



**FASD United**  
THE NATIONAL VOICE ON FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDERS  
Formerly NOFAS

## Weekly Roundup

September 5, 2023  
FASD Awareness Month!

# NEW AT FASD UNITED

### [FASD Awareness Month 2023 is Here!](#)

We are so excited to welcome everyone to FASD Awareness Month 2023. It's a HUGE year for all things FASD, advocacy and education are ramping up as we make our way towards the end of the year! We have plenty of avenues and resources for you during this month. During Awareness Month, FASD United is hosting National FASD Impact Week from September 18th-September 21st in Washington, D.C.

**FASD AWARENESS  
MONTH**  
**SEPTEMBER**

### [Podcast Features FASD United on Run FASD 5K and Respect Act](#)

Jennifer Wisdahl, FASD United Chief Operating Officer, and Rebecca Tillou, self-advocate and lead for our upcoming Run FASD 5K, are both featured guests on The Legislative Gazette podcast from WAMC podcasts.



### [FASD Respect Act Has 3 New Co-Sponsors](#)

We can celebrate the start of FASD Awareness Month as three new co-sponsors have signed onto HR 3946, The FASD Respect Act!

Thank you to Rep. Deborah Wasserman Schultz [D-FL-25], Rep. Susie Lee [D-NV-3], and Rep. Collin Z. Allred [D-TX-32] for officially becoming co-sponsors.



### [FASD United's Jennifer Wisdahl Featured on Radio Show](#)

FASD United's Jennifer Wisdahl was featured on WMBS Radio in Pennsylvania for FASD Awareness Month. Check out the conversation on Facebook Live for the show "What You Need to Know with Fayette County Drug and Alcohol Commission."



### [Five More Organizations Support Respect Act](#)

We are grateful for support from five more organizations for the FASD Respect Act: A Healing Paradigm (Georgia), Mental Health America of Indiana, Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition of New York, Easterseals UCP North Carolina and Virginia (serves both North Carolina and Virginia), and HOPE North Carolina.



### [Save the Date: The Vancouver Conference 2024](#)

Coming April 11 – 14, 2024!

Expanding on the work of eight previous conferences, The Vancouver Conference is back in action... this time in the bustling city of Seattle! FASD United has taken on the task of putting on this important global FASD conference.



### [Join FASD United and ACOG for Awareness Month Twitter \(X\) Chat](#)

Please join FASD United in partnership with ACOG (American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists) for a Twitter (X) Chat on September 27<sup>th</sup> for FASD Awareness Month, from 1:00-2:00pm.

Please use hashtag #FASDChat2023 and #FASDNPN



### [New Co-Sponsor for FASD Respect Act](#)

FASD Awareness Month has brought in a new co-sponsor for S. 1800, The FASD Respect Act. Senator Kevin Cramer [R-ND] signed onto the bill on September 12<sup>th</sup>, becoming the fifth co-sponsor of S. 1800, The FASD Respect Act, which was introduced by Senators Murkowski (original author) and Klobuchar (original co-sponsor).



### [More Organizations Support The FASD Respect Act](#)

The FASD Respect Act now has the support of over 150 organizations thanks to advocates like you!

The latest group of organizations to endorse The FASD Respect Act come from California, The District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia (4), Indiana (2), Kentucky, North Carolina, and Texas.



### [Forward to a Friend](#)

# LATEST FASD NEWS

## [Self-Advocate Landon French Shares Inspiring Poem](#)

“Meet Landon French, an inspiring self-advocate who uses his poetic talent to shed light on the challenges of living with FASD. Prepare to be moved by his captivating words!”



## [New Materials from CDC on Alcohol Use During Pregnancy](#)

“In recognition of September being FASD Awareness Month, CDC is excited to announce the release of new materials for both healthcare professionals and patients to encourage conversations about alcohol use during pregnancy and the use of alcohol screening and brief intervention (SBI)”



## [Proclamation for FASD Awareness Month in Massachusetts](#)

We are very excited to share that the Governor of Massachusetts has signed an official proclamation recognizing September as FASD Awareness Month. The proclamation was made possible by the hard work of two members of the FASD United Family Navigator team: Kristen Eriksen and Laura Bedard.



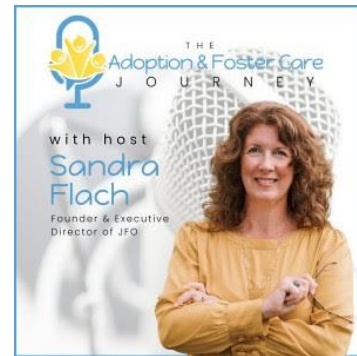
## [Couple Turns Dreams of Creating a Safe Space for Those With FASD Into a Reality](#)

“Cliff and Kat Meinhardt started their journey back in December 2022 in an effort to provide, essentially, what could become a forever home for those with FASD. They were handed the keys to officially be able to start renovations back in May 2023.”



### **Podcast: Back to School with FASD Adoptive Mom, Michelle Catania**

This episode of The Adoption & Foster Care Journey podcast features “adoptive mom Michelle Catania, who discusses why it’s often difficult for children with trauma, FASD, and other challenges to navigate school and how homeschooling can lead to thriving kids.”



### **September is National Recovery Month 2023**

“National Recovery Month (Recovery Month), which started in 1989, is a national observance held every September to promote and support new evidence-based treatment and recovery practices, the nation’s strong and proud recovery community, and the dedication of service providers and communities who make recovery in all its forms possible.”



### **Mental Health and Cannabis Use in Pregnant Women**

“A recent study reveals a potential vulnerability of pregnant and postpartum women with mental health disorders towards self-medicating with cannabis. Prior research had been vague, generalizing mental health issues without delving into specific disorders.”



### **Women Without Children at Age 35 Are at Highest Risk of Binge Drinking, Alcohol Use Disorder**

“A new study shows that newer generations of middle-aged women are also more likely to engage in excessive alcohol consumption, and that women without children are most at risk.”







### **TV News: Run Raises Awareness of FASD**

“The 5-K Run FASD was held this past weekend to raise awareness of FASD. Event coordinator Rebecca Tillou said the condition is 2 ½ times as common as autism and affects executive brain function including impulse control and time management and cause problems for students in schools. All proceeds from the run went toward FASD United.”



### **An Open Letter in Support of the FASD Respect Act**

“This is an open letter in support of the FASD Respect Act. This would bring federal funding to individual states for state/local organizations, non-for-profits in the medical and mental health capacity, and schools and establish a system of care for the lifelong needs of those living with the damaging effects of prenatal alcohol exposure. I write this as a teacher, an adoptive mom, and as someone whose family is directly impacted by a loved one diagnosed with FASD.”

### **Education, Not Punishment, Key to FASD Fight**

“Educating young girls on the dangers of alcohol consumption during pregnancy may be the best way to avoid growing numbers of babies diagnosed with FASD. These are the sentiments of Vivien Lourens, founder of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Information Centre (FASIC).”





### [Volunteers Rally at Hawaii Capitol for FASD Awareness Month](#)

This local TV news segment features volunteers and advocates speaking about pregnant mothers consuming alcohol and making their voices heard at the Hawaii State Capitol, because September was made the FASD awareness month.”



### [Teachers Needed to Test Website for Teachers About FASD](#)

“Will you have a student with an FASD or prenatal alcohol exposure (PAE) this upcoming school year? Researchers at the University of Rochester have developed a website for teachers about FASD. They are looking for teachers to try out the website this upcoming school year (2023-2024).”

### [A Young Woman’s Journey Towards FASD Awareness](#)

The author writes about interning with NOFASD Australia and says, “I only had limited awareness of what FASD was, and nothing could prepare me for the extensive learning I was immersed in throughout my short time at the organization.”



### [Significant Boost To FASD Support For New Zealand Maaori Welcomed](#)

“Maaori welcomed the \$1.4 million investment from the Maaori Health Authority to increase support for whaanau affected by FASD. “This is a significant step towards ensuring effective, equitable outcomes so that those with FASD can live to their full potential.”



### [South Africa Sees Alarming Spike in FASD Rate](#)

“Recent research findings have raised alarm among health authorities as they reveal a disturbing increase in the prevalence of FASD in South Africa. The country continues to grapple with the highest FASD rates globally, with some regions recording rates as high as 31% of children born with FASD.”

[Forward to a Friend](#)

## RESEARCH UPDATE

### [Alcohol Exposure Before and During Pregnancy is Associated With Reduced Fetal Growth](#)

“This study demonstrated that PAE negatively affects fetal growth, in particular when exposed during the periconception period or in second trimester. Our results indicate that potential negative consequences of



PAE are detectable already before birth.”

- *BMC Medicine*

### [Prenatal Alcohol Exposure and Cognition at Midlife](#)

“While all participants with PAE had lower fluid cognition, those with PAE and dysmorphic features also exhibited specific deficits in their performance on measures of inhibition, attention, and cognitive flexibility”

- *Alcohol: Clinical & Experimental Research*

### [Cohort Effects of Women's Mid-life Binge Drinking and Alcohol Use Disorder Symptoms in the United States: Impacts of Changes in Timing of Parenthood](#)

“In the United States, subgroups of women at highest risk of excessive drinking appear to be expanding, probably supported in part by a trend towards delayed parenting.”

- *Society for the Study of Addiction*

*Note: To request more information on a piece of research, please contact the source of publication/journal.*

*Some journal articles may require a paid membership or login credentials to access and view the full article.*

*FASD United is not able to provide assistance in obtaining this access.*

## **National FASD Impact Week**

Advocates, Experts, Researches and Families will gather in DC for a week of workshops, information sharing, celebration and advocacy.



### [National FASD Impact Week](#)

September 18-21, 2023

Join FASD United at our nations capitol September 18th-21st for National FASD Impact Week.

### [The Red Shoes Gala by FASD United](#)

September 19, 2023

A celebration of the FASD community that will honor Congressional and other leaders who have championed FASD-informed legislation, care, research, education and achievement.

### [An Impactful Network: Widening the Circle](#)

September 19, 2023

We will deepen our sense of connection and community with each other as we consider what it means to be advocates for equity and inclusion on behalf of people with FASD in the broader DEIB (diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging) space.

**[2nd Annual Workshop on FASDs: State of the Science](#)**

September 20, 2023

Hear from the top FASD Researchers, Advocates and Others to get insight and updates into the growth and emerging trends of the field.

**[Advocacy Day at the US Capitol](#)**

September 21, 2023

Join FASD Advocates from around the United States for a Hill Day at the seat of our democracy in Washington DC.

# RESOURCES

**[Featured: CDC FASD Training Website](#)**

This online training course is from the CDC's Collaborative for Alcohol-Free Pregnancy.

**[Featured: National FASD and Education Survey](#)**

**[Meet Your Student: Fillable Tool for Educators](#)**

**[FASD United Family Navigator](#)**

**[NIAAA Alcohol Treatment Navigator](#)**

**[CDC Surveillance for Emerging Threats to Mothers and Babies Network \(SET-NET\)](#)**

**[NIAAA: The Healthcare Professional's Core Resource on Alcohol](#)**

**[CDC Alcohol and Other Substance Use Fact Sheet](#)**

**[CDC Course: FASD Primer for Healthcare Professionals](#)**

**[NIAAA Brochure: Alcohol and Your Pregnancy](#)**

**[AAP PediaLink course: FASD: Recognition and Management](#)**

**[Participate in Study on Prenatal Alcohol and Neuroimmunity](#)** (For Canadian participants only)