

A Publication of the Committee on Alcohol and Pregnancy

CAP calls for comprehensive prevention campaign to keep babies sober

On March 4th, 1996, The Committee on Alcohol and Pregnancy (CAP) called for public understanding of the risks of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Fetal Alcohol Effects in children whose mothers drink alcohol while pregnant, at a press conference at the Manitoba Medical Association.

“Recent studies have shown that children born to mothers who consumed an average one to two drinks per day or occasionally up to five drinks at a time, are at increased risk for learning disabilities and other cognitive and behavioural problems (Streissguth, 1990; Day, 1994; Jacobson, 1994),” stated Dr. Oscar Casiro, Chairperson, Committee on Alcohol and Pregnancy. *“No safe level of alcohol intake during pregnancy has been established (Finnegan & Kandall, 1992) and a recent study from the University of Minnesota indicated that the risk of developing leukemia is increased 10 times in children born to women who drank alcohol during pregnancy.”*

The Committee stated the following FACTS :

- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) is a pattern of birth defects that results from drinking alcohol during pregnancy. It occurs in one out of every 750 births.
- Children born with FAS may be small in size, have abnormal facial features and brain damage.
- FAS symptoms are irreversible. Children with FAS never 'catch up' mentally or physically.
- FAS has been called the most common, best known, most preventable cause of mental retardation in the western world.
- FAS is totally preventable. No alcohol = No FAS
- Alcohol in any form is alcohol. A can of beer, a glass of wine/wine cooler and a mixed drink all contain some amount of alcohol.
- Every time a pregnant woman drinks, the alcohol passes through the placenta to the unborn baby.
- Alcohol is more harmful to the fetus than the mother because of the unborn baby's small size and rapid growth rate.
- There is no 'safe' drinking level.

In a more aggressive effort to promote the best possible environment for an unborn child the Committee on Alcohol and Pregnancy supports and recommends:

- The legislation of warning labels on alcoholic beverages
- Senate Bill C-337 to ammend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act
- Changes to CRTC regulations regarding alcohol advertising on television and radio to include preclearance by public health agencies
- Changes to CRTC regulation to include a balanced view of issues which in the case of beverage alcohol means broadcasting messages about the potential dangers associated with drinking.

“Based on the information available today, the choices are elementary. One can choose to place an unborn child (who has no choice in the matter) at risk for alcohol related birth defects; or one can choose to provide the best possible environment for that child. Our advice is to avoid drinking alcohol during pregnancy,” stated Dr. Casiro.

- ◆ A five-day training program for parents is being explored for delivery in Winnipeg in August. The program will deal with the everyday issues parents face, in dealing with an FAS child. For information contact the coordinators at the Association for Community Living in Winnipeg.
Telephone: 204-947-1118.
- ◆ The Committee on Alcohol and Pregnancy and Sunny Hill Health Centre in British Columbia are developing a 'training for trainers' package for caregivers. This package will be available in the Spring. For information contact: Zenon Lisakowski, Addictions Foundation of Manitoba.
Telephone: 204-944-6358.
- ◆ A Review of FAS/FAE in Post Secondary Curricula has been completed by medical student, Gilles Pinette. The information is available for review by contacting the Coordinator of the FAS/FAE Resource Centre.
Telephone: 204-786-7565.
- ◆ Manitoba Health and the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba are in the process of developing an FAS poster to be distributed to all physicians' offices across the province. The poster will be designed, printed and available by spring. Contact: Dave Kennedy, Addictions Foundation of Manitoba.
Telephone: 204-944-6281.
- ◆ CAP continues discussions with Mr Reg Toews, Assistant Deputy Minister, Children and Youth Secretariat, regarding support for services for children and youth with FAS/FAE in Manitoba. Discussions were precipitated by a recommendation from the Child Health Strategy Committee Report which encouraged government support for the work of the Committee on Alcohol and Pregnancy.
- ◆ Currently, information from the FAS/FAE Resource Network is being compiled for inclusion in the Addiction Foundation of Manitoba Services Directory. This Directory will be published and available in May 1996. The FAS/FAE Resource Centre is located at the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, 1031 Portage Avenue in Winnipeg. The Resource Centre coordinates and maintains a Network of FAS/FAE services, resources, and contacts throughout the province.

PROGRAM PROFILE

Mobile Therapy Team

The Mobile Therapy Team is an outreach service offering physiotherapy and occupational therapy consultation to family members and other natural caregivers of children with a range of disabilities. The purpose of this service is to support the children in natural environments in their own community by sharing information, and transferring knowledge and skills to caregivers.

The Mobile Therapy Team is staffed and administered by the Rehabilitation Centre For Children through a contract with the Childrens Special Services program of the department of Family Services. Services are provided throughout the province with the exception of locations within a 90km radius of Winnipeg, a 45km radius of Brandon and First Nations communities.

Physiotherapy and occupational therapy services are provided in the following regions/communities: Thompson, Flin Flon, The Pas, Swan River, Dauphin, Westman region, North Central region, Northern Interlake region, Eastman region (north and south).

The Children who receive therapy through the Mobile Therapy Team must be between the ages of birth and eighteen years, and have a developmental delay or potential delay, or a physical or mental disability.

Referral of a child for Mobile Therapy Team physiotherapy and/or occupational therapy services must be made to the Regional Manager, Childrens Special Services for the region in which the child lives.

Further information about Mobile Therapy Team may be obtained from: Mary Wirt, Director, Rehabilitation Therapies, Rehabilitation Centre For Children.
Telephone: 204-452-4311.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 19, 1996 - Windsor, Ontario A COMPREHENSIVE WORKSHOP ON FAS

Organized by the Fetal Alcohol Support and Information Centre. The workshop is designed to educate professionals dealing with children/youth/adults who may have behavioural, academic, social or emotional problems due to neurological or central nervous system damage caused by prenatal exposure to alcohol. Emphasis throughout the workshop will be on the continuum of effects and how characteristics observed at various stages of childhood have implications for adulthood - a life-span approach. Registration fees before March 24, 1996, \$50; after, \$60. For a complete brochure or to register contact: Pat Fitzpatrick, The Child's Place, 2611 La Belle Street, Windsor, Ontario N9E 4G4.
Telephone: 519-966-2211. Fax: 519-966-1142.

May 2 - 3, 1996 - Winnipeg 10th INTERNATIONAL NATIVE EDUCATION CONFERENCE

A Conference concerning effective strategies of empowerment/self-determination of Native Children. Of special interest may be the Pre-Conference Workshops on Wednesday, May 1, 1996 by Dr. Philip May, Director, The Center on Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Addictions - University of New Mexico. Dr. May presents two workshops: Fetal Alcohol Syndrome - An Overview; and Alcohol Epidemiology and Policy for Native Communities. Contact: R.S. Phillips & Associates, 517 Bower Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0L7.
Telephone: 204-896-3449. Fax: 204-889-3207.

February 28 March 1 & 2, 1997 - Winnipeg NATIONAL FAS/FAE CONFERENCE "EMBRACING THE LIGHT"

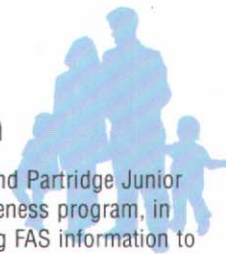
Coordinated by the Association for Community Living - Manitoba. Topic areas include: Justice, First Nations, Families, Research, Media, Prevention, Grass Roots Programs, Films, Education, Community Involvement, Networking. The Coordinating Committee is currently seeking speakers and presenters in each of these areas. To assist in the conference design or to recommend speakers or for more information contact: Dale Kendel, Association for Community Living, #1 - 90 Market Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0P3. Telephone: 204-947-1118. Fax: 204-949-1464.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Schools launch FAS awareness program

Valentine's Day took on special meaning for the students of Edmund Partridge Junior High and Marymound School. It was the kick-off for an FAS awareness program, in which a group of students worked alongside their teachers to bring FAS information to their peers.

An FAS poster contest for students in the two schools proved so successful, the committee was inspired to coordinate a contest in Manitoba. In March, schools throughout the province will receive a package of information about FAS, with an invitation for students to enter the provincial poster contest. Submissions on 18" X 24" white paper can be hand done using any material other than computer generated images. Posters will be judged for content and originality, and prizes will be awarded. For more information contact: Val McCorkell at 338-9373 or Jennifer Janzen at 338-7971.



FAS/FAE RESOURCES

The Addictions Foundation Library is located in Winnipeg at 1031 Portage Avenue, R3G 0R8. Phone: 204-944-6233. Fax: 204-772-0225.

The following resources would be of interest to support groups, agencies, and associations for parents, social workers, counsellors, educators, and other professionals.

Iceberg: an educational newsletter for people concerned about fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) and fetal alcohol effects (FAE):

Because the problems are only the tip of the iceberg. Seattle, Washington. Quarterly. A one-year subscription is available for CND \$25 professional rate, CND \$12 family rate. Order from: PO Box 95597, Seattle, WA 98145-2597, U.S.A.

FASNET Assessment Tools. Developed by the FAS/E Support Network to answer the question: "How can I tell if my child might have FAS/E and if he should be assessed for it?" The Assessment Tools are meant to be used by non-medical professionals and parents. They are not intended to and cannot make a diagnosis but can alert the assessor to the possibility of FAS/E in an individual, and of the need to obtain a thorough and comprehensive assessment. They have been broken down into age groups and identify the different characteristics that present themselves at various ages: 0-36 months; 3-5 years; 6-9 years; 10-13 years; 14-18 years; adults 19 years and up. COST: \$8.50 each including shipping and handling. To order or for more information contact: FAS/E Support Network, 14326 Currie Drive, Surrey, B.C. V3R 8A4. Phone: 604-589-1854. Fax: 604-589-8438.

The Fabulous F.A.S. Quiz Show. A 15 minute video and activities for middle school students with a facilitator's education kit. Produced by Washington State Department of Health and March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation, Western Washington Chapter. The package is designed for students in grades six through nine to emphasize the prevention of FAS and FAE and to encourage the acceptance of individuals with FAS or FAE. It includes a video with post-viewing discussion material and a flexible menu of activities that can fill one class period or can be extended over a series of classes. With cooperation from the Washington State production team, CAP is able to make this video and kit available for a cost of \$10 (Canadian). Contact: The Association for Community Living, #1 - 90 Market Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0P3. Phone: 204-947-1118. Fax: 204-949-1464.

'BIRTH TO 3 PROJECT' FEATURED AT WOMEN • ALCOHOL • PREGNANCY SYMPOSIUM

The Committee on Alcohol and Pregnancy was thrilled to invite 'Birth to 3 Years' Project Director, Ms. Therese Grant, to Winnipeg as a Visiting Speaker during Healthy Baby Month. Ms. Grant, PhC, works with the Fetal Alcohol and Drug Unit at the University of Washington School of Medicine in Seattle, Washington. She shared her knowledge about prevention and intervention strategies for women abusing alcohol in pregnancy - in particular, the "Birth to Three" advocacy model.

"The model is novel: pairing mother and newborn with a paraprofessional advocate who would stand by them for three years. These are the years most critical in a child's development," reported Dr. Oscar Casiro.

"This is not another velvet-padded luxury for the poor. It's as much a way to get these women off the backs of taxpayers as a lifeline to the individuals and their, yes, innocent children."

Dr. Ann P. Streissguth on the 'Birth to 3 Project'

The Birth to 3 Project was initiated to develop a system for intervening at delivery with high risk mothers who have been abusing alcohol and drugs during pregnancy, have had little or no prenatal care, and are not successfully involved with other community

agencies. The intervention involves recruitment at delivery, pairing with an advocate/case manager who helps each mother address the problems she perceives as the most pressing, and comparing outcome at three years with an untreated comparison group.

"The purpose is ultimately to prevent fetal alcohol and drug effects in our community's children," said Ms. Grant. *"Our aim is to help these children be raised in a healthy environment by their families, and to help these mothers resolve alcohol and drug problems and develop healthy productive life styles."*

Ms. Grant presented formally at the Auditorium of the Faculty of Medicine on March 5th to an audience of physicians, students, nurses, social workers, and parents. Other smaller group sessions took place for field workers, agency and government representatives from the Child Special Services, Department of Manitoba Health, the AFM and the Interagency FAS/E Clinic. Local Faculty participating included Dr. Oscar Casiro, Department of Pediatrics and Child Health, UofM; Dr. Ab Chudley, Departments of Pediatrics and Child Health and Human Genetics, UofM; Dr. Morag Fisher, Women's Treatment, AFM; Dr. Lawrence Hoeschen, Department of Internal Medicine, UofM; Dr. Nichole Riese, Graduate Studies, Department of Community Health Sciences.

Dr. Oscar Casiro commented after the sessions: *"Now that we've seen a model which exists to teach communities how to respond through advocacy and outreach, it is time to make such programs available here in Manitoba."*

The Healthy Baby Month Campaign of the Committee on Alcohol and Pregnancy is grateful for financial support from the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, Manitoba Medical Association, Health Sciences Centre and the Interagency FAS/FAE Program to enable the Therese Grant Lecture Series.

COMMITTEE ON ALCOHOL AND PREGNANCY

The Committee on Alcohol and Pregnancy (CAP) was established by the Manitoba Medical Association in 1993 to develop a Manitoba FAS/FAE Network and to promote FAS/FAE initiatives in Manitoba. CAP's members represent a diverse cross-section of individuals, groups, and communities. They participate on behalf of parents (including birth, adoptive and foster) and professionals in the health, education, social service and correctional sectors.

Direct correspondence to:

CAP Coordinator
Manitoba Medical Association
125 Sherbrook Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 2B5
(204) 786-7565 (Fax) 775-9696

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FAS/FAE Resource & Information Centre

1031 Portage Avenue · Winnipeg, Manitoba · R3G 0R8
(204) 944-6200 · (FAX) 772-0225

Welcome to the FAS/FAE Resource & Information Centre. When you complete this questionnaire your information will be placed on a FAS/FAE Network that will document services, resources, and Manitobans interested in FAS/FAE. The database will improve access to information for parents and professionals working in this area. A Resource Directory will be published listing Treatment Centres, Diagnostic Services, Parent Support Resources, and Prevention & Education Resources. Please provide any information that should be included in the Directory and return the completed form to us by mail or fax.

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Province: Manitoba Postal Code: _____

Phone: (204) _____ Fax: (204) _____

1. Please check (✓) which category(s) applies to you:

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educator | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Care Provider |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Service Professional |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Native Organization | <input type="checkbox"/> Researcher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent: | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> birth parent | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> foster parent | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> adoptive parent | |

2. If you are parenting a child with FAS/FAE, may we provide your name to parent organizations or FAS professionals? yes no

3. If you represent an organization, does your organization provide services for FAS/FAE children? yes no

If yes, please describe the details of your program in 50 words or less.

RETURN THE COMPLETED FORM TO:
FAS/FAE RESOURCE & INFORMATION CENTRE
1031 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3G 0R8