectrum disorder 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](http://www.fasdunited.org) or [www.cdc.gov/fasd](http://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](mailto:melfi@fasdunited.org).

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 with 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.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, **(Governor's name)**, Governor of the state of **(name of your state)**, do hereby declare **[September 9, 2025, 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.