



FASD Network News

FASD SUPPORT NETWORK
OF SASKATCHEWAN INC.

February 2010 - Issue 24

A Note to our Readers

Hello Friends,

The new year is well underway and the winter days seem to have just slipped by. Already the days are longer and a seed catalogue arrived in my mailbox the other day, signaling the coming spring.

Here at the Network office we have been busy hosting some extraordinary events. It was great to see so many of you at these events. In January, we were fortunate to have Brenda Knight, a registered psychologist from BC, present to a group of 80 professionals from the fields of mental health and addictions.

Just a few short weeks later, Nathan Ory presented to capacity crowds in two Locations—Saskatoon and North Battleford. A total of over 400 people attended the two-day workshops. The focus of the training was on supporting individuals with challenging behaviours.

We were truly overwhelmed by the response to these training opportunities. Clearly, people in every region of our province continue to seek greater understanding of FASD. We are confident that individuals living with this disability will benefit from the increased skills and knowledge of attendees at the trainings.

The staff and board of the Network would like to offer heartfelt thanks to our Funder Saskatchewan Health through the Community Care Branch's Cognitive Disability Strategy. Financial support for our organization allows us to meet the community demand for high quality FASD training and education.

We also want to express a huge thanks to each participant at these events. Your interest and willingness to gain knowledge about FASD is so encouraging.

Keep in touch and enjoy this issue of Network News.

Beverly

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HOW TO CONTACT US

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Letter to a Grandchild

Submitted by Alison Ballentyne on behalf of the Northern Healthy Communities Partnership

This touching article was first prepared as a fictional letter to be read out loud and aired on the Missinipe Broadcasting Corporation radio. It was played in the fall of 2009 as a way to increase awareness and understanding of prenatal alcohol exposure. Enjoy...

My dear Grandchild,

As I watch you, playing dodgeball with such energy and enthusiasm, I am amazed at all you can do.

Before you were born, I watched helplessly when your Mom and Dad would go out to parties. Your mom would promise not to drink, and sometimes she kept her promise, but sometimes she didn't. Finally, she just stayed home because it was hard for her to say no to her friends. I was glad and kept her company as much as I could. I didn't know much about alcohol but I knew alcohol wasn't good for the baby inside.

When you were born, you were so tiny but so perfect. I prayed that you would be okay and for the first few years, although slower than other children, you were. You were happy and full of fun, and always had a big smile for everyone. You loved to go out on the trap line with me, and you could spend hours with me, checking snares and picking berries.

When you started school, your first teacher didn't know anything about prenatal alcohol exposure and she didn't understand why you had such a hard time sitting still. That first year was very rough and you got more and more frustrated and angry. Your Mom felt so guilty for what she had done and she had a hard time making rules for you. So I would take you out on the trap line, and I would have my noosim back and we would have a wonderful time. When you tried to do school work and would get upset, I would just let you be mad for a few minutes then we would go out for a walk and you would be okay.

The next school year you had a new teacher, and she was different. She talked to you in a gentle voice and asked you to sit close to her. She asked me if your mom drank when she was carrying you, and I almost said no. Then she said "My mom did when she was carrying me" and I told her the truth. I was amazed that she could be a teacher even though her mom drank alcohol when she was pregnant. That was our best school year ever. Your teacher explained a lot of things to your Mom and me, she taught us how to do things differently so you could learn, and she taught you in ways you could understand. She even



helped your dad be more patient with you by explaining why it took you so long to do some things.

You still struggle with some things, like reading and adding, but you are a leader in your classroom and you take such pride in helping others. With your reminder pictures at home and in school, I don't have to keep telling you what to do, and you can get ready all by yourself. You even made lunch for your Mom and me yesterday and those were the best sandwiches I ever ate!

You are teaching me so much about acceptance and determination. You are so excited when you learn something new, and so loving to us all. You have brought much joy to our family.

Some days, I feel badly, wishing I could have made things different, but I love you with all my heart and I know as long as we teach you in ways you can learn, you will be okay.



Updates from the Network Office...

Website Updates



If you haven't visited the Network website lately, take a few minutes to stop in. On the Network Resources Tab you will find all past issues of **Network News** available to download.

We have also just recently added a popular resource called **Lifeguard Strategies**. This booklet was developed in partnership by the Saskatoon Supported Housing Project and the FASD Support Network of Saskatchewan. Feel free to download a copy of Lifeguard Strategies—you will see that it is full of excellent ideas and helpful strategies.

Lifeguard Strategies
For Supporting Adolescents and
Adults Affected by FASD



Other new additions to the website are 10 downloadable issues of **Living with FASD**. Each issue includes a variety of local, regional, provincial and national information and articles.

You may want to check out the links page too. We have updated our links with lots of new sites and downloadable resources. A couple downloadable resources that you might find useful:

- ◆ A fabulous booklet called **Brain Facts** available on the Society for Neuroscience site. This book has been valuable around the Network office and includes colourful images to help understand our complex brains!
- ◆ **The Canadian Guidelines for Diagnosis-FASD**. This booklet can answer many questions related to assessment and diagnosis in Canada.

Contact the Network if you are looking for information or if there is something you would like to see added to our website.

Upcoming Conference

April 14-17, 2010
Vancouver, BC

Fourth National Biennial Conference on
Adolescents and Adults with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
Facing the Future Together: Where Do We Go From Here?

For more information:
Email: ipinfo@interchange.ubc.ca

Website:
www.interprofessional.ubc.ca

Please Click [Here](#) to View the Program Brochure
Please Click [Here](#) to Register

Register before March 5th, 2010 to receive the reduced early bird rate!





Membership Form

Please support the Network by filling out this form to become a member. Membership includes the Network's twice yearly publication *Living with FASD*, copies of Network materials including FASD Tips in pictorial and text format, receipt of our newsletter, *Network News*, four times each year plus notices of upcoming events and workshops.

- I wish to become a new member of the FASD Support Network of Saskatchewan for the 2010 year.
- I am renewing my membership with the FASD Support Network of Saskatchewan for the 2010 year.
- I am a parent or caregiver of an individual with FASD. I will have voting privileges.
- I am enclosing my \$15.00 membership fee.
- I am enclosing a donation in the amount of \$_____ (Charitable donation receipts will be issued on all donations over \$10.00)

Name: _____

Organization (if applicable) : _____

Address: _____

Town/City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Date Submitted: _____

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