

F.A.S. NEWS

FETAL • ALCOHOL • SYNDROME

Winter 2001

A Publication of the Coalition on Alcohol and Pregnancy

Stop FAS Program to be Expanded in the North

On December 12, Family Services and Housing Minister Tim Sale announced an expansion of the STOP FAS program in the North.

The STOP FAS program will be expanded to Thompson and The Pas in January, with funding of \$264,000 from Healthy Child Manitoba.

The program has proven effective in addressing Fetal Alcohol Syndrome issues in Winnipeg.

"The Stop FAS program has provided important supports for high-risk mothers to avoid the birth of children affected by alcohol and drug abuse," said Sale. "With the expansion of the program to The Pas and Thompson, northern women at risk of having a child born affected by alcohol will also be able to access the supports of this program."

The program provides mentors for a three-year period to women struggling with long-term drug and alcohol addiction. The mentors help the women to succeed in treatment, parent their children, connect with positive community supports and attain stable housing and employment.

The STOP FAS program began in April 1998 in Winnipeg, helping

women at risk of having a child with FAS or who had already given birth to an FAS child.

To date, over 70 per cent of the women enrolled in the program have entered treatment and 40 per cent have abstained from alcohol for six months or more.

"Issues facing drug and alcohol addicted women are complex, but intervention is crucial to avoid the cost of drug abuse, foster care and legal issues that some families struggle with," said Health Minister Dave Chomiak. "The STOP FAS program works with Manitoba's highest risk mothers to help them connect with the supports they need to maintain their sobriety and build positive, healthy lifestyles."

Expansion of the STOP FAS program was one of the key recommendations of a recent report entitled "The Service Needs of Pregnant Addicted Women in Manitoba". The report was funded by Manitoba Health and conducted in co-operation with the Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence.

Manitoba's STOP FAS program is run in partnership with the Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre and Nor'West Co-op in Winnipeg, the



Burntwood Regional Health Authority in Thompson and the NOR-MAN Regional Health Authority in The Pas.

"This announcement demonstrates the government's continued commitment and involvement in FAS issues and reinforces the need for leadership and partnership with communities, in this case Thompson and The Pas," said Dale Kendel, chairperson for the Coalition on Alcohol and Pregnancy (CAP).

Healthy Child Manitoba is an initiative of the Manitoba government which works across departments to build a community development approach for the well-being of Manitoba's children,

families and communities with a priority focus on conception through infancy and the preschool years.

It is led by the Healthy Child Committee of cabinet, chaired by the minister of family services and housing, and includes the ministers of Aboriginal and northern affairs, culture, heritage and tourism, education and training, health and justice.

The first core commitments of Healthy Child Manitoba include parent-child centres, prenatal and early child nutrition programs, nurses in schools, FAS/FAE prevention and adolescent pregnancy prevention.

Prairie Northern Partnership

Minister Sale reinforced the work of the Prairie Northern FAS Partnership with the announcement of a three year continuation of the partnership. The governments of Alberta, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Saskatchewan and Yukon will continue to share resources and learn from each other. It is hoped that BC will also join the partnership.

Sponsored Buses to FAS Conference

The Manitoba government plans to sponsor buses to the May 2-4, 2001, Prairie Northern Conference in Saskatchewan to enable more people to attend. (See conference notice on page 5.)

Over 500 Attend Norway House Conference

On the first day, heavy fog delayed several key speakers on the tarmac in Berens River. But it could not dampen the spirits of those attending the F.A.S. Northern Conference in Norway House.

In true Northern fashion, other speakers and many attendees pitched in to fill the gap until the weather cleared and the plane arrived.

Held September 29-30, the conference featured well-known international speakers Susan Doctor from Nevada, Diane Malbin from Oregon, and Mary Vandenbrink-Berube and her son David from Sherwood Park, Alberta.

Participants travelled from communities across the north, including Thompson, Birch River, Wabowden, Pukatawagan, The Pas, Shamattawa and Moose Lake among many others.

Sixteen people from the Prince Albert First Nations Women's Council drove in from Saskatchewan.

"The networking was excellent," said Lia Braun, one of the conference organizers. "We encouraged people who were coming to attend as a team so they would have people in the community to work with afterward."

Getting solid information from people well known in the field and networking throughout the north were the two major expectations for the conference.

The F.A.S. Northern Conference was jointly sponsored by the Norway House First Nation, Frontier School Division and the Kinosaio Sipi Minisowin Agency.



Their generous financial support allowed organizers to offer free attendance to people in Norway House and a nominal two-day registration fee of \$35.00 to all others.

The idea to offer an affordable conference close to home came from one of the four subcommittees of the Norway House Community Round Table.

This multi-agency committee was originally formed in 1997 when agencies and individuals came together to address FAS/FAE issues in the community.

Radio talk shows, newspaper articles, poster contests and guests speakers have helped to increase public awareness in the area over the past three years.

"It was time to hold a conference," said Braun. "We wanted to help people to network throughout the north and encourage different agencies in more communities to work together."

A LOOK INSIDE...

Strategies for Students with FAS	2
FAS Day Around the World	2
Gaps in Services	3
Reclaiming Our Voices 2	3
New E.D. at Family Association	3
Dr. Chudley Appointed	4
BC Network Project Funded	4
FAS: "The Real Brain Drain"	4
Children's Clinic Update	4
Headingley MDO Program	4
Justice System FAS Training	5
Upcoming Conferences	5
Youth Teaching Youth	5
Tough Kids and Substance Abuse ...	6
Foster Parent Training	6
Letters to Our Children	6
FACES of FAS	6
Help for Child Care Providers	6

Strategies for Students with FAS

In January 1999, Manitoba Education and Training released *The Final Report of the Manitoba Special Education Review*. The Special Education Review Initiative (SERI) was launched to respond to the report's recommendations.

One of the clearly identified needs was a support document for educators on intervention strategies for alcohol affected children.

Jim Hoddinott of Manitoba Education and Training is the project lead. He travelled to schools around the province. "The feedback I got from teachers was that there were lots of strategies available, but they didn't quite know how to put it together with working with kids in the classroom."

Both educators and non-educators are collaborating to develop this document. The team's task is to put together a tool that will assist teachers with planning for the students within their classrooms. External reviewers will also provide feedback to the development team.

The document is to be grounded on a philosophy of inclusion and on curriculum. The Special Education Review Initiative is preparing a philosophy of inclusion to be released to schools in January 2001.

"Our plan is not to reinvent the wheel," said Hoddinott. "But the feedback we're getting from educators is that they do not have exactly what they need to meet the programming needs of alcohol affected children. Although there are many strategies out there, teachers want to know how and when to apply it in their day to day work."

The final document is to be released to schools by September 30, 2001. Training will follow to show teachers how to use this tool.

For information on the Special Education Review Initiative (SERI), phone (204) 945-2392 or visit the web site at:

www2.edu.gov.mb.ca/metsk4/instruct/specedu/review/default.htm

Family Resource Site

A Family Resource Site is connected to the Special Education Review Initiative (SERI) web site and has links to organizations that provide supports, information and resources for families with children with special needs.

The site links to government and institutional services, advocacy and support groups, service groups, and professional associations.

To go directly to the Family Resource Site web page, visit:

www2.edu.gov.mb.ca/metsk4/instruct/specedu/review/fam_info.html

Improving the School Experience

To mark International Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Day on September 9, 2000, the Government of Manitoba announced a three-year pilot project aimed at improving the school experience for students with FAS and alcohol related disorders.

"This pilot project to develop best practices for Manitoba school divisions will lead to a more effective learning experience for children with FAS, and will also improve the school experience for their teachers and parents," said Family Services and Housing Minister Tim Sale.

The \$325,000 pilot project, cost shared by the Manitoba government and Winnipeg School Division No. 1, will be located in the inner-city school district.

The highest need grades 3 to 6 students with FAS in the inner-city school area will receive specialized programming from a team including a teacher, teacher assistant and clinical/therapy support professionals.

As a long-term goal, the partners also intend to explore the development of a pilot program for grades 7 to 12 students with FAS.

The project is part of Healthy Child Manitoba.

Gr. 5-8 Curriculum

Debbie Thordarson, a teacher at Hugh John Macdonald School in Winnipeg, and Daisy Monias, vice-principal of Jack River School in Norway House, have created new prevention curriculum for grades 5-8.

Stemming from the work of the Norway House Community Round Table and published by the Frontier School Division, the curriculum is multicultural in approach and is applicable in any setting. It is intended for use with all students.

"Depending on the grade level, there are 5 to 10 learning outcomes taught in 10 to 15 lessons," said Thordarson. "The children will come out with a very solid understanding of what drinking alcohol during pregnancy can do."

The lesson plans are teacher friendly and use material from the new curriculum documents put out by the Department of Education.

The curriculum was piloted in both Winnipeg and Norway House. At the end, students in each grade develop a product. Thordarson's Grade 8 students analyzed alcohol advertising in magazines and used their new understanding to create brochures.

Thordarson and Monias eventually plan to create prevention curriculum for kindergarten through Grade 12.

For more information, call Debbie Thordarson at 786-5631 or Daisy Monias at 359-6781 in Norway House.

INTERNATIONAL FAS DAY AROUND THE WORLD

International FAS Awareness Day, September 9, began in Auckland, New Zealand, where "Minute of Reflection" bells rang at 9:09 a.m. Here are a few excerpts of FAS Day 2000 events across Canada and around the world:

Thunder Bay, Ontario

"The parents... showed up to ring the bell this morning and get their FAS Knots... Dave, my hubby, gave us the count-down as each parent (9 in all!) put a hand on the rope. I think we were right on time to start at 9:09 a.m. Since the bell is too heavy for a group of inexperienced bell ringers to stop and start at will, we just let it ring! Just as the last nine rings came up we started calling out our children's names one by one ('This ring is for Marvin!' and so on). It was such a precious time. Hardly a dry eye in the group as we gave the last pull for Derreck."

- Margie Fulton, Fetal Alcohol Support and Information Network

Whitehorse, Yukon

"... We had between 250 to 300 attending our event. And let me tell you something, that was excellent because the weather was horrible, raining, cold, veerey cold. About noon my husband Richard and I had to go hunting for a propane heater because it was too cold for the performers and their instruments."

- Lilliam Sequiera Duran, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon (FASSY)

"My daughter Plum and I ventured downtown on a very cold and wet Saturday morning. Plum was so cold in spite of being dressed for the weather, she insisted on being held (all 55 lbs!) for over an hour of very inspiring speeches. As the bells tolled at 9:09 from Sacred Heart Cathedral next to our gathering, tears flowed from my eyes as Plum kissed me and told me that she loved her mommy."

- Robert Humberstone, FASSY

Winnipeg, Manitoba

"Thursday I joined a group of 7 women (and kids) at Arrow Lake for a retreat for women who drank while pregnant... we talked about our kids and our struggles and how to get support from folks that are determined to undermine and hurt us..."

- Kathy Jones, West Region Child and Family Services

"Just back from doing a phone-in radio show. The question was 'Are governments doing enough in the area of prevention of Fetal Alcohol'... There were a lot of calls, many of which went unanswered as we ran out of time..."

- Val Surbey, Fetal Alcohol Family Association

Cape Town, South Africa

"Today there were 10 adults and 10 children present to hear the beautiful sound of the carillon. We all then went to see Donovan in the belfry and he told us the history of the bells and much to the delight of the children, they were allowed to make 'music' on the practice bells."

- Vivien Lourens, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome South Africa

Hawick, Scotland

"This is taking off finally and we are excited about this. I have made excellent progress, especially with the support of our member of parliament. He is also taking this to the Head of the Scottish Parliament and I have a meeting in the works with the Minister of Health!"

- Jane Murphy, FASS (Scotland)

Tucson, Arizona

"Yeah! We did it! Great turnout for the Bell Concordance at the Cathedral, where John played his drum in a heart-beat rhythm until the bells rang at 9:09. While the bells rang, 20 altar boys and girls marched in a procession from the church to our circle of celebrants..."

- Teresa Kellerman, FAS Community Resource Centre, Tucson

For more details on FAS Day 2000 and 2001, check out www.FASworld.com.

The Knot Tied Round the World

The "FAS Knot" is a piece of knotted cord designed in memory of Abel Dorris (1968-1991) whose brief and poignant life was documented in the groundbreaking 1989 book about FAS called "The Broken Cord, written by his father, Michael Dorris (1945-1997).

The knot was designed by Bonnie Buxton and Brian Philcox. A cord is tied in a square knot, sometimes called a reef knot, the favoured knot for reconnecting a broken line or cord. The knot is stronger than the cord itself, and cannot be broken or snapped.

Buxton notes "The circle symbolizes the womb, a baby's head, the human brain, the earth. And we, a planet-size network of people who care about people living FAS, are the knot that will make them whole. If women did not drink in pregnancy, FAS would be totally eliminated. Our long-range goal is to rename this small piece of cord, 'The FAS Not!'"

Groups supporting FAS/FAE efforts are encouraged to use the "FAS Knot" for promotion or as a fundraiser. For instructions, contact Bonnie Buxton or Brian Philcox at 250 Scarborough Golf Club Road, Toronto, ON, M1J 3G8 or phone (416) 264-8000, fax (416) 264-8222 or e-mail ograd@pathcom.com.

Children's Special Services FAS Team

Children's Special Services provides support to families who are parenting children with special needs. As part of their early intervention service, a FAS team for Winnipeg was started in 1995.

The FAS team consists of 2.5 positions and includes Karen Johnston and Julia Wellwood. The third team member is on maternity leave.

At present, the team provides service to approximately 45 children. Over time, the team has found that a high percentage of the children to whom they provide service are children in care.

When this occurs, the FAS team members work closely with the Child and Family Services agency to ensure that case management is maintained for the children that are in care.

Children's Special Services supervisor Irma Nadeau believes the FAS team has made a difference. "Over five years, they have served more than 200 children and impacted their lives and the lives of their caregivers in some way."

By supporting the caregivers, there are a number of instances in which the team believes the child has been able to remain in the home environment,

whether that is with a birth, foster or extended family.

"Creating stability for children by teaching caregivers how to handle some of the very difficult challenges that some of the children can present is probably one of the biggest accomplishments of this program," said Nadeau.

The Children Special Services FAS team also works very closely with the day cares regarding direct programming as well as education for the care providers in those settings.

One of the issues for the FAS team, noted Nadeau, is that their service stops at age six. Team members often find it difficult to pull away when they have been so involved in the lives of the children and feel they have made a difference.

"A lot of the times the behavioural concerns resurface at various developmental stages of the child's life," she added. "The team want to be there for the long haul because they know the child and have already dealt with that behaviour."

For more information, contact Karen at 945-8067 or Julia at 945-7329.

Gaps in Services

At the September meeting of CAP members, Deborah Kacki of the Interagency FAS Program spoke on the gap in services for families with children over the age of six.

The majority of programs are withdrawn when a child reaches age 6 even though the needs for education, intervention, advocacy and support do not end at that age.

"What we know from Dr. Anne Streissguth's longitudinal work with alcohol affected children is that they are at risk of secondary disabilities as they age," noted Kacki. "This suggests that we need to sustain our interventions over time."

Secondary disabilities can include mental health problems, disrupted school experience, trouble with the law, alcohol and drug problems, imprisonment, problems with employment, inappropriate sexual behaviour, and independent living.

In the past year, the Interagency FAS Program received over 60 calls from families or agencies looking for services for older children. Kacki noted these calls are coming from:

- families who have heard about alcohol effects for the first time and are looking for information;
- families with children who were recently diagnosed and in need of support and intervention strategies;
- biological parents who are concerned about their substance abuse during pregnancy and that it may have affected their child;
- adoptive, foster, step parents, grandparents who are taking on a parenting role with an alcohol affected child for the first time and need support to do so; and
- families who have experienced support during the first six years of their child's life and need that support to continue.

As children affected by alcohol age and grow, they also grow beyond the safety nets. They influence and are influenced by larger groups and institutions in the community.

As they enter the school system, reach adolescence or move through any other key transitions in their lives, they need advocacy and support services.

"FAS is a lifelong disability and we as service providers and government need to consider a continuum of support that extends a lifetime," concluded Kacki.

CAP would like to form a working group on gaps in services for children 6-18 and another on adults living with FAS/FAE.

If you are interested in contributing, contact Dale Kendel at 786-1607.

New Executive Director at FAFA

Leilani (Lani) Buschau is the new executive director at the Fetal Alcohol Family Association (FAFA).

With an education degree, counselling courses and recent experience working at the Portage Friendship Centre, Lani is thrilled to be working with the FAFA.



After attending her first FAFA board meeting, Lani noted she was "in awe of the parent board volunteers."

"The board is delighted to welcome Leilani," said Kathy Jones, president of the Fetal Alcohol Family Association. She added that they chose Lani for her background working with First Nations communities and experience in writing funding proposals.

The first priority will be to secure stable, long-term funding. Secondly, more outreach is planned to connect with birth moms and Aboriginal peoples.

"We need to find ways of building better relationships with First Nations agencies," said Jones. "Particularly with the transfer of First Nations children back into First Nations agencies."

To contact Lani, call the Fetal Alcohol Family Association at 786-1847.

COALITION ON ALCOHOL AND PREGNANCY (CAP)

CAP represents over 100 organizations interested in FAS/FAE issues in Manitoba. The six working committees include: Research/Communications, Family Support, Education, Service Coordination, Prevention and Justice. CAP 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.

Manitoba F.A.S. News
is published by the Coalition on Alcohol and Pregnancy.

Newsletter Editor:
Beth McKechnie
339-0247

CAP Correspondence:
Dale Kendel
c/o Association for
Community Living Manitoba
210-500 Portage Ave
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 3X1
(204) 786-1607 (Fax) 789-9850

Reclaiming Our Voices 2

West Region Child and Family Services held their second annual healing conference for birth mothers on November 21-23. Held at Waywayseccapo, the event was open to all women and a limited number of professionals.

The main themes this year were reclaiming voice and building a better circle of support.

"We really encouraged people to talk to each other about their own experiences and their own lives," said Kathy Jones of West Region Child and Family Services. "There was much less isolation this year, less shame and fear of talking about some of the issues."

Approximately 30 of the 150 women present also attended last year's healing conference. Two of these women shared what had happened in their lives since that first event.

One of them, Shelley Bone, talked about how she built the strength to get back two of her five children in care.

"I told them how everything started and how and where to look for help," she said. "I encouraged the women to do the same as me and help themselves."

Shelley plans to attend again next year. The conferences give her strength and encouragement not to give up. "You get a lot from listening to other women and sharing what you have to say."

Special workshops at Reclaiming Our Voices 2 included one on residential schools and their effect on mother/daughter relationships. Others included a storystick workshop, a sharing circle, a quilting workshop, a toymaking

and child's play workshop, and one on how to build personal strength.

"Women are starting to ask for help and for supports," noted Jones. "The women this year came to work."

Thanks to a subsidy from Family Services and Housing Minister Tim Sale, birth mothers were eligible for a reduced registration fee of \$100. Professionals paid \$300 to attend.

West Region Child and Family Services pay for birth mothers in their region to attend. Notably, Winnipeg Child and Family Services also funded some clients to attend this year.

Additional fundraising is still needed for the many women who do not have the money to attend.

"We are very proud of Reclaiming Our Voices as an agency because we are seeing some successes among the women," said Jones. "But until we deal with the root causes of poverty and abuse, we are really never going to be able to deal with FAS."

West Region Child and Family is now looking at a program to support men. "Men are looking for some way in which they can build their own strength too."

Reclaiming our Voices 3 is scheduled for November 20-23, 2001. An extra day was added after women this year said that by the time they opened up and felt safe, the event was over.

Brochures for Reclaiming Our Voices 3 will be available in February. For copies, contact Kathy at 985-4061 or Lori at 636-6100 in Rolling River.

Dr. Chudley Appointed to National FAS Committee

On May 13, 2000, Health Canada announced the establishment of a National Advisory Committee on FAS/FAE. The announcement was made during the Prairie Northern Conference on FAS held at the University of Manitoba.

Dr. Ab Chudley, pediatrician and medical geneticist, is one of the 18 members appointed to the committee. Dr. Chudley is Head of the Section of Genetics and Metabolism at Children's Hospital in Winnipeg and is a Professor in the Departments of Pediatrics and Child Health, Biochemistry and Medical Genetics at the University of Manitoba.



The committee includes experts in the fields of health, addictions, corrections, education and research from a variety of sectors and jurisdictions. It has representation from First Nations and Inuit to provide their expertise. One mandate of the committee will be to ensure that people affected by FAS/FAE have a voice in the committee's work.

"It's a comprehensive group of people with diverse backgrounds," says Dr. Chudley. He is encouraged by the strong, long standing expertise of the committee members.

The committee reports to the Minister of Health and is expected to provide advice and expertise to Health Canada on FAS/FAE related issues with particular attention to supporting the effective and efficient implementation of the FAS/FAE Initiative.

The three major terms of references include recommending specific plans to:

- 1) better reach populations at risk and previously unreached populations on education, prevention and intervention;
- 2) advise and promote strategic alliances, collaboration and coalition building across disciplines and sectors (non-governmental, governmental and private); and
- 3) advise on emerging issues and trends and assist in the development of a long term national plan of action on FAS/FAE.

BC Network Project Funded

On August 3, 2000, Health Minister Allan Rock announced the Government of Canada will contribute \$1.15 million over three years toward a project to develop a training manual and a nucleus of trainers across Canada for FAS/FAE.

The project, called "A Manual for Community Caring," is being undertaken by the FAS/E Support Network of B.C. The Network will work closely with the provinces and territories, Aboriginal organizations, and other key stakeholders including families and individuals affected by FAS/FAE.

"This manual will help professionals, front line workers, parents and educators deal with and prevent FAS/FAE. In addition to the manual, the project will provide training to professionals so they may spread their knowledge across the country," said Minister Rock.

In the 1999 Budget, the Government of Canada increased funding for the expansion of the existing Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP) to allow for a sustained national focus on FAS and to further improve the health of pregnant women at risk and their babies. The 1999 Budget allocated \$11 million dollars over three years for the FAS/FAE Initiative.

FAS: "The Real Brain Drain"

Paul Szabo, MP for Mississauga South, is calling upon the federal government to make FAS a national priority. In his 120 page paper entitled "Fetal Alcohol Syndrome... The Real Brain Drain," Szabo also recommends that:

- Health Canada not receive any funding from the alcoholic beverage industry;
- health warning labels be introduced on alcoholic beverage containers; and
- a national coalition of FAS community groups and organizations be formed to standardize the message and speak with one voice to ensure that FAS becomes a national priority.

To promote awareness and education, Mr. Szabo partnered with the national nurses, police and fire chiefs associations to produce and distribute information posters. This effort is part of the "Drink Smart Canada" campaign which he launched in 1996 to promote the responsible use of alcohol.

For copies of the poster and Mr. Szabo's book, call Drink Smart Canada toll free at 1-888-463-1111. Contact Mr. Szabo at (613) 992-4848 or (905) 822-2111.

Children's FAS Clinic Update

It has been a hectic first 18 months for The Clinic for Alcohol and Drug Exposed Children (CADEC) at Children's Hospital.

The Clinic provides multi-disciplinary assessment/diagnostic services, helps families link with appropriate resources in their community, and works to increase knowledge and diagnostic capabilities in rural and isolated communities.

In its first year and a half, the Clinic has received 792 requests for diagnosis. Approximately 55% came from within Winnipeg and 45% from outside the city.

Approximately 62% of those referrals were for children aged 0-7, 26% for children aged 8-12 and 12% for those 13 or older.

After receiving the referrals, clinic staff try to contact the families by phone to clarify expectations and provide information regarding the diagnostic process.

The multi-disciplinary assessment team saw 184 children in person in 1999 and 93 in the first six months of 2000.

The Clinic's assessment team relies heavily on partnerships with the community to provide a comprehensive understanding of the child and his/her environment.

"The demand for diagnosis has far exceeded the Clinic's capacity to provide assessments," said coordinator Mary Cox Millar. "As a result, families are faced with a longer waiting period than desirable."

The challenge, she added, is to provide the service in a respectful and thoughtful way that is sensitive to the needs of families and community systems.

For more information, call The Clinic for Alcohol and Drug Exposed Children at 787-1822 or 787-1828.

FASWORLD Canada is a new national FAS organization being formed to build awareness and raise funds to provide support for individuals with FAS and their families.



Parents, caregivers and professionals are invited to join. FASworld Canada also maintains the international links formed on FAS Day. For details, see:

www.FASworld.com

New Headingly Subunit for Mentally Disordered Offenders Program

Three years ago, a pilot program for mentally disordered offenders (MDO), developed by Carlos Clark, was introduced at Headingly Correctional Centre.

In August, clients in the MDO program moved into a private subunit. At present, this includes two offenders diagnosed with FAS.

"Those diagnosed with FAS/FAE traditionally have been victimized and either used or coerced," said Clark. The safety provided by a subunit with direct supervision has reduced this to almost nonexistent levels. "It is as close to a residential facility as you can get while still being in an institution."

In the subunit are 16 beds and desks in separate rooms. There is also a common area where the offenders can interact openly and watch television.

A staff member is in the unit from 7 a.m. to lock-up at 11 p.m. Offenders have a minimum 16 hours each day with a staff member to address any needs or concerns and to talk with in a positive environment.

Clark believes this is a key element of the program. Conversation in the general population can be negative and violent. In the subunit, staff are within earshot and have the opportunity to challenge and confront any thinking errors.

The intent of the MDO program is to use the time offenders spend at Headingly as a learning opportunity.

The educational program developed by Clark includes a relapse prevention model. Offenders look at their path to offending, the negative consequences and positive choices they could have made.

After offenders complete the 14 week educational program, information is collected to evaluate memory performance. The educational program then begins again, presented differently each time.

By the process of constant repetition and role playing, it is hoped offenders will learn appropriate responses, especially to high risk situations.

Clark noted that all participants have demonstrated an improvement in scores for short to medium term memory. Recent data collected from the MDO subunit is expected to produce markedly improved findings over that collected when the offenders were housed with the general population.

Whether the offenders are internalizing the actual concepts will probably be better demonstrated at the 3 to 5 year mark.

Within their time at the MDO unit, the offenders also develop concrete plans for release. That plan is then forwarded to a probation officer who ensures it is carried out in the community.

The challenge, Clark noted, is addressing those who reoffend in order to return to a positive structured environment.

For more information on the Mentally Disordered Offenders program and subunit, call Carlos Clark at 837-1351, ext. 269.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

Prairie Northern Conference

2001 Saskatchewan: A focus on youth is the third annual conference sponsored by the Prairie Northern FAS Partnership. The conference will look at the issues and challenges of FAS faced by youth, families and communities. The objectives are:

- to raise awareness of FAS as a lifelong disability
- to increase knowledge about issues and challenges of FAS faced by youth, families and communities
- to foster skills in effective prevention/intervention strategies that address FAS among youth
- to profile effective and innovative programs and strategies
- to provide information on the latest research regarding FAS and youth
- to provide opportunities to network and to share information

Prairie Northern is a partnership of the governments of Alberta, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Saskatchewan and Yukon.

2001 Saskatchewan: A focus on youth

May 2-4, 2001

Radisson Hotel
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

For more information, contact:

Saskatchewan Institute on

Prevention of Handicaps

Ph: (306) 655-2512

Fax: (306) 655-2511

E-mail: skiph@sk.sympatico.ca

Let's Find a Solution

"Across the Lifespan"

This conference will include workshops on parenting and life challenges experienced across the lifespan; innovative infant and preschool programs, parenting support, school based services, transitional housing, the justice system, vocational rehabilitation, sexuality and couple relations.

Conference participants can expect to:

1. Learn about effective prevention/intervention models of collaboration and partnership.
2. Increase their knowledge about common issues facing individuals with alcohol and other drug related disabilities, how to deal with the issues and how to provide support.
3. Share information with others in the field about their resources and experiences.
4. Explore social, health, education and justice policy implications and their impact.
5. Hear from individuals with alcohol and other drug related disabilities.

Alcohol and Other Drug Related Disabilities: Across the Life Span

February 22-24, 2001

Coast Plaza Suite Hotel
Stanley Park, Vancouver

For more information, contact:

Interprofessional Continuing

Education

The University of British Columbia

Tel: (604) 822-0054

Fax: (604) 822-4835

E-mail: rachel@cehs.ubc.ca

Reaching Out, Reaching In Youth Teaching Youth About FAS

If you own information, hopefully you will use it better. That was the thinking behind Marymount School's "Reaching Out, Reaching In" project.

To increase awareness and knowledge, students were given ownership of a project to produce four brochures on FAS. The goal was to develop a resource for youth by youth.

Overall, 15 students took part in stages of the process, with three or four involved from start to finish.

Written by the students, some with FAS, the brochure subjects include: What is FAS?; Tips for Women Using; A Guide for Parents and Caregivers of Children with FAS; and Living with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.

The last brochure tells the personal story of Mila, a student who was

valedictorian at her year end's graduation ceremony at Marymount.

"Mila is proud of who she is," said teacher Andrea Loepp. "She was willing to admit she has FAS and didn't want others to see it as something she'd be ashamed to put her name on." Loepp and social worker Lisa Passante initiated and led the project.

The process created self-awareness for other students as well. "It was a difficult process, but they were willing to walk through it," said Loepp. "I think the students really felt a sense of accomplishment when the brochures were finished and put on display in the school."

The brochures are available through Marymount School. For copies, call Sandy at 338-7971.



Tough Kids and Substance Abuse

Tough Kids and Substance Abuse is a drug awareness program for children and adolescents with ARND, FAS, FAE and cognitive disabilities.

On November 15, Tough Kids received an Award of Distinction from the Manitoba Addiction Awareness Week Committee.

Teacher Paula Cook first saw a need for this type of program in 1997 when an 11-year-old with a long history of solvent abuse came into her class. It was strongly suspected that he had FAE.

"He had very high needs and very low literacy levels," said Cook. "He was well versed in street culture, but he couldn't read."

Her first priority was an addictions curriculum to address the solvent abuse. When Cook went looking for existing curriculums, she found plenty but none suitable for her classroom.

Curriculum for young children not affected by FAS/FAE was too cartoonish and not concrete or pragmatic enough. Material designed for older children demanded too high literacy levels. The program would have to be developed from scratch.

Cook's co-authors for the program included Richard Kellie, Kathy Jones and Laura Goossen.

"It was a very interactive process with the students involved," says Cook. "We had to give the kids credit for what they already knew."

While they wanted to avoid creating a manual on how to use alcohol, drugs or solvents, they did not want to skirt

the issue to the extent that students would not get the message.

"We also didn't want to use a lot of scare tactics as research has proved that scare tactics and total abstinence curriculums don't work."

The program can be used in its entirety or in sections. Cook regularly uses the approaches in Tough Kids in her own classroom at Lord Nelson School.

In fact, all of the educational and environmental strategies she uses in her classroom were designed for children with FAS/FAE. She noted that it helps those who are affected, diagnosed or not, and does not harm the others.

"These strategies don't cure the problems, but it makes school less painful," she says. "Life can be punitive, school doesn't need to be punitive as well."

It makes Cook angry when people talk about FAS as hopeless. Tools like Tough Kids and Substance Abuse can provide the strategies to prevent that outcome.

Cook is already at work on a new book called Tough Kids and Sexuality. It deals with sexuality and the need of many kids with FAS/FAE for physical contact and physical touch.

Working in conjunction with the Sexuality Education Resource Centre (SERC), she hopes to have the book in print by December 2001.

Tough Kids and Substance Abuse can be purchased through the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba Library for \$15.00. Call 944-6233. For teacher inservices or more information, call Paula Cook at 586-1908.

Justice System Introduces FAS Training

For the first time, correctional officers received FAS training on October 31 as part of the basic training program.

Jocelyn Bjorklund, program coordinator at Manitoba Youth Centre, provided the FAS training. She pulled the three hour session from material developed in Saskatchewan and Alberta as part of the Northern FAS Partnership.

The primary focus of the training, said Bjorklund, is to educate corrections staff on what client behaviours to expect and possible intervention strategies.

This includes discussion of changes corrections staff can make within the parameters of their position, such as enhancing the living environment.

Bjorklund also talks to the corrections staff about modifying their expectations, particularly with FAE clients, and reframing their interpretations of client behaviours.

"They may assume that if you tell a client something the night before that they will remember it the next day,"

said Bjorklund. "We reframe it from 'won't remember' to 'can't remember'."

Corrections staff are encouraged to identify individual client strengths, skills and interests, and build on them.

Specific strategies are provided in the areas of attention difficulties, social skills, cause and effect thinking, personal skills and language development.

"If they come away with four strategies that work when they try them, they may then look for others on their own."

The basic training also includes a half day session with Carlos Clark on the Mentally Disordered Offenders program and subunit at Headingly Corrections Centre (see page 5).

Training sessions for correctional officers already employed in the system are planned. Training for all Manitoba Youth Centre staff is scheduled for February and March.

For more information, contact Jocelyn Bjorklund at 475-2010.

RESOURCES & TRAINING

Foster Parent Training Offered

The foster home development team for Winnipeg Child and Family Services has developed a foster parent training schedule.

These sessions help to address the many needs and experiences people face in their challenging role as foster parents. Participation is voluntary.

Most of the training sessions include a small module relating specifically to children with FAS/FAE.

A one day session in April 2001 will be devoted to behaviour management ideas involved in caring for children with FAS and FAE.

Participants are asked to register in advance and enclose a \$5.00 commitment fee per session. The money will be used to offset the costs of the workshops and bring in future trainers.

Winter 2001 Training Schedule

January	Parenting the Aboriginal Child
February	Separation and Loss
February	Non-violent Crisis Intervention
February	Magic 1,2,3 - Behaviour Management
March	Attachment Series
April	Foster Parent Role in Preparing Children for Adoption
April	Behavioural Management Issues with FAS and FAE
May	Developing Life books
May	"Puberty Comes Anyway"

These programs range from one day workshops to four evening sessions. Additional training sessions to this list are expected. For information, contact Bev Wiebe at 944-4516 or Michele Brown at 944-4358.

Canadian Health Network

The Canadian Health Network is a credible on-line source of information related to health care. The site is funded by and in partnership with Health Canada.

The Addictions Foundation of Manitoba is a strong affiliate in the substance use/addictions section.

In addition to providing resources, and answers to frequently asked questions, users can search the site for specific information or answers to specific questions. Check it out at:

www.canadian-health-network.ca

FASlink

FASlink is a free Internet mailing list for individuals families and professionals who deal with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. FASlink web site has the largest archive of FAS information in the world. Check it out at:

www.acbr.com/fas/faslink.htm

No pregnant woman ever drinks alone. The drink goes fairly strong. For the sake of the effects of alcohol in pregnancy will tell her.

MOTHERISK
ALCOHOL AND
SUBSTANCE USE
IN PREGNANCY
HELPLINE

1(877) FAS-INFO
Toll-free 1-877-327-4636

FACES of FAS: Putting a personal face on FAS

FACES of FAS is a book about courage, hope, love, despair and disappointment. It is about facing challenges on a daily basis. It is about parents facing battles for services for their children. The book contains real stories about real people and their real life situations.

This collection of 10 stories profiles the struggles, successes and perspectives of parents and families in different situations. From a birth mother setting aside her guilt to care for her affected son to a foster parent on a reserve dealing with community denial to an adoptive family negotiating their way through the justice system with their adult son.

It is hoped that by reading the 10 stories in the collection, others will be able to share in the wisdom, strength and insight that the participating families have offered. It is also hoped that readers will be inspired by the families and appreciate the courage it takes to tell these stories.

Produced by the Association for Community Living-Manitoba and written by Beth McKechnie, *FACES of FAS* is dedicated to the parents and families involved in raising children in our communities.

FACES of FAS is expected to be available in February 2001. For more information or to obtain a copy, contact Dale Kendel at 786-1607.

Help for Child Care Providers

Feedback on "Best Practices for the Inclusion of Children with FAS/FAE in Manitoba's Early Childhood Programs" has been "outstanding," said Manitoba Child Care Association (MCCA) executive director Pat Wege.

The manual and audiotope kit were produced by the MCCA with financial support from Healthy Child Manitoba.

The MCCA distributed the kit to 1,072 licensed child care centres, nursery schools and family child care homes across the province.

It is being used by the child care community to educate employees and implement suggestions contained in the resource. It is also being used as an educational tool with families that use the programs.

"We were very careful to focus on the strengths as well as the challenges of children affected by FAS," said Wege.

Much of the approach involves the adults changing their expectations to correspond with the abilities of the child.

"Sometimes we expect children to adapt to the environments we set up whereas we should adjust to meet their needs."

This can include keeping instructions simple, knowing which behaviours frustrate which children or modelling appropriate behaviours so children have a visual and concrete example of how something should be done.

The 40-page manual also provides guidance and strategies on how to establish partnerships between all the people involved in a child's life.

Wege noted that the program was written specifically for licenced child care facilities, but it is equally useful for parents or babysitters as well as other agencies involved with young children.

Those pressed for time might choose

the companion audiotope as a quick alternative. Using a dialogue or talk show format, the tape is a condensed version of the manual.

Corresponding best practise workshops for MCCA members are also open to the public at an additional cost. For information, contact Karen Gander at 586-8587 ext. 6.

In partnership with Healthy Child Manitoba, the **Manitoba Text Book Bureau (MTTB)** now distributes FAS resources. To purchase, quote the catalogue number below and call toll free: **1-800-305-5515**.

Cat# Resource

- 8053 What Educators Need to Know About FAS (English)
- 8054 What Educators Need to Know About FAS (French)
- 8055 What Educators Need to Know About FAS - audio cassette (English)
- 8056 What Educators Need to Know About FAS - audio cassette (French)
- 8057 What Doctors Need to Know About FAS - audio cassette (English)
- 8058 What Doctors Need to Know About FAS - CD (English)
- 8059 Laminated Referral List for Physicians
- 8060 23x18 Kangaroo Poster - "Listen to the Inner Voice"
- 8061 Pregnant? Did you know you could hurt your baby if you drink alcohol? (package of 25 brochures)
- ** Best Practices for the Inclusion of Children with FAS/FAE in Manitoba's Early Childhood Programs - manual (English)
- ** Best Practices for the Inclusion of Children with FAS/FAE in Manitoba's Early Childhood Programs - audio cassette (English)

**Still to be set up in the system.

Letters to Our Children, Letters from Our Children

Letters to Our Children, Letters from Our Children: Living with Fetal Alcohol and Alcohol Related Effects is the second book in the Letters to Our Children series.

The first book, published seven years ago, contained 26 letters from families of children living with a disability. The current edition has 44 stories written from the heart by parents, relatives and caregivers.

Included in the second book are the original letters and an update from the families of two adopted children diagnosed with FAS.

Edited by Dorothy Badry and Liz Lawryk, this collection of stories is about



hope, about children who are loved and children who know they live life with a difference.

Letters to Our Children, Letters From Our Children: Living with Fetal Alcohol and Alcohol Related Effects is available through the Alberta Association for Community Living.

To order, send \$19.95 plus \$3.00 shipping (\$0.75 for each additional book) and G.S.T. payable to the Alberta Association for Community Living to: Letters to Our Children Project, 11724 Kinsway Ave, Edmonton, AB, T5G 0X5 (ISBN 1-895736-10-2)