



FASD Network News

FASD SUPPORT NETWORK
OF SASKATCHEWAN INC.

July 2011 - Issue 29

A Note to our Readers

Sunny Saskatchewan Greetings,

I hope this note finds you enjoying a summer filled with plenty of time in the prairie sun with the good company of your friends and family. This spring, the Network looked forward to several promising projects on the horizon for families living with FASD. The past several weeks of summer have the Network team and the provincial FASD community working hard to launch some great programs and initiatives.

Many of you will know that the FASD Support Network of Saskatchewan began with several dedicated parent-advocates in the province. They were concerned about the needs of their growing children living with FASD. This group of advocates changed and evolved over the years, always giving a diverse and comprehensive voice to the needs of families in Saskatchewan. It has been their continued hope that the Network expand the in the area of family support to be able to provide more information, peer support and strategies about FASD to others. This year, thanks to financial support from

the Government of Saskatchewan, the Network is pleased to expand our programming to include more support for families. The *FASD Family Support Program* will look to build healthy families and healthy communities this year. read on in this issue of the *Network News* to learn more.

Another great initiative that will be launched this fall will also build capacity in families across the province. In collaboration with the Ministry of Social Services, Government of Saskatchewan, the Network is happy to announce FASD training for foster parents. We hope that you will stay tuned to learn more about this training and the positive outcomes it will surely bring to families living with FASD.

I hope that you can find a cold glass of lemonade and a warm breezy spot outside to read through another issue of the *Network News*. We hope you enjoy learning more about what we have coming up this year.

Jessica

Jessica Kaban,
Executive Director

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HOW TO CONTACT US

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Introducing a new Family Support Program

Submitted by Gerralee Reynolds
Family Support Worker

The FASD Support Network of Saskatchewan has looked forward to the day when we would be able to provide direct services to families living with FASD. Recent funding received from the Government of SK Children and Youth Agenda has given us the chance to do more to support families and address their daily needs. We are pleased to announce the FASD Family Support Program!

Two Family Support Workers, Allana Dziarski and Gerralee Reynolds, have joined the Network team. Over the next couple of months they will design the program and begin to offer support to families in Saskatoon and surrounding area. The goal of the FASD Family Support Program is to help to build healthy families and healthy communities through support, acceptance, and empowerment.



Healthy Families

Family Support Workers will help to build healthy families by offering these services:

→ Toll Free Support Line

1-866-673-3276

Family Support Workers will offer telephone support through the toll free line. This service is a great way for families to find out more information about the program, ask questions about FASD, learn about other community supports or just to talk with someone who understands FASD.

→ Family Support Meetings

Family Support Workers will hold monthly family support meetings in Saskatoon and occasional meetings in other areas of the province. The support meetings will offer parents and caregivers a chance to gather and talk about the strengths and struggles of living with FASD. Meetings will be empowering, knowledge building and hopeful. The family support meetings will give parents and caregivers a chance to create their own

support networks. Through these networks they can come to a new understanding of FASD by sharing similar life experiences.

→ One on One Support

Family Support Workers will provide one on one support to families who may be involved in the family support meetings and require additional assistance.

The goal of one on one support will be to help families meet specific needs or to address specific challenges. Family Support Workers can help families by connecting them with community supports like health care, respite or counselling.

A Family Support Worker may attend appointments or help with advocacy in a specific setting. For example, if a family is having trouble at school, the Family Support Worker can offer ideas, provide useful strategies and help to advocate for the needs of the child with FASD.



Healthy Communities

Healthy communities can provide better supports that consider the needs of families living with FASD. The FASD Family Support Program will work toward building healthy communities by helping others understand the lived experiences of individuals and families affected by FASD. We will do this by:

→ Working with Other Organizations

Many organizations are already supporting families living with FASD. We will help them to learn more about FASD and learn how to offer a good fit for families and individuals living with FASD.

A main goal of the program will be to help families get the support they need within their community. For example, a Family Support Worker can help families know who to call, what to ask and what to expect when they want to begin assessment or diagnosis. The Support Worker can support families through this process and many more.

→ Improving Awareness and Understanding

Professionals and service providers often have questions about FASD. It is our hope that by responding to questions, meeting with community members and improving awareness about FASD we will help to build healthy communities. Knowledgeable professionals and service providers are an important part of a healthy community.



Next Steps of the FASD Family Support Program

The FASD Family Support Program is just getting started. We hope to offer families and individuals a chance to be supported by the Network in a whole new way. The program will offer parents and caregivers a way to share experiences and build a new group of support that can expand beyond the Network.

We are excited to start the program and step along with families on their journey with FASD. Contact us to learn more.

CONTACT THE FASD FAMILY

Call our Toll Free line to learn more about the FASD Family Support Program.

1-866-673-3276

Contact one of the Family Support Workers directly by email or telephone:

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Training for Saskatchewan Foster Families

Foster families have an important role in our province. Foster families offer vulnerable children and youth a safe, healthy and nurturing home. Many of the children in care are living with FASD and pose a unique challenge to the families who provide foster care. In order to help foster families learn more about FASD and gain skills in parenting children and youth with FASD, a training initiative has been developed. Together the Ministry of Social Services and the FASD Support Network of Saskatchewan plan to provide mandatory training to foster parents. This new initiative aims to support foster parents and improve outcomes for children and youth with FASD.

Working Together!

The Network was pleased to have the job of developing the training materials for this important venture. We approached this task knowing we wanted to bring together up to date content, research based evidence, real life best practices and the ideas and voices of many parents. The materials are designed to increase knowledge of FASD, offer practical strategies for everyday life and alert parents to the need and benefit of self-care. Woven throughout the content are real life stories, wisdom and strategies shared by parents who know and understand FASD. The voices of parents teach us. They lead by example, offer startling insight and help us to truly understand what it means for families to live with FASD.

This exciting project has been a long time in the works. It is our hope that by meeting the need for education, strategies and support, foster parents across the province will be better able to support children and youth with FASD who are in their care. The province-wide training will be launched this fall. Sixteen selected community members and members of the Saskatchewan FASD Speakers Bureau have attended a training and will begin deliver workshops throughout the province.

The voices of parents teach us. They lead by example, offer startling insight and help us to truly understand what it means for families to live with FASD.



Sixteen community members will begin to deliver training to Saskatchewan Foster Families beginning in the Fall 2011.