



# FASD Network News

FASD SUPPORT NETWORK  
OF SASKATCHEWAN INC.

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## A Note to our Readers

### *Hello Friends,*

As fall rolls around, we can all hope that the summer storms have finally come to an end. Throughout the province we have had many weather related challenges and hardships. I hope that in spite of this, each one of you also had special moments to enjoy warm breezes, beautiful sunsets, sand in your toes, exciting family gatherings or moments of peace and quiet.

Many of you likely know that in September, people all around the world recognize September 9th, the 9th day of the 9th month, as FASD Awareness Day. A day such as this may have different meanings for different people. Communities around Saskatchewan mark this day with walks, informational sessions, displays and lunches. At the Network, September 9th gives us an opportunity to step back from day to day work and take the time to attend an event and join with others to celebrate

the success of individuals and families living with FASD who so generously teach us and lead us in our vision.

This past spring we were fortunate to work with CTV to produce a short announcement about FASD. We hope that you see this announcement aired during September and that this media spot can help to increase and awareness and understanding of FASD in our province. If you don't catch it on television, head to our website where you can watch the clip and browse around for other information.

We have a busy schedule of events this fall including training opportunities and our annual Parent Retreat. Notices of events will be sent out to our email contact list and also posted on our website. As always, contact the office for information, print resources or for support.

Beverly

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### HOW TO CONTACT US

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## Creating A Memory Book —by Beverly Palibroda

In the last issue of *Network News* it was suggested that special summer memories could be preserved by creating a memory book. This article offers more information about the purpose of a memory book, shares some possible benefits of using a memory book and offers a few tips to help an individual with FASD or a family member to get started on creating a memory book.

### What is a memory book?

We all have ways of documenting our lives. One of the most common is the family photo



album. A memory book expands on the idea of the family album and includes a wide variety of other mementos and keepsakes.

A memory book can be very simple or it can be quite elaborate. It is always a personal creation. This means there is no right or wrong, and each book is as unique as the person who created it.

### How can a memory book be helpful to people with FASD?

Individuals affected by prenatal alcohol exposure commonly have memory problems. Serious consequences of memory problems include the feelings of frustration that result when people, holidays, special events or places are forgotten

or the information is recalled but only in scattered bits and pieces that don't seem connected. Another consequence of the gaps in memory are the feelings of shame and embarrassment in one's inability to recall past events. Finally, a long term consequence for individuals with a memory disability is that their personal history and their life story is lost to them and they may only hear it from others. This can create a sense of disconnection from experiences.

A memory book is one tool that can address these consequences. The memory book acts as a concrete way to store important memories. The memories can be retrieved simply by opening the pages, reading the captions, reflecting on the photos and talking about the memories. In addition to being a concrete approach to retrieving memories, a memory book also offers a variety of external and visual cues. The pictures, ticket stubs from events or special mementos collected on a holiday may just help individuals to recall information or trigger stored memories. Questions and conversations with friends and family can then be structured around this concrete information.



These special memories, stored in an album or scrapbook, when saved over time, document a history that might otherwise be lost to an individual. The act of storing the photos or special items is a creative and positive activity that could be enjoyed by children, youth or adults with FASD on their own or along with others.

### What do I need to get started?

Starting a memory book is not that hard. You will need a photo album with room for captions and descriptions or a simple scrapbook with blank pages. Other important items you need are: a digital camera, scissors, colourful pens, glue and tape.



With the popularity of scrapbooking there is a good selection of suitable albums, scrapbooks and other supplies for you to choose from.

Just a word of caution—it might be best to keep the scrapbook, album and other supplies pretty simple. If the expectation is too high or the task is too demanding the process could lead to feelings of being overwhelmed rather than a positive and creative pursuit. It is also a good idea to find a sturdy box or a certain drawer where all items are stored and put away each time.



### Ready, set, go...

Once you have all the items you need and have yourself organized, you are ready to begin on your memory book. Working on the memory book can become a consistent part of your routine, even if it is just for a few minutes one time each week.



A good place to start is by looking through your photos and by taking more photos. Get in the habit of toting your camera with you and snapping photos. Then, get in the habit of printing some photos, even if just a few, on a regular basis. Let people know that you are working on a memory book and they will likely share their photos.

### What kinds of photos?

Everyone will have ideas about the kinds of photos to include, but here are a few ideas:

- ◆ Things you like
- ◆ Favorite places, people and pets
- ◆ Sports or hobbies
- ◆ Holidays and celebrations
- ◆ Everyday activities
- ◆ Well known people and extended family members that you might see less often
- ◆ Nature or scenery

This variety of photos can help

you to tell your story by blending familiar and everyday things along with one-time events, celebrations and special holidays. Take the time to write a brief caption or story about the photos, include names of people, the year and other details that you think are important.

Photos are a main part of a memory book but, many other items can also be saved in the memory book. Here are just a few thoughts to help come up with your own ideas:

- ◆ Notes, cards or postcards from family and friends
- ◆ Ticket stubs from movies, theatre or concerts
- ◆ Programs from ceremonies like weddings or graduations
- ◆ Invitations to birthday parties or reunions
- ◆ Artwork, poetry or writing that you or others have created
- ◆ Favorite sayings and positive messages (you can use nice paper and interesting computer fonts to make it decorative and appealing)
- ◆ Sheet music or favorite song lyrics
- ◆ Be creative and consider items like leaves, feathers, pressed flowers, special coins or trinkets

All the items help to tell your story and create a connection between the parts of your life.

Family and friends can support you and join in by sharing copies of their photos, taking photos of you, writing short notes or sending cards that you can save in your memory book. Others can ask about your memory book and use it as a prop for starting conversations or telling about your life.

### A few last thoughts

Creating a memory book can be fun and helpful for children, youth or adults with FASD. It is a highly creative and participatory activity and only requires basic supplies that lots of people already have around the house. Many individuals will be good at this activity and will manage it with minimal support, some will need more guidance while others may prefer to be less involved, but still enjoy having a memory book.

### THINK ABOUT THIS...

The most obvious benefit of a memory book is about filling in memory gaps in a helpful and fun way. The book also tells a story about gifts, talents, interests, important people, places and events. This collection of memories can be a treasured item that is helpful during tough times, can help to lift a bad mood or can be a reminder of positive things when things are going wrong. Photos and notes can offer a connection to those who are not around or are far away.



Parent Retreat 2010  
Songs of Strength  
November 5-6th  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan



Save the  
Date

The Parent Retreat, hosted by the FASD Support Network of Saskatchewan, has gained great approval over the years. Each year a selection of inspiring and informative presentations, a warm and welcoming atmosphere and opportunities for sharing continues to attract parents from all over the province. Parents travel great distances, juggle childcare arrangements and make plans well in advance so they can join in this two day event.

We encourage parents to Save the Dates of **November 5-6th** and plan to attend the Parent Retreat 2010 Songs of Strength.

**The 4th International Conference on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder *The Power of Knowledge: Integrating Research, Policy, and Promising Practice Around the World***



Reminder

March 2-5, 2011  
TheWestin Bayshore  
Vancouver, BC, Canada  
Ph: (604) 682-3377  
Toll Free: 1-800-937-8461  
Fax: (604) 687 3102

<http://www.interprofessional.ubc.ca/FASD.htm>