



## FASD Newsletter July 2013

Dear Members & Supporters,

Welcome to our July newsletter.

Some of you will recall that in March this year NOFASARD made a submission to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee inquiry into the value of a justice reinvestment approach to criminal justice in Australia. [Of special interest](#) in this month's newsletter is a link to the committee's final report, released on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2013. NOFASARD welcomes the recommendation that the Commonwealth provide funding to support a trial of justice reinvestment in Australia.

Also of interest in this month's newsletter is the response from NOFAS in the United States of America to yet another round of misleading media coverage on FASD research, suggesting that low-moderate alcohol consumption during pregnancy may be safe, if not beneficial. This time around the research was in relation to childhood balance ability. NOFASARD, along with NOFAS, is very concerned about continued media misreporting, as well as, research papers that are written in such a way that encourages such reporting, begging questions about who may be influencing some alcohol researchers. Have a look at the [international news and media](#) section for more information.

We are also happy to announce the release of '[Children of the Grog](#)' by NOFASARD board member, Lorian Hayes. The book aims to raise awareness about FASD and contains some fabulous art work by Lorian and her family.

We are always interested to receive your news and personal stories. The deadline for articles for our August newsletter will be August 19<sup>th</sup> 2013 (contact [Leila@nofasard.org.au](mailto:Leila@nofasard.org.au)).

We are always keen to expand our network so please encourage your family, friends, and colleagues to join NOFASARD and support FASD prevention in Australia.

Until next time, happy reading!

Best wishes,

Leila Picken  
National Policy Officer

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Consensus Development Conference on Legal Issues of FASD, Edmonton, Canada: September 18 –  
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First International Conference on Prevention of FASD, Edmonton, Canada: September 23 - 25, 2013

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## Of Special Interest

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### **Senate Committee Report Released on the Value of a Justice Reinvestment Approach to Criminal Justice in Australia**

On 20<sup>th</sup> June 2013, the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee released their report into the *Value of a justice reinvestment approach to criminal justice in Australia*. NOFASARD made a submission to the inquiry and welcomes the recommendation that the Commonwealth should commit to a trial of justice reinvestment in Australia in conjunction with the relevant states and territories, using a place-based approach and that at least one remote Indigenous community is included as a site. NOFASARD also supports the recommendation that the Commonwealth provide funding to support justice reinvestment in Australia. [Read report](#)

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## National News and Media

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### **I want to make FASD history: young Fitzroy Crossing health worker**

Jadnah Davies travels to communities in the Fitzroy Valley to deliver education and raise awareness about FASD. [Read news article](#)

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### **'Children of the Grog' – New book released by Ms Lorian Hayes**

This book was written to raise awareness of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders among children, youth and adults. During the process of writing this book other important areas of interest have emerged such as literacy, social studies, Indigenous culture, bush foods, alcohol, colonisation, Aboriginal society, community behaviour and resilience. Lorian and artists are direct descendants of the Bidjara people from Central Western Queensland, language used in reference to special animals in this book is Bidjara. The book has been a joint family effort especially the art work. Family members (the artists) have shown excellence in contemporary Aboriginal art design to create the beautiful art work used in the book. NOFASARD is selling copies of the book for \$30 plus \$6 postage and handling.

Please contact [sue@nofasard.org.au](mailto:sue@nofasard.org.au)

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### **Anyinginyi FASD Project Newsletter**

Read the latest update on the Anyinginyi FASD project in Tennant Creek. [Read more](#)

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### **NAAA 2013 Federal Election Policy Statement**

The National Alliance for Action on Alcohol (NAAA) has released a federal election policy statement, 'Healthier Families, Safer Communities'. Under 'Action 4: Give individuals information to make healthier and safer choices', NAAA calls for a comprehensive public education campaign to increase awareness of the risks of alcohol consumption during pregnancy, the implementation of a national diagnostic tool and improved support services for individuals and families living with FASD. [Read](#)

[policy statement](#)

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### **Parent and carer scholarships available for Australasian FASD conference registration**

The Public Health Association of Australia is offering some scholarships to cover the cost of registration for the upcoming Australasian FASD conference to be held in November in Brisbane. Applications close on 9<sup>th</sup> August. [Application form](#)

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### **Alcohol and Other Drugs Conference Funding Program**

The Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) is currently offering grants for AOD sector workers or researchers to attend AOD related conferences to support their professional development. Applications close on 31 July 2013. [Read more](#)

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## **International News & Media**

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### **NOFAS outraged by UK study**

The National Organisation on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (NOFAS) in the USA have released a response to the latest misleading and inaccurate media reporting on a UK study titled "Prenatal alcohol exposure and childhood balance ability: findings from a UK birth cohort study". NOFAS expressed concern with not only media misreporting but also the research article itself which is written in such a way that seems to lend itself to inaccurate reporting with quotes such as "We found an apparently beneficial effect of prenatal alcohol exposure on balance at age 10 years". What is not highlighted is that the research paper states that it does not conclude that alcohol is safe during pregnancy. [Read NOFAS response](#) and [read research paper](#)

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### **Top 10 things we have learned about FASD in 40 years**

To mark 40 years since the effects of prenatal exposure to alcohol were first described and the term 'Fetal Alcohol Syndrome' defined, Dr K.O. Asante from the Asante Centre has put together a top ten list of things we have learned about FASD during this time. [Read more](#)

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### **NHS Education for Scotland Fetal Alcohol Harm e-Learning resource**

NHS Education for Scotland recently launched an on-line course about FAS/FASD. Although primarily intended to be a free CPD course for a wide variety of health professionals, it can also be shared with social workers, educators, police officers and others who work with people living with FASD. [Access free e-learning resource](#)

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### **Cancer risk of two beers a year**

The Alcohol Health Alliance, an EU funded body of 30 universities and other scientific institutes, have warned of the increased risk of cancer from drinking just two alcoholic beverages a year. The group has called for cigarette pack style health warning labels on alcohol products, including warnings about the risk of cancer. [Read article](#)

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### **Northern Ontario university bar first in Canada to offer pregnancy tests**

A campus pub at Lakehead University has introduced a pregnancy test vending machine in the female toilets with the aim of preventing women who do not yet know they are pregnant from drinking. The initiative is supported by an organisation called Healthy Brains for Children. [Read more](#)

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### **FASD, Young People and Crime**

JustSpeak is a New Zealand network of young people concerned about criminal justice issues. Their website contains a number of interesting articles and discussion on topical issues, including the impact of FASD on young people that come into contact with the criminal justice system in New Zealand. [Read article](#)

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### **Australian Research**

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#### **Prenatal Alcohol Exposure and Educational Achievement in Children Aged 8-9 Years**

O'Leary, C., Taylor, C., Zubrick, S., Kurinczuk, J., and Bower, C. Journal of American Academy of Pediatrics, published online 8 July 2013, doi: 10.1542/peds.2012-3002

This research used data from a randomly selected, population-based birth cohort of infants born to non-Indigenous women in Western Australia between 1995 and 1997. The study found that children who were heavily exposed to alcohol in utero during the first trimester were twice as likely not to achieve the benchmark for reading. Children who were exposed to occasional binge drinking in late pregnancy were twice as likely not to achieve the benchmark for writing. Low-moderate prenatal alcohol exposure was not connected to academic underachievement. The study concluded that the type of learning problem is influenced by dose, pattern and timing of prenatal alcohol exposure.

[Read more](#)

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#### **Predictors of antenatal alcohol use among Australian women: a prospective cohort study**

AE Anderson, AJ Hure, P Forder, JR Powers, FJ Kay-Lambkin, DJ Loxton. BJOG. Article first published online: 17 JUL 2013, DOI: 10.1111/1471-0528.12356.

This study used data from the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health (ALSWH) and included women who were pregnant in 2000, 2003, 2006 or 2009. The research found that most Australian women who drank alcohol prior to pregnancy continued to do so during pregnancy. Alcohol guidelines, fertility problems and Health Care Card status also impacted levels of antenatal alcohol consumption. [Read more](#)

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### **International Research**

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#### **Paternal lifestyle as a potential source of germline mutations transmitted to offspring**

Linschooten JO, Verhofstad N, Gutzkow K, Olsen AK, Yauk C, Oligschläger Y, Brunborg G, van Schooten FJ, Godschalk RW. FASEB Journal. 2013 Jul; 27(7):2873-9. doi: 10.1096/fj.13-227694. Epub Mar 28 2013.

This study looked at two groups of families from the Norwegian Mother and Child Cohort Study, one with a low yearly income and the other with relatively high yearly income. The researchers chose income as a criterion as it is an indicator of lifestyle choices. They found that DNA mutations in the children were more frequent amongst the children born to low income fathers, suggesting that the parents living conditions prior to conception directly impact the health of the child. [Read more](#)

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#### **Abnormal white matter microstructure in children with sensory processing disorders**

Julia P. Owen, Elysa J. Marco, Shivani Desai, Emily Fourie, Julia Harris, Susanna S. Hill, Anne B. Arnett, Pratik Mukherjee. *NeuroImage: Clinical*, 2013; DOI: 10.1016/j.nicl.2013.06.009

This study examined 16 boys between 8 and 11, with sensory processing disorder (SPD) but without a diagnosis of autism or prematurity and compared the results with 24 typically developing boys. The researchers used diffusion tensor imaging and detected abnormal white matter tracts in the SPD children, mainly in the back of the brain. The findings indicated that SPD is neuroanatomically distinct and identified SPD as a brain-based disorder. [Read more](#)  
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### **Women's Knowledge, Views, and Experiences Regarding Alcohol Use and Pregnancy: Opportunities to Improve Health Messages**

Elvira Elek, Shelly L. Harris, Claudia M. Squire, Marjorie Margolis, Mary Kate Weber, Elizabeth Parra Dang and Betsy Mitchell, American Journal of Health Education, Volume 44, Issue 4, 2013, DOI: 10.1080/19325037.2013.768906

The study included 20 focus groups of 149 reproductive-age women. The women in the study acknowledged the risks and consequences of drinking alcohol during pregnancy, but many held common misconceptions. The study found that women's partners, families, and friends influence women's decisions to drink or abstain from alcohol and that health professionals and the internet are important sources of information but do not always provide an adequate level of information.

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### **Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder - Poverty Trap?**

NX Thanh, E Jonsson, J Moffatt, L Dennett, Journal of Population Therapeutics and Clinical Pharmacology, Vol 20 (1): e63-e66; March 4, 2013.

This short research paper concludes that the economic consequences of FASD and the poverty trap of intellectual disability suggest a possibility of the existence of an FASD-poverty trap – an area that needs further studies, probably longitudinal, to determine and identify the pathways leading people with FASD to poverty. This information will be important in developing policies to prevent people with FASD and their families falling into the poverty trap. [Read more](#)

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## Conferences & Courses

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### National

#### **DASSA Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Aboriginal Workers Forum, McLaren Vale, Adelaide: 27 - 28 August 2013**

The theme for 2013 is "Time for a Change: What Works?" The Program will comprise key note speakers, workshops, and interactive panels with topics on: successful regional programs focusing on alcohol harm reduction (alcohol management plans, measuring and monitoring outcomes, what is working); social marketing planning within rural communities; skills development workshops [methamphetamine, cannabis, IRIS, others]; Foetal Alcohol Syndrome resources and programs; career, workforce development, network development and support; rehabilitation programs; bigger picture issues National perspective; and mental health. For more information and to register email [katie.coulthard@health.sa.gov.au](mailto:katie.coulthard@health.sa.gov.au) or [steven.johnson@health.sa.gov.au](mailto:steven.johnson@health.sa.gov.au)

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#### **Australian Association of Special Education National Conference, Adelaide: September 29 – 1 October 2013**

The theme of the conference is 'The Door is Open: Repertoires of Practice'. The conference will welcome both national and international speakers to provide information and current research on inclusion, differentiation and collaboration and to discuss national issues such as the Australian curriculum and the disability standards. Professor Barry Carpenter will be a keynote speaker at the event. Professor Carpenter is the author of 'Educating Children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders' and will release another book in 2013 entitled 'Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders: Interdisciplinary Perspectives'. [To register](#)

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#### **Infant and Early Childhood Social and Emotional Wellbeing Conference, Canberra: October 30 - 2 November, 2013**

This conference aims to close the gap between what we know about healthy child development and what we do to ensure that children thrive. The program focuses on infant and early childhood social and emotional wellbeing and mental health and is a call to action. The conference is being presented by the Australian Association for Infant Mental Health (AAIMHI) and the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY), in collaboration with the Infant Mental Health Association of Aotearoa New Zealand (IMHAANZ). [Conference website](#)

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#### **Australasian Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Conference, Brisbane: November 19 – 20, 2013**

Early bird registrations are now open for the Australasian FASD conference and close on 31 August 2013. Keynote speakers include Professor Elizabeth Elliot, Ms June Oscar, Mr Mick Gooda, Ms Sue Miers, and Judge Tony Fitzgerald. The conference will take place at the Royal Brisbane and Royal Women's Education Centre from 19-20 November 2013. [To register](#)

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#### **National Indigenous Health Conference, Cairns: November 25 – 27 2013**

The National Indigenous Health Conference will be held at the Hotel Pullman Cairns International on November 25-27, 2013. [Further information](#) and [registration](#)

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## International

### **FASD throughout the Lifespan: From Prevention to Lifelong Support, Newfoundland, Canada: September 5 – 7, 2013**

This is a national Canadian FASD Conference hosted by fasdNL & the FACE Research Association. The conference will be held at the Sheraton Hotel, St. John's, Newfoundland & Labrador. The conference will include a wide range of speakers including Dan Dubovsky, Jan Lutke, Dr. Christine Looke, Nancy Poole, and Dr. Dorothy Badry. [Conference program](#)  
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### **Consensus Development Conference on Legal Issues of FASD, Edmonton, Canada: September 18 – 20, 2013**

This conference is a 3-day juried hearing of evidence and scientific findings that allows for the engagement and collaboration of citizens, decision makers in government, and the justice system in addressing a specific set of key questions on legal issues of FASD. [Read more](#)  
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### **First International Conference on Prevention of FASD, Edmonton, Canada: September 23 - 25, 2013**

Professor Elizabeth Elliott from Westmead Children's Hospital will be one of the guest speakers at this first international conference to address the primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention of FASD. The conference will serve as an international knowledge exchange and networking forum for those interested in FASD prevention, bringing together key experts from around the globe. Abstract submissions have now closed. [Further information](#)  
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## Anyinginyi FASD Project Newsletter – June 2013

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It has been a very hectic and interesting year for the FASD Project, and I apologise for the long time between updates....

Our trip to the 5<sup>th</sup> International FASD Conference in Vancouver, Canada, during February – March this year was fantastic! AHAC Chairperson, LT, and FASD Project staff, Leonie Williams and Adele Gibson attended five days of the Conference, including one full day on FASD and the Law, and our own very successful and well-received presentation: “A Story of Ownership and Empowerment”. We also had the amazing experience of visiting a First Nations community and FASD Program in Terrace, British Columbia, where we were treated as honoured guests with a generous welcome, gifts and a traditional banquet.



During our time in Vancouver, we also visited a multi-purpose women’s centre in the Downtown area, called Sheway – another great example of long-lasting holistic programs which are effective in reducing FASD because they support women without judging them.

Unfortunately, our return was marked by funding problems, and then the departure of Leonie from Tennant Creek – we miss her greatly, and appreciate the work she did with FASD, particularly with young people.

The good news is that our training package is very much in demand and we have a few positive options for funding to roll that out across the Barkly during the next six months. This flexible

package can potentially be used by a variety of groups and individuals, whether they are in a large or small community setting.

FaHCSIA has agreed to give us a little more funding to keep the Project going until the end of the year, and we are hopeful of attracting more, perhaps from other sources – we continue to talk and put our case, with optimism!

Meanwhile, the Puppet Project has continued to interest people, within and outside Anyinginyi, and we have had a couple more fun workshops which resulted in a well-developed family of puppet characters, and some excellent scripts. Chris Burke, That Puppet Women, has been of great assistance with this process via video-conferencing, and young film-maker, Bidy O'Loughlin, is currently in Tennant Creek, filming our puppets for a film to be launched in September. This film is going to be a fantastic local resource, and it is planned to show it, in part, on Imparja television. Hopefully, it will also be a way to start a community discussion about FASD and what needs to be done here.



The other news to mention is that Public Health Section Manager, Cathy Malla, is expecting a new baby soon! We wish her well as she goes off on maternity leave at the end of June, and FASD Project Co-ordinator, Adele Gibson, will cover Cathy's role for the next six months, as well as continuing to oversee the FASD Project.

*Many thanks to all the members of the community who continue to support this Project!*

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