



VIRTUAL SCHOOLS AND FASD

FASD is a core concern for Virtual School Heads and Virtual Schools.

Significant numbers of children in Virtual Schools have FASD.

National FASD can help.

Many children who are struggling in education have undiagnosed FASD. This can lead to staff spending time trying to address misunderstood needs, without getting to the root of the issues.

All of our work promotes a no-shame, no-blame culture which removes the stigma associated with prenatal alcohol exposure and changes the narrative about what children and young people with FASD can and do achieve - provided they get informed and timely support at school, at home and in their communities.

27%

children in care
have FASD*

75%

freed for adoption
have been prenatally
exposed to alcohol

1-2

per year group have
undiagnosed FASD

General prevalence
of 2-4% is higher
than autism**

WHAT'S FASD?

"FASD [Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder] results when prenatal alcohol exposure affects the developing brain and body. FASD is a spectrum. Each person with FASD is affected differently. While more than 400 conditions can co-occur, FASD is at its core a lifelong neurodevelopmental condition. All people with FASD have many strengths. Early diagnosis and appropriate support are essential, especially for executive functioning." Common Description, FASD: Preferred UK Language Guide, 2020

🗨️ Prenatal alcohol exposure should be actively considered as a possible underlying cause for neurodevelopmental delay. 🗨️

"A diagnosis/descriptor of FASD is made only when there is evidence of pervasive and long-standing brain dysfunction, which is defined by severe impairment in three of more of the following neurodevelopmental areas of assessment: Motor skills, Neuroanatomy/neurophysiology, Cognition, Language, Academic achievement, Memory, Attention, Executive function, including impulse control and hyperactivity, Affect regulation, and Adaptive behaviour, social skills or social communication." (SIGN 156, guidance for Scotland, England & Wales)

FASD diagnoses will increase due to long-overdue new guidance

"There is no mild FASD"

(DHSC, 2021)

POLICY HAS CHANGED

DHSC FASD Health Needs Assessment (2021)

The first FASD Health Needs Assessment for England highlights best practice and suggests issues for consideration. Some key issues that will impact Virtual Schools include:

- "The needs of individuals vary greatly and may change over the life course. Policy developments will need closer collaboration between the education, justice and industrial sectors in addition to health and social care."
- "There is a need to develop innovative approaches to supporting those with FASD. Although no single approach will suffice, there is a global evidence base emerging, which could be tailored to design culturally appropriate interventions that are focussed on the needs of individuals and their families and carers." (DHSC, 2021)

NICE Quality Standard for FASD (2022)

NICE outlines areas for improvement of quality of care for which all ICBs in England and Wales must "have regard":

- Statement 5: "Children and young people with a diagnosis of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) have a [multiagency] management plan to address their needs....The plan helps to coordinate care across a range of healthcare professionals, as well as education and social services, and improves outcomes."

RESOURCES

In 2020, The National Organisation for FASD, alongside Seashell, obtained a DHSC grant to develop interventions to help children and young people in England with FASD. This included the development of a training programme for professionals in teams around young people with FASD. All of these developments were and continue to be made in consultation with the National FASD experts committee and the Adults and Young Adults with FASD Advisory Committee and are now available throughout the UK.



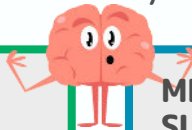
www.fasd.me

- "World class"
- Peer-to-peer coping strategies
- Resources for one-to-one support
- Interactive "My Brain, Me and FASD"



ME AND MY FASD TOOLKIT

- Hands-on resources to help young people with FASD understand what helps them
- Break It Down Board ("a game-changer")
- Calming Cards
- The Misunderstoods game
- People with FASD are Awesome pamphlets
- Fidget spinner
- Stress brain



ME AND MY FASD CLUB SUBSCRIPTION - £30

- 5 issues of Living FASD magazine between now and March 2024 - showcasing people with FASD and what they can and do achieve
- My Brain, Me and FASD booklet
- Packs also contain additional resources, postcards and posters
- Great materials for Learning Resource Rooms!



<https://nationalfasd.org.uk/product-tag/me-my-fasd/>

TRAINING CAN HELP

The resources developed using the ethos that surrounds Me and My FASD have permeated the national training we developed with Seashell (<https://nationalfasd.org.uk/learn-more/training/in-personand-zoomtraining/>).

- Introduction to Supporting Children and Young People with FASD (1-day)*
- Me and My FASD: A Unique Course for Practitioners Supporting a Young Person to Understand Their FASD Diagnosis (3-days - all attendees receive a Me and My FASD Toolkit to take home)*
- Bespoke training - contact us
- E-school - Introduction to FASD



*Jointly offered with **Seashell**

FURTHER INFORMATION

In addition to the Me and My FASD website (<https://fasd.me>), we also have two other websites full of information, advice and guidance:

- **The National Organisation for FASD website** (<https://nationalfasd.org.uk>) hosts the latest UK-focused information for anyone working with people with FASD and for adults with FASD. See especially *The Time is Now: The National Perspective on Ramping up FASD Prevention, Diagnosis and Support*.
- **The Prevent FASD website** (<https://preventFASD.info>) is aimed at 15- to 25-year olds to educate them about the risks associated with prenatal alcohol exposure. This contains an award-winning short film, "RISK", that seeks to educate teenagers and young adults; the Conceivables cartoon strips that educates young people in an accessible and entertaining way; and our NoMoments campaign where Louise Thompson, when 7 months pregnant, sat down with Consultant Paediatrician, Dr Inyang Takon, to discuss her relationship with alcohol and the risks of alcohol-exposed pregnancies.

More information for educators can be found at:

<https://nationalfasd.org.uk/learn-more/practitioners/educators/>

Or email us at: info@nationalFASD.org.uk

