

UPDATES

Services Available

Information Clearinghouse

Diagnostic & Support Services for Children

Diagnostic Services for Adults

First Steps Program

Training and Education



Important Dates:

- ◆ May 1 & 2, 2002
PDD & FAS Conference
Cold Lake, AB
- ◆ May 8-10, 2002
Yukon 2002 Prairie Northern
Conference FAS
Whitehorse, Yukon
- ◆ May 28, 2002
Lakeland FAS Committee
Annual General Meeting
1:00 pm
2nd floor Provincial Building
Bonnyville, AB

Diagnostic Updates

To date 30 children have been seen by the Children's Diagnostic Team for Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. The Statistical breakdown is as follows.

Diagnosis:

- 0— FAS with confirmed alcohol consumption
- 9— Partial FAS
- 16— Alcohol Related Neuro-developmental Disorder
- 5— Unable to make a clear diagnosis

Community:

- 4— For Saskatchewan
- 2— Redwater
- 2— St. Paul
- 1— Glendon
- 2— Fishing Lake
- 3— Elk Point
- 1— Goodfish Lake
- 8— Bonnyville
- 3— Ardmore
- 3— Cold Lake
- 1— Lac La Biche

**FASD is the leading cause of
Developmental Delays**

Executive Board Members:

- ◆ Sue Lysachok
- ◆ Jack McIntyre
- ◆ Heather Dowhaluk
- ◆ Ed Rondeau
- ◆ Lorraine Deschambeau
- ◆ Audrey McFarlane
- ◆ Diane Gillan

Centre Staff

Audrey McFarlane
Regional Program Coordinator

Pat Wilson
Administrative Assistant

Nancy Schneider
Adult Service Coordinator

Joanne Ring
Family Support Consultant

Gina Olofson
First Steps Program

Lorne Kaban
Education Coordinator/Trainer

**The Adult Clinic is now
taking referrals.
Contact the Centre.**



**Prevention activities continue
to be the focus by raising
awareness of FASD by hosting
conferences, media releases,**



LAKELAND CENTRE FOR FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME

OUR VISION

We envision a region with no new FASD births & where currently affected individuals are well supported.

MISSION STATEMENT

To establish & ensure that information about FASD, prevention, diagnosis & support services are available in the region.

New Terminology: "FASD" *Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder* is the new terminology used to describe a medical diagnosis that describes a pattern of physical & behavioural abnormalities that can affect a child born to a mother who drinks alcohol during her pregnancy.

Importance of Diagnosis

Why Diagnose?

There are many reasons why a family, caregiver or individual would want a diagnosis, even if that diagnosis is Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. Research indicates that early diagnosis can result in healthier, more successful children.

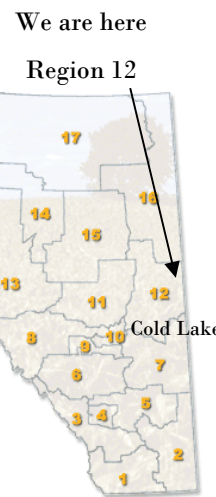
Proper support, intervention, and strategies can be implemented to foster the child's or adult's success. With support and knowledge of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, families, community services and the education system can support a child or adult to achieve many goals that at one time were deemed improbable.

Diagnosis to a child or adult with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder usually means an understanding of why they do not do well at school or work, and not that they are stupid, lazy, willful or bad. A person diagnosed is relieved to know there is a medical reason for the things they have not been able to do.

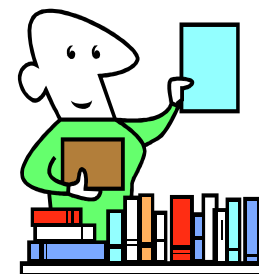
A diagnosis may offer access to supports such as funding through Alberta Learning for assistance at school, a job coach, Persons with Developmental Disabilities, AISH, or other support services within their own community. Knowledge offers acceptance and understanding from the people around them.

With a diagnosis it is hoped that the secondary disabilities that usually accompany Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder will be minimized. Many suffer from depression, mental illness, alcohol/drug addictions, incarceration, and homelessness. Research indicates a number of these secondary disabilities could be diminished if the proper supports were offered.

Also, diagnosis helps to identify the birth mother, which allows her to receive support and education to reduce the risks of further children being born with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.



Feel Free to come in and browse our wide selection of resources including CD's, video's, cassettes and much more on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.





Training Blitz

The Lakeland Centre for Fetal Alcohol Syndrome is entering into the last month of providing free Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder training across the region.

The funding through the Alberta Partnership on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome has allowed for an Education Coordinator/Trainer at the Centre will expire at the end of March.

Those that have taken advantage of the training are organizations and individuals in the health care system, adult and child education systems, children's services, and many others involved in supporting both children and adults that are affected by FASD.

The training provides a brief historical overview, defines "What is Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)?" as well as the Prevalence Rates, explores latest research on how fetal development is affected by alcohol consumption, how diagnosis is made, Characteristics / Profile, Secondary Disabilities associated with FASD, and Best Practices Strategies for FASD. The Centre remains committed to providing training but due to reductions in funding and increased program demands, starting in April it will be necessary to charge a fee for training requests.

There are still a few dates available for anyone interested in receiving the training before the end of March. In order to confirm a date contact Lorne Kaban at the Centre.

Book Review

"Watch for the Rainbows" True Stories for Educators and Other Caregivers of Children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

By Frances M. E. Kapp, B.Ed., M.A., Ph.D. & Kieran D. O'Malley, M.B., D.A.B.P.N.(P)

-This book published in May 2001 is heralded as "A Collaboration Between an Educator and a Psychiatrist". Dr. Kapp, through the retelling of anecdotal stories, highlights some of the traits common in individuals that are affected by FASD. Many of the stories will bring a smile to the faces of those who have had the opportunity to work with these individuals and for those who have not it allows you to have some insight into this exciting world. More importantly these stories capture and relate the paradigm shift that must be adopted by professionals, parents, and others working with individuals with FASD in order to successfully support these individuals to succeed. Each section of stories is followed by Dr. O'Malley's commentary which clarifies how the pre-natal alcohol exposure (FASD) has manifested the behaviors illustrated in the stories, as well as defining strategies for maximizing these individuals potential.

In addition, the book includes some teaching strategies that can be used to enhance the success of students affected by FASD. Dr. Kapp includes from her research a "Summary of Recommendations by Parents, Physicians, and Teachers for Caregivers of Children Who Have Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder" which, in a basic format, defines what each group sees as necessary to continue improving the support that individuals with FASD receive. Dr. O'Malley explains "The Neuropsychiatry of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders" which provides a very clinical perspective which is difficult to understand in some areas due to the medical terminology. This appendix is still valuable in that it does reinforce challenges that FASD individuals may

experience, as well as the importance of having physicians/psychiatrists that understand the dynamics of FASD as part of the treatment team. Finally the book also includes a limited listing of information resources available to those affected, raising, or working with those that are affected with FASD.

Overall this book presents a positive outlook and is an enjoyable read for, as the dedication reads, "All the Children and Others Whose Lives Have Been Touched by Fetal Alcohol. With strong hopes that This Little Book Will make a Difference".

LATEST RESEARCH

Alcohol & Miscarriage

A recently published Danish study found even moderate amounts of alcohol can increase a woman's risk of miscarriage, particularly during the first trimester. The research, which appears in the current issue of Alcohol and Alcoholism, underscores what doctors have believed for a long time that alcohol has toxic effects on the baby, especially at the earliest stages of development. Despite the barrage of studies linking alcohol to pregnancy complications, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, recently reported that pregnant women are drinking and smoking more than ever. The Danish study was one of the largest to date, involving almost 25,000 singleton pregnancies between 1989 and 1996. After analyzing the data, including the mother's admission of alcohol consumption, the researchers concluded that five (5) drinks a week seemed to be the point at which the risk of pregnancy loss took a noticeable jump. The researchers believe alcohol consumption during pregnancy is widely underreported - with many women experiencing early miscarriages as a result of drinking, sometimes before they even know they are pregnant. As Dr. Charles Lockwood, high risk pregnancy expert says "the take home message here is simple: If you are pregnant, or trying to get pregnant, reduce your alcohol intake as much as possible."

For copies of the research study contact the Lakeland Centre for FAS.

Latest News Release

The Lakeland Centre for Fetal Alcohol Syndrome has completed its first ever FASD diagnostic team training. In January 2002, the Centre and the current diagnostic team spent three days training 4 other teams on how to diagnose children and adults with FASD.

The teams were from High Prairie/Slave Lake, Peace Region, our Adult Diagnostic & Assessment Team, and our second Children's Diagnostic Team.

The training is the only training of its kind offered in Alberta and is specifically designed to train FASD diagnostic teams working in rural areas.



The training was very well received and will be repeated next year for new teams.

The Lakeland Centre For Fetal Alcohol Syndrome now has a second Children's Diagnostic and Assessment team operational and can now diagnose 4 children per month. The Centre also has an Adult Diagnostic & Assessment team operational and is accepting referrals.

FIRST STEPS UPDATE

The First Steps project, which provides support to pregnant moms at risk of having a fetally affected baby, has come a long way in the few months of its operation. Referrals can now be made on an informal basis and anyone wishing to obtain information or meet with an advocate may do so by contacting the Centre or the First Steps advocate, Gina Olofson.

The project is a free service to pregnant women in the Cold Lake area, this includes Elizabeth Settlement and Cold Lake First Nations.

First Steps is now heading into its second year of operation. In February 2002, the project coordinator,

Audrey McFarlane and our advocate both attended the first ever "First Steps Conference" in Edmonton Alberta (projects from Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge, and Cold Lake were represented).

The two-day conference was a chance to share information and experiences as well as set some common goals for the upcoming year.

Also in February, our advocate visited the Sheway Project in Vancouver, B.C. This program focuses on prenatal care and nutrition.

Many of the women who access the services of Sheway are impoverished and struggle with drug and alcohol issues. Unfortunately the project does not have the resources to provide the

one on one long-term mentorship that First Steps provides.

The focus is also limited to pregnant women who are economically disadvantaged. From research and experience we know that FASD is a problem that exists in all socio-economic classes. The middle and upper class moms and babies also face barriers that put them at risk.

The First Steps project is available to **all** women in the Cold Lake area who are pregnant or have recently delivered, have used alcohol or drugs during their pregnancy and wish to make positive changes in their lives for themselves and their children.