

All about me and FASD

A diagnosis of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder can tell you many important things you need to know about:

- Learning needs
- Behaviours
- Relationships
- Social needs

FASD is commonly referred to as an *invisible condition*. Most people impacted by FASD are not diagnosed. That means that many people with FASD do not know it and may look like they are doing fine. However, a person with FASD can experience a number of difficulties if they do not get the right supports.

Challenges can be with things like:

- Acting impulsively, then later not remembering why they behaved a certain way
- Trouble remembering important dates, events, or things they need to do.
- Misdiagnosed with other things like ADHD or Learning Disabilities.
- Going along with what everyone else may be doing without considering what is best for them.
- Getting into trouble or high-risk behaviors, but not fully understanding how it happened.



The first step is to **determine if you have a diagnosis or if an assessment is needed.**

The next step is to **get connected to a trustworthy support system that can help you decide what is best for you** and explain your choices in a way you can understand.

“I have a diagnosis of FASD”

What you can do:

- Contact your local FASD network



ConnectFASD will help you find a place that can properly assess what is going on for you, and help you find involvement with FASD informed supports and services in your community.

- Get help to know about your diagnosis; [What is FASD?](#)
- Get help to make a plan to live your best life.

“I don’t have a diagnosis, but I suspect I am living with FASD”

Things you can consider:

These signs are related to FASD:

- History of Prenatal Alcohol Exposure (PAE) – was there alcohol use in pregnancy?
- Other diagnosis, such as ADHD or Autism – You may already have another diagnosis, but it may not explain everything that is happening for you.
- Do you sometimes feel:
 - Easily distracted
 - “Sensory overload” with things like noise, strong smells, bright flashing lighting,
 - Like you are getting in trouble often, without meaning to

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- Do you sometimes feel you have a hard time:
 - understanding complicated language,
 - understanding long instructions,
 - expressing yourself to others so you feel they fully understand.
 - containing your frustration when you are overwhelmed.
- Do you have difficulty keeping employment or housing because the expectations feel difficult?

If you are experiencing anything above, contact your local FASD network or professional and/or natural supports that can help. ConnectFASD will work with you to find an assessment, or to build a community of supports, or listen if you need to talk.

Resources in your area:

CALGARY ALTERNATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

Calgary Alternative Poss-Abilities - Provides case management assistance to enable individuals with FASD and other diagnoses with complex support requirements to live and participate in the community and develop vital service and interpersonal connections.

CALGARY JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY

The Extended FASD Support Project - Support project for adults diagnosed, or suspected of living with FASD, at risk of involvement, or already involved with the criminal justice system, through advocacy, referrals, and intervention and prevention strategies based on individual strengths.

The FASD Action Hall (FAH) - Peer support group for individuals with FASD & their support person. A wide variety of topics are covered throughout the year, including FASD awareness/strategies, life skills, emotional regulation, addictions and healthy relationships.

ENVIROS

FASD Support Program - Provides foster, adoptive, kinship and biological parents with the information and tools they need to effectively parent a child or youth with FASD.

FASD Evolution Program - Supports adults living with a diagnosis of FASD through access to income support, housing, employment and medical care.

FOOTHILLS FETAL ALCOHOL SOCIETY

FASD Family Response Program - Supports caregivers living with someone with FASD through in-home visitation, advocacy, access of diagnosis and assessment services, and transition supports in the rural surrounding areas of Calgary. Hosts a variety of parent support groups.

FASD MAPS

FASD MAPS is a partnership program with Renfrew Educational Services, Hull Services, McMan Calgary and Woods Homes. The partnership offers a continuum of services for families with children and youth affected by FASD.

Renfrew Education Services works with children, newborn to 10 years who may be affected by FASD, and their families (403) 291-5038 ext.1691. Hull Services works with children and youth, 8 to 15 who may be impacted by FASD (403) 923-8276



Talk to us at ConnectFASD for more information about referral processes.
connectfasd.ca • 1 866 601 3273 (FASD) • info@connectfasd.ca

FOR FURTHER READING:

[Read our other Factsheets here](#)

Calgary Fetal Alcohol Network. (2016). Best & Emerging Practices for Individuals and Families affected by FASD throughout the Lifespan. Best & Emerging Practices for Individuals and Families affected by FASD throughout the Lifespan.

Proof Alliance (2019). How do I know if I have an FASD? [How Do I Know if I Have an FASD? :: Disability :: Resources :: MOFAS \(proofalliance.org\)](#)

Get Real AB. (2021). [Challenges of FASD. Challenges of FASD – Let's Get Real Alberta \(getrealab.ca\)](#)

Kodituwakku P. W. (2009). Neurocognitive profile in children with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders. *Developmental disabilities research reviews*, 15(3), 218–224. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ddrr.73>

Medalia, A. & Revheim, N. (2002). Dealing with cognitive dysfunction associated with psychiatric disabilities: A handbook for families and friends of individuals with psychiatric disorders. Albany, NY: New York State Office of Mental Health.