



RFFADA Newsletter September 2012

Online Petition - Need to reach 1000 signatures by 13 September 2012

A fantastic effort, so far!!!!

FARE has now received 735 signatures, but needs a further 265 before 13 September 2012 to reach the organisation's aim of 1000 signatures

Thanks to everyone who has signed the online petition calling on the Commonwealth Government to mandate health warning labels on alcohol products in Australia. Prior to meeting with and delivering the petition to the Honourable Catherine King MP, Chair of the Australia and New Zealand Food Regulation Ministerial Council on 13 September 2012, RFFADA aims to have 1000 signatures.

Please help meet the goals of the petition by passing this link onto just one friend, and encouraging them to sign. Assisting in this way will not only help exceed RFFADA's goals, but help future lives!!!

Petition link: <http://www.change.org/en-AU/petitions/the-hon-catherine-king-mp-implement-a-mandatory-evidence-based-alcohol-labelling-regime-in-australia>

New warning over alcohol

An alcohol industry group, who came under fire for visually-poor health warnings on alcohol bottles, has responded by launching a campaign to warn against drinking during pregnancy.

Tracking the effects of prenatal alcohol exposure through to 9 years of age

A study of a pregnant cohort from Cape Town, South Africa, reports that growth deficiencies, marked by lean body composition, reduced head size, and height restrictions, may be markers for prenatal exposure to alcohol. Article, Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research, August 15, 2012

Professor Barry Carpenter [ABC Radio: Adelaide] Foetal Alcohol Syndrome

Health expert Professor Barry Carpenter told 891 Mornings host Ian Henschke that he is seeing a dramatic increase in F.A.S in children.

'All expectant mothers are told not to drink while they are pregnant. However, the long-term effects on the children of mothers who drink during are still being understood. Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (F.A.S) is typically caused by women who binge drink during pregnancy, but in some cases you don't even need to binge drink.'

Intergovernmental Committee on Drugs Working Party on FASD: FASD in Australia: An Update – Final Draft (Editors: Lucy Burns, Emma Black, and Elizabeth Elliott, August, 2009)

The Intergovernmental Committee on Drugs (IGCD) Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Working Party's monograph provides information regarding the status of research, policy and practice on alcohol use during pregnancy in Australia. In particular, the FASD findings identify areas when further information is needed to enhance existing practices in relation to prevention, early intervention and long term management.

Statement to the House of Representatives Inquiry into FASD(National Congress of Australia First Peoples, August 2012)

As the national body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and an independent national voice that advocates on Australia's First Peoples' rights in regards to securing economic, social, cultural, political and environmental development, the National Congress of Australia First Peoples (2012) has released the document - *'Statement to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs: Inquiry into Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder'*

The National Congress of Australia First Peoples states the organisation supports the Australian Government's initiative of investigating and developing FASD policy responses,

supports submissions from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, and the impact FASD has had on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The National Congress of Australia First Peoples states that the organisation encourages the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs to carefully consider and respond to the views put forward by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations regarding FASD.

NOFAS: Stanford Research President Advances International Research on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD)

After Dr. Gene Hoyme's most recent visit to South Africa, he is now working on developing clinically applicable criteria for FASD diagnosis.

View Article, PRWEb, August 16, 2012

'There is no safe amount'

An article found on Niagrathisweek.com (August 13, 2012) provides resources for individuals with FASD. Niagrathisweek.com also claims children born to mothers who drink alcohol during pregnancy can have disguised impairments that may make it difficult to recognise symptoms.

Sleep Problems in Children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders

An article presented in the Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine (August, 2012) claims further studies are required to confirm the association between sleep disturbances and individuals with FASD.

Pregnancy alcohol message ignored

The West Australian (Online, 23 August 2012) claim a survey has found four of five people consider that it is not safe for women to consume a small amount of alcohol while pregnant, while one in five people consider it is OK for women to drink a small amount of alcohol while pregnant.

Children with Foetal Alcohol more likely to end up in prison

"Research in Canada and the USA shows that children with FASD are 19 times more likely to end up in prison than those who are not affected. About 35% of young people with FASD end up in the criminal justice system, and over half have been in trouble with the law. Canadian research with young offenders showed that more than one fifth are behaviorally impaired due to prenatal alcohol consumption."

(Scoop Media, 12 July, 2012) <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/GE1207/S00069/children-with-foetal-alcohol-more-likely-to-end-up-in-prison.htm>

Although the Federal Government remains convinced that moderate to heavy alcohol is required to do damage, at least some money is trickling down

Minister for Mental Health and Ageing Mark Butler today announced funding for projects aimed at reducing alcohol related harm in the community. Mr Butler said the funding was focussed on reducing the misuse of alcohol during pregnancy. "Research links moderate to high levels of alcohol consumption during pregnancy with the risk of a variety of abnormalities in the unborn child," Mr Butler said. "People born with fetal alcohol syndrome often have difficulty in learning, developmental delays, behavioural problems and other mental health effects." "We're providing more than \$750,000 over three years for the National Organisation for Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Related Disorders to support its work as the peak body." Mr Butler also announced more than \$1 million for projects that raise awareness of the risks of harmful drinking – particularly during pregnancy. "Funding will be provided to the Foundation of Alcohol Research and Education to work with health professionals in raising awareness with patients about the risks of harmful drinking – particularly to pregnancies." To optimise the impact of the alcohol industry warning labels, funding will also be provided to DrinkWise Australia to work with industry to develop 'point of sale' information for consumers at liquor retailers, clubs, pubs and hotels. Mr Butler said it was important to work with all stakeholders so that consumers get the right information. "Point of sale information is critical in helping people make informed choices about their drinking." The projects build on the \$103.5 million National Binge Drinking Strategy and on specific Government investments we have made for better prevention and understanding of fetal alcohol syndrome.

For more information, contact the minister's office on 02 6277 7280

[http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/53FB45CD9A81EC17CA257A6100831542/\\$File/MB087.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/53FB45CD9A81EC17CA257A6100831542/$File/MB087.pdf)

New Techniques Yield New Info on Alcohol Related Birth Defects

An article presented in the Science Tech Daily (August 23, 2012) claims new imaging tools are being used to detect birth defects associated with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders.

Drinking Alcohol While Pregnant Has Long-Lasting Effects In Children,

A study presented in the Huffington Post (August 2012) claims amongst the causative factors for height restrictions in children is prenatal exposure to alcohol.

Imaging study sheds new light on alcohol-related birth defects

Research undertaken by the University of North Carolina (UNC) Health Care (August 22, 2012) and led by Dr.Sulik illustrates that prenatal alcohol exposure can cause more than one pattern of birth defect in individuals.

Mom warns others against drinking during pregnancy

An article presented by ABC News (August, 2012) claims individuals with FASDs are more likely to have secondary disabilities, including increased vulnerability and poor judgment.

Health care burden and cost associated with FAS: based on official Canadian data.

In August 2012 the National Institutes of Health (NIH) released details of the fiscal costs of FASD, including mental and physical healthcare.

FASD Awareness Day and Melissa's Story: Alcohol During Pregnancy

An article from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (September, 2012) brings attention to International Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs) Awareness Day on September 9. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention claims drinking alcohol during pregnancy can cause FASDs, including a wide range of physical and mental disabilities and lasting emotional and behavioral problems.

AAP endorses statement on alcohol-related neurodevelopmental disabilities

The American Academy of Pediatrics' (AAP) official news magazine has released the AAP's endorsement of the ARND consensus statement. The statement, which came out in February, is attached below.

Recognizing Alcohol-Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder (ARND) in Primary Health Care of Children

An article in the American Academy of Pediatrics - AAP News (September, 2012, 33:18) states that Alcohol-Related Neuro-developmental Disorders (ARND) are being recognised during primary health care screenings.

National Center for Victims of Crime 2012 National Conference

In September 2012 a forum will be hosted by the National Center for Victims of Crime. The forum will be aimed at law enforcement officers, victim service professionals, allied practitioners, policy makers, and researchers. The National Center for Victims of Crime will focus on sharing practical information about current developments to assist with better guiding support services for individuals victimised by crimes of all types.

Rising incidence of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome in South Africa

The World Health Organization has revealed that in a number of countries FAS is the leading cause of mental retardation. In particular, nations include South Africa where consumption rates of alcohol are high.

Variation Noted in Pattern of Alcohol-Related Birth Defects

HealthDay News (August 28, 2012) claims mothers who consume alcohol during pregnancy can give birth to children with a full range of facial and brain defects.

1 in 3 pregnant women in SLO County drinks alcohol in first trimester states officials

According to an article in The Tribune, retrieved from SanLuisObispo.com, August 28, 2012: when a culture fosters social drinking, women are more likely to drink during pregnancy – this places the fetus at risk of developing permanent disabilities.

**C.A.S.E. Adoption Support
Newsletter**

The not-for-profit Center for Adoption Support and Education's (C.A.S.E.) August 2012 E-newsletter provides: - resources and support for foster and adoptive families; - access to a free 'Strengthening Your Family' webinar series; and - additional information spotlighting kinship care;

**Reaching out to Birth
Families and Parents**

The Minnesota Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (MOFAS) (August, 2012) has launched a series of initiatives aimed at supporting individuals and families affected by prenatal alcohol exposure.