

## Spotlight on Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

### What is FASD?

Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, or FASD, is an umbrella term describing the range of detrimental effects to the fetus and a baby's development when a woman consumes alcohol during pregnancy. A range of physical, mental, behavioural and/or learning disabilities can develop, with life-long implications. Watch this short two-minute video about alcohol in pregnancy called [The Safest Choice](#).



September is  
**FASD**  
AWARENESS  
MONTH

It is estimated that one in every 100 children are born each year in the UK with FASD, a greater number than the combined number of children born in any year with Down's Syndrome, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis and spina bifida.

No two children with FASD are exactly alike, either physically or behaviourally. Often the condition goes undiagnosed, but the signs of FAS are complex and vary, so a multi-disciplinary team will be involved in the assessment. In fact, from [research](#) of 127 studies, 428 conditions were found to co-occur with FASD. Watch this [short video](#) about the SIGN guidelines from Health Improvement Scotland about the effects of FASD, and how an assessment will be done to diagnose it.

### Does FASD only affect children and young people?

FASD is a life-long condition, with life-long implications, which are often compounded by secondary disabilities in adulthood, such as drug use, involvement in criminal activity and mental health problems. Adults with FASD experience problems with logical thinking, organisation, the ability to plan, problem-solve and understand the consequences from potential actions. So, FASD is a Public Protection issue that we all need to learn more about.

The effects of FASD are not reversible, and there is no particular treatment, but children, carers and families can learn how to manage the effects with early diagnosis and support.

“Everyone with FASD is affected differently. Multi-disciplinary assessment, diagnosis, and care management plans lead to brighter futures” [National FASD](#)

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### Where can I get more information about FASD?

The [FASD Network](#) has lots of resources for children and young people, adults, teachers, and practitioners, including videos, information sheets and tips. The [FASD Scotland](#) website is currently being updated, but their contact details are here.

The [National Organisation for FASD](#) has lots of great information, including a [Mythbuster](#) which is an easy way to learn more and check out your assumptions about alcohol use in pregnancy and the effects. There is also a really good [FAQ](#) section.

[Foetal alcohol spectrum disorder - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#) – there are great links to confidential support and help on alcohol use.

### Resources for children, young people and families

[Me & My FASD](#) is a really good website for young people with FASD, including information about FASD and things that can help.

[FASD Makes Me, Me](#)

[Advice for Families about FASD](#)

[Tips for Adults with FASD](#)

[Let's Talk FASD](#) has practical tips, techniques and strategies for parents and carers; including the importance of creating routine and consistency every day, tips for managing behaviour (change the environment – not the child), strategies to help your child learn better and tips for making friends.

Here is a really good resource for [Top tips for brilliant meetings with young people](#)



How to make meetings more accessible for everyone