

## FAS facts:

- ✓ FAS is 100% preventable
- ✓ FAS is the leading preventable cause of mental retardation
- ✓ Alcohol during pregnancy causes permanent brain damage
- ✓ There is no safe level of alcohol consumption during pregnancy
- ✓ Even one drink risks the health of an unborn baby
- ✓ FAS is a lifelong, invisible and irreversible disability
- ✓ Symptoms may not become obvious until a child is 3 or 4 years old
- ✓ FAS is found in all races and all socio-economic groups
- ✓ There is no cure for FAS

**Pregnant? Don't drink!**  
**Can you fall pregnant?**  
**Don't drink!**

All FASfacts' programmes are aimed at achieving:

- Girls **making the decision not to drink any alcohol when they will be pregnant**, or when they plan to become pregnant. Adult women making the decision not to drink any alcohol when they plan to become pregnant, and during their pregnancies.
- Boys, at a very young age, **making the decision to assist their wives /girl friends** not to drink any alcohol during their pregnancies. Adult men must make the decision to assist their wives/girl-friends not to drink any alcohol when they plan to have a baby, and while she is expecting their child. An extremely effective method for the men is to personally abstain from alcohol themselves during their girlfriends'/wives' pregnancies.

The **earlier and more often** these children and adults make these very important and positive choices in their lives, the better chance there will be that they actually will abstain from alcohol during their pregnancies, which will lead to a definite decrease in the FAS-rate.

### How can YOU become part of the FAS prevention campaign?

- To implement the FAS-prevention programme, FASfacts needs **financial assistance**. Any donation is welcomed and would help us to address this problem. Banking details: FASfacts, ABSA, cheque account 4056484460, branch code 632-005.
- **Talk** about FAS where possible.
- Put us in contact with **possible donors**.

**Thank you for speaking on behalf of those who cannot speak for themselves.**

HEAD OFFICE  
CEO - Francois Grobbelaar  
info@fasfacts.org.za  
+27 (0) 23 342 7000 t  
+27 (0) 23 342 7001 f  
www.fasfacts.org.za

FAITH GROUPS UNIT  
Manager  
Rev Jan Ungerer  
janungerer@fasfacts.org.za  
+27 (0) 23 342 7000 t  
+27 (0) 23 342 7001 f  
+27 (0) 83 320 4553 s  
www.fasfacts.org.za

# Pregnant?



# Do not drink!

#### VISION:

We have a vision of children being born without **Fetal Alcohol Syndrome**.

#### MISSION:

FASfacts implements programmes and campaigns to decrease the prevalence of **Fetal Alcohol Syndrome**.

**FASfacts**  
We speak on their behalf



# What is Fetal Alcohol Syndrome?

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) is a characteristic pattern of physical and mental birth deficiencies, caused by alcohol consumption by the pregnant mother.



A normal brain vs a damaged brain of a child with FAS

**1** The continued focus of research based on communities such as Wellington in the Western Cape Province, and De Aar and Upington in the Northern Cape Province, once again underscored the enormity of the FAS problem in South Africa. The severity of the potential crisis facing the country is best illustrated by the results from the De Aar project that show a prevalence of FAS in the town of 122 per 1 000 school-entry children, thus 12,2%. This is officially the highest frequency yet reported in one population anywhere in the world. [website: [www.farr-sa.co.za](http://www.farr-sa.co.za)] In addition, the prevalence rate of Fetal Alcohol Exposure is always far higher than the FAS rate. (In the above-mentioned areas between 3 – 5 times higher.) As a result, an unknown number of children are damaged prenatal due to their mother's alcohol consumption.

**2** The prevalence of FAS in countries such as America varies from 0,1 – 0,8%.

*“Drinking during pregnancy is linked with disaster – personal disaster for the ‘bright-eyed ones,’ disaster for their families and their hope for their young, and disaster for . . . society as we struggle to pay the huge price of this destruction.”* - Dr. Ann Streissguth, Ph.D.

**3** FAS is the largest cause of mental retardation in most industrial nations, which directly leads to the scourge of **crime, HIV/Aids & substance abuse**.

**4** FAS is more than a disability - it's a social disorder that causes many of the expensive problems which plague governments, and all of us. On both a financial and personal level, we are all affected by the **secondary disabilities and consequences of FAS:** learning disabilities, early school drop-out, juvenile delinquency, poverty, chronic unemployment, sexual acting-out (promiscuity, teenage and unwanted pregnancies, prostitution, sexual assault, child-molesting, rape), AIDS, mental illness, homelessness, violence, crimes against property, theft, murder, gangsterism, alcoholism, drug smuggling, drug addiction and substance abuse.

**5** **FAS is 100% PREVENTABLE!** Unfortunately **FAS is 100% INCURABLE!**

**6** There is very little social acceptance for people with FAS. In general, **our society has very little compassion** for those thousands of misbehaving individuals whose damaged brains lead them to crime, homelessness and addiction. Instead, we assume that they have chosen to behave as they do. Few people realize that the severely acting-out teenager, the addicted prostitute, the homeless beggar, or the man charged with killing his girlfriend's baby may all behave as they do as the result of brain damage caused by their mothers' drinking during pregnancy.

**7** Prevention programs and treatment programs for alcoholic women could dramatically reduce the incidence of FAS. Early diagnosis and new techniques of therapy, medical treatment, education and residential facilities, could **allow people with FAS to lead productive lives**, and save our nation millions of rands that could be diverted for other disabilities.

**8** Mental / neurological damage caused is irreversible and cannot be restored.

**9** The FAS-child/adult **could never exercise a choice** as to whether he or she would consume alcohol or not in the mother's womb. This decision was taken solely by the mother on his or her behalf.

**10** Research into FAS is one of **4 priority areas** of the National Department of Health, as well as the Department of Medical Genetics at the University of the Witwatersrand.

## FASfacts' Model to Convey the FAS Message: Experiential Learning

After looking into different models, FASfacts decided to make use of Experiential Learning to convey the FAS-message on a local and national basis to the following groups in communities:

- Grade 6 & 7 learners: 4 Modules of 1¼ hour each
- Grade 10 & 11 learners: 1 hour Module
- Working youth, adults & parents on farms, and in rural and urban communities, as well as shebeen owners
- FAS-raps & FAS-PSA's on community radio stations
- In order to reach these communities we establish satellite operational offices

Activity to demonstrate the restrictions and limitations that a FAS-child or FAS-adult may experience in his life. He wants to do certain things, but he cannot, or he finds it extremely difficult to do so. Alcohol during pregnancy 'binds' the child. Instruction of facilitator: "Turn around!"

