



Network News

May 2005, Issue 7



Saskatchewan Fetal Alcohol Support Network

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A Note to Readers

By Beverly Palibroda

I want to send out a warm hello to all of you from the office of the Saskatchewan Fetal Alcohol Support Network. Please take a few moments to look over the latest issue of the Network News. We have some exciting items in store for you. To begin, we would like to welcome Angela Schmolke to our team as the Executive Director for the Saskatchewan Fetal Alcohol Support Network. Angela comes to us with energy, enthusiasm, and a range of skills and abilities. Angela has already begun working on several projects and has had opportunity to meet many people involved with the Network.

The days are warming and gardening season is upon us. Think about planting some sunflowers in your yard. Let the sunflowers be a reminder to you of the shared commitment we have to create a community where people with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder can grow, thrive, blossom and be the best that they can be.

“And forget not that the earth delights to feel your bare feet and the winds long to play with your hair.”

Kahil Gibran

Did You Know???

FASD Workshop Opportunity

May 27, 2005

9:00am—4:30pm

Community Awareness and Action Workshop and SFASN
Annual General Meeting

John V Remai Centre

510 Cynthia Street

Saskatoon, SK

Call 975-0806 for more information or to register for this event.



WE Cares Project

The SFASN is involved as a sponsor agency in the WE Cares Project. This is a wonderful chance to create educational opportunities utilizing the “train the trainer” model. Participants will be trained to deliver educational sessions for front line support persons serving adults with FASD. We are currently seeking individuals who are interested in receiving this training. For information call Angela at 975-0884 or toll free 1-866-673-FASN (3276) or email fasdnetwork@sasktel.net.

Saskatchewan Prevention Institute 25th Anniversary Celebration

June 22, 2005

1:00—3:00pm

Kinsmen Children’s Centre

Call 655-2512 to RSVP or check the website www.preventioninstitute.sk.ca for more information.



The ABC'S of FASD

By Sylvia Nagy

Sylvia Nagy is a parent of children with FASD, a board member of the Saskatchewan Fetal Alcohol Support Network, and a member of the Speaker's Bureau. She has written this FASD Alphabet with a strategy for every letter of the alphabet. Much of Sylvia's knowledge has come through trial and error and learning from others. She notes that some of the following strategies describe what works for both her *and* her kids most of the time and some are the best practices of others. Perhaps not all the strategies will work for the people in your life who are affected by FASD, but some of the ideas might be just what you need.

A is for Adjustment. Parents must be willing to adjust their lifestyle and provide a positive atmosphere. The onus is on the parents to make the adjustments because the child can't.

B is for 'Be There'. There is a need for constant supervision. Preventing messes is easier than damage control.

C is for Concrete Language. Say what you mean and mean what you say. Say what you want, not what you don't want. Be exact and concrete in your language.

D is for Trying Differently. In a familiar quote from Diane Malbin, "Success takes place when we stop trying harder and start trying differently".

E is for Enjoy. Enjoy the good times you have today.

F is for Forgiveness. Forgive and forget - they have!

G is for Grief. Acknowledge the grief felt for the losses. Many of our children have lost their birth families. Parents have lost many hopes and dreams of the future they envisioned.



H is for Hope. Hope for the future. Although it may not be the one we expected, it still can be fulfilling.

I is for Identify Strengths. Build on strengths. Emphasize the positive. Minimize the negative.

J is for Join a support group.

K is for KISS. Keep it short and simple.



L is for love. Love covers a multitude of wrongs.

M is for Modelling. Model appropriate behaviour. "When your child has a tantrum, don't have one yourself."

N is for New View. Try to see the behaviour in light of the disability.

O is for Observe. Note how the child learns. Most are visual and tactile learners, rather than auditory. So just giving instructions verbally may not get the results you want.

P is for Predictability. Same time, same place, same station.

Q is for Quiet. Quiet time is needed. Minimize distractions and stressors in the environment.

R is for the 3 R's: repetition, repetition, repetition.

S is for Structure. Provide structure rather than control. Organize the environment for success. Have the same patterns every time you do something.



T is for Teaching. Teach appropriate social skills and life skills.



U is for Understanding. We tend to see our children's behaviour as a direct reflection on our abilities as a parent rather than the result of brain damage.

V is for Value. Value your children as the creation of God. They have something to teach us.

W is for Willingness. Willingness to adapt, change, try differently, and to challenge long held views on child rearing. If you're willing to bend, you're less likely to break.

X is for eXpectations. Modify them and keep them realistic.

Y? Don't ask Y? They don't know Y.

Z is for Zeal. You will need zeal to advocate for your child with teachers, friends, neighbours, relatives, lawyers and judges. Never give up!

Supported Housing For Persons with FASD

For most of us our homes are extremely important. Our homes are much more than the physical structure around us. Our homes are where we gather with loved ones, relax, have fun, face life's struggle, and feel free to be ourselves. We want to feel safe and secure in our homes. For adults with FASD having a home can be a struggle and may feel like an impossible dream.



Recently the Supported Housing Project, coordinated by Eunice Bergstrom, held a two-day workshop at the Mennonite Central Committee office in Saskatoon. The facility was lovely and the staff were gracious hosts to our gathering of nearly 40 partici-

pants. Tina Antrobus, a well know speaker with a wealth of information related to supporting individuals with FASD, was a vibrant and enthusiastic facilitator.

The aim of the workshop was to explore the possibilities of housing situations for people with FASD. The workshop included the opportunity to break out into small groups and brainstorm ideas around housing and



Tina Antrobus shares a laugh with workshop participants.

the supports needed for persons with FASD to be successful. I honestly believe that all participants went away from the workshop with a feeling of hope and that having a home is not an impossible dream for persons with FASD.

Watch upcoming issues of Network News and our Fall 2005 issue of Living with FASD for updates on the Supported Housing Project for Persons with FASD.



Brainstorming Ideas



The Network has been Growing!

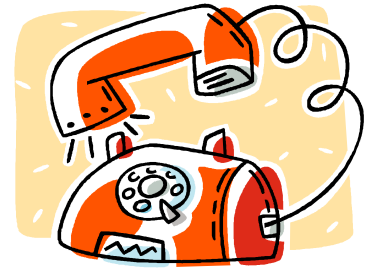
Our membership continues to grow and this is excellent news for all of us. We are reaching communities across the province and providing a valuable source of support and information to parents, family members, people with FASD, community members, schools, and professionals.

If you are interested in joining the Network, annual SFASN membership is \$15.00. Membership comes with several benefits. You will receive the publication *Living with FASD* two times per year, receipt of the Network News four times per year, access to print resources, including FASD Tips, and pictorial materials as they are developed. As The Network grows, we will continue to expand our resources and be better able to meet the needs of people throughout the province.

For more information please contact the Network by email at fasdnetwork@sasktel.net or by telephone at 975-0884 or use the toll free number 1-866-673-FASN (3276).

The Toll free Warm Line

The Network has a toll free warm line that you can call for information or support. This service is available to everyone. If you are requiring mentorship or guidance you will be matched with a parent mentor. If you need specific answers to your questions we can help you find the answers you need or connect you with other community agencies for assistance in various areas of life.



The Network maintains up to date print resources on specific aspects of FASD that can be of assistance to parents, family members, support persons, or community members.

1-866-673-FASN (3276)

Take some time to play...

I know most of us live very busy lives, but it is important to take some time to play. Whatever you choose, whether it is playing in the back yard, at the local park, getting together with neighbours for a walk, or hiking through the wilderness, this is a valuable use of your time. Individuals and families affected by FASD need to manage the stresses and pressures that come with daily life. Summer Camp is an excellent way for this to happen. Children with FASD can develop friendships and have fun in the great outdoors. There is a range of summer camps throughout all regions of the province. If you are interested in summer camp information the Network office has copies of the Saskatchewan Camping Directory. Contact us for more information.

Words of Wisdom and Life Lessons

Request for Submissions

Do you have any words of wisdom that you find yourself sharing with others or telling yourself on those days when you are in need of wise words? Have you learned a life lesson, or watched another learn a life lesson? If you are willing to share some words of wisdom or life lessons related to supporting those whose lives are affected by FASD please email skfasnetwork@sasktel.net or phone 975-0806. The Saskatchewan Fetal Alcohol Support Network is committed to providing an opportunity for individuals to share their stories and experiences. By doing so, you are helping to build a community of understanding, sensitivity, and hope for persons with FASD and their families.