Dear Members & Supporters,

Welcome to our July Newsletter.

Of Special Interest in this month’s newsletter is a link to a very poignant and thought provoking essay by NOFASARD’s Indigenous Spokesperson Lorian Hayes, that has been published in the Medical Journal of Australia. This essay was an entrant in the 2011 Dr Ross Ingram Memorial Essay Competition and is adapted from an article published in the Aboriginal and Islander Health Worker Journal. Also in this section of the newsletter is a link to the seventh issue of the FETAL ALCOHOL FORUM published by NOFAS-UK that includes the latest FASD research and articles from experts around the world including Australia.

In National News and Media is an article addressing education issues by NOFASARD’s National Project Manager Vicki Russell that has been published in the latest edition of SERUpdate, the quarterly newsletter from the Special Education Resource Centre in SA.

Another article of interest to parents and carers discusses the possible benefits of martial arts for children with FASD and can be found in the International News and Media link. The article suggests that the structured, safe and family environment of a Martial Arts class can help children with complex needs develop emotional and physical self-awareness, self-control, socialization and teamwork skills.

Please encourage your family, friends, colleagues and network to join NOFASARD and support FASD prevention in Australia and don’t forget to visit our website for details of our recently updated Alcohol and Pregnancy and FASD resources http://www.nofasard.org.au/brochures.html

Remember that we would love to hear your news. The deadline for articles for our August newsletter will be August 26th (contact admin@nofasard.org.au)

Happy reading!

Kindest regards,

Sue Miers
Chair

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Conferences & Courses

**Australian**

National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee (NIDAC), Consultation on Drug and Alcohol Issues in Darwin 9 August, 2012

Women’s Health Statewide SA  6 week course - *Wellbeing for Me Wellbeing for Family*  14 Aug – 18 Sep 2012

**International**

2012 Fetal Alcohol Canadian Expertise (FACE) Research Roundtable September 11, 2012 Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

NeuroDevNet 2012 Brain Development Conference September 21-23, 2012 Toronto, Ontario

Second EUFASD Conference - Barcelona 21 to 24 October 2012

1st Annual MOFAS Statewide FASD Conference *Building Brighter Futures: Working Together to Create Change in Minnesota* November 1-2, 2012 Minnesota USA


The 5th International Conference on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder - Vancouver 2013
Of Special Interest

Aboriginal women, alcohol and the road to fetal alcohol spectrum disorder Lorian G Hayes Med J Aust 2012; 197 (1): 21-23. This essay was an entrant in the 2011Dr Ross Ingram Memorial Essay Competition. It is adapted from an article published in the Aboriginal and Islander Health Worker Journal. Link to essay

Fetal Alcohol Forum Issue 7 June 2012
This issue provides 143 FASD Research abstracts from 27 countries as well as full articles and recommended books. Read Journal

National News and Media

I paid the ultimate price for my binge drinking
In the hope that her story will help to raise awareness about FASD Tammy Penna who is a member of the NOFASARD Management Committee has been courageous enough to share her story with That's Life Magazine. Read Story

SERU update article on FASD
This article on FASD addressing education issues has been written by NOFASARD's National Project Manager Vicki Russell. SERUupdate is the quarterly newsletter from the Special Education Resource Centre in SA. Read article

Alcohol's damage to fetus won't go away
This is a report about a little boy in Queensland who has significant challenges caused by prenatal exposure to alcohol and a call by his carers for a national approach to the prevention, diagnosis and management of FASD. The Courier-Mail July 02, 2012 Read story

Federal government Inquiry into FASD update
Public Hearings relating to the Inquiry into FASD have now been completed and transcripts are available online. It is expected that House Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs will table the Report from the Inquiry in Federal Parliament sometime before the end of the year. Once tabled a copy of the Report will be available on their website. FASD Inquiry website

Resolutions from the 2nd National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Conference
At the 2nd National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Conference (NIDAC 2012), which was held from 6 – 8 June, a number of resolutions were developed including one that calls on all governments, funding bodies and industry bodies implement all relevant recommendations of the NIDAC Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) position paper. The resolutions will be discussed at their next meeting which is being held in Darwin on 8 & 9 August and the outcomes of this discussion will be included in the next NIDAC Communiqué which will be available on the NIDAC website towards the end of August. Read Resolutions
Martial Arts and FASD
This article suggests that the structured, safe and family environment of a Martial Arts class can help children with complex needs develop emotional and physical self-awareness, self-control, socialization and teamwork skills. Read Article

Clinical and research commentary on recent Danish alcohol in early pregnancy research
This commentary comes from Christine Rogan, co-ordinator of the Fetal Alcohol Network NZ to provide some balance to the recently reported Danish alcohol in pregnancy studies. Read commentary

You-Tube video “FASD & What Corrections Needs to Know”
This educational video targets the criminal court and corrections professionals to raise awareness about Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) focusing on the impact of prenatal alcohol exposure to brain functioning and subsequent legal implications. View video

Pregnant women admit to drink binges
A US government survey has shown 1 in 13 pregnant women drink alcohol and of those who said they drank, nearly 1 in 5 said they went on at least one binge - downing four or more drinks. Pregnant women ages 35 to 44 were the biggest drinkers. Read story

Folic Acid Transport to the Human Fetus Is Decreased in Pregnancies with Chronic Alcohol Exposure.
In a small control study of cord blood, researchers found that folic Acid transport to the human fetus was decreased in pregnancies with chronic alcohol exposure. Read Article

Children and adolescents with fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS): better social and emotional integration after early diagnosis.
A German study of children and adolescents with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome found that early diagnosis was a protective factor, with significantly better social and emotional integration outcomes for children diagnosed in early childhood. A diagnosis established later in life was particularly helpful for families and caregivers, reducing feelings of self-blame and failure despite the FAS-related impairments persisting. PubMed, Klin Padiatr. 2012 Mar;224(2):66-71. Epub 2012 Mar 9. Abstract
Cognitive changes may be only sign of fetal alcohol exposure
Most children exposed to high levels of alcohol in the womb do not develop the distinct facial features seen in fetal alcohol syndrome, but instead show signs of abnormal intellectual or behavioral development, according to a study by researchers at the National Institutes of Health and researchers in Chile. These abnormalities of the nervous system involved language delays, hyperactivity, attention deficits or intellectual delays. The researchers used the term's functional neurologic impairment to describe these abnormalities. The study authors documented an abnormality in one of these areas in about 44 percent of children whose mothers drank four or more drinks per day during pregnancy. In contrast, abnormal facial features were present in about 17 percent of alcohol exposed children. Link to research

Children with Heavy Prenatal Alcohol Exposure Experience Reduced Control of Isotonic Force
These data suggest that prenatal alcohol exposure produces deficits in regulating isotonic force, which presumably result from alcohol-related damage to developing brain regions involved in motor control. These children will most likely experience difficulty performing basic motor skills and daily functional skills that require coordination of finely graded force. Therapeutic strategies designed to increase feedback and, consequently, facilitate visual-motor integration could improve isotonic force production in these children. Abstract

A Prospective Cohort Study of the Prevalence of Growth, Facial, and Central Nervous System Abnormalities in Children with Heavy Prenatal Alcohol Exposure
After exposure to heavy alcohol consumption during pregnancy, 80% of children had 1 or more abnormalities associated with alcohol exposure. Patterns of alcohol use that posed the greatest risk of adverse outcomes were binge drinking and high total weekly intake. Functional neurologic impairment occurred most frequently and may be the only sign to alert physicians to prenatal alcohol exposure. Abstract

Prenatal Alcohol Exposure, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, and Sluggish Cognitive Tempo Alcohol-exposed children exhibited elevated SCT scores. Elevations were related to increased parent ratings of internalizing and externalizing behaviors and attention. These findings are observed in alcohol-exposed children regardless of ADHD symptoms and specific SCT items proved useful in distinguishing exposed children, suggesting clinical utility for this measure in further defining the neurobehavioral profile related to prenatal alcohol exposure. Abstract

Persistent Dose-Dependent Changes in Brain Structure in Young Adults with Low-to-Moderate Alcohol Exposure In Utero
The results from this study indicate that even at low doses, alcohol exposure during pregnancy impacts brain development and that these effects persist into young adulthood. Abstract

Executive Function Predicts Adaptive Behavior in Children with Histories of Heavy Prenatal Alcohol Exposure and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
The results from this study support prior research in ADHD, suggesting that EF deficits are predictive of poorer adaptive behavior and extend this finding to include children with heavy prenatal exposure to alcohol. Abstract
Metabolic Biomarkers of Prenatal Alcohol Exposure in Human Embryonic Stem Cell–Derived Neural Lineages

Ethanol (EtOH) exposure induces statistically significant changes to the metabolome profile of human embryoid bodies, neural progenitors, and neurons. Several of these metabolites are normally present in human serum, suggesting their usefulness as potential serum FASD biomarkers. These findings suggest the biochemical pathways that are affected by EtOH in the developing nervous system and delineate mechanisms of alcohol injury during human development. Abstract

Relation Over Time Between Facial Measurements and Cognitive Outcomes in Fetal Alcohol-Exposed Children

The analysis of longitudinal data identified a common set of predictors, as well as some that are unique at each age. Prenatal alcohol exposure appears to have its primary effect on brain growth, reflected by smaller forehead widths, and may suppress neural crest migration to the branchial arches, reflected by deficits in ear length and mandibular dimensions. These results may improve diagnostic resolution and enhance our understanding of the relation between the face and the neuropsychological deficits that occur. Abstract

Delays in Auditory Processing Identified in Preschool Children with FASD

Auditory delay revealed by MEG in children with FASDs may prove to be a useful neural marker of information processing difficulties in young children with prenatal alcohol exposure. The fact that delayed auditory responses were observed across the FASD spectrum suggests that it may be a sensitive measure of alcohol-induced brain damage. Therefore, this measure in conjunction with other clinical tools may prove useful for early identification of alcohol affected children, particularly those without dysmorphia. Abstract

Caudate Volume Predicts Neurocognitive Performance in Youth with Heavy Prenatal Alcohol Exposure

These data are consistent with previous research associating gestational alcohol exposure with structural and functional changes of the caudate nucleus. Our findings extend this previous work by demonstrating that volume reductions of the caudate have behavioral relevance for this population, in relation to cognitive control and verbal learning and recall abilities. Abstract

Conferences & Courses

Australian

National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee (NIDAC), Consultation on Drug and Alcohol Issues

Darwin 9 August, 2012. NIDAC extend an invitation to people working within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander alcohol and other drugs sector to attend this consultation from 8.30am – 10.00am. Arrival tea and coffee from 8.00am, morning tea provided at 10.00am. To be held at the Holiday Inn, 116 The Esplanade, Darwin. RSVP by COB Wednesday 1 August, 2012. Tel: (02) 6166 9600 Fax: (02) 6162 2611 Email: nidac@ancd.org.au
Women's Health Statewide SA  6 week course - *Wellbeing for Me Wellbeing for Family*
14 Aug – 18 Sep 2012 This is a free 6 week group for women who are caring for a child/ren with a developmental delay or ongoing illness. Learn simple strategies and share ideas to reduce stress and increase wellbeing.
Further details
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*International*
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2012 Fetal Alcohol Canadian Expertise (FACE) Research Roundtable will present the latest in the field of fetal alcohol research and FASD intervention. After each presentation the floor will be opened to delegates for questions and discussion. Be a part of this time-honoured tradition of scientific review as Canadian researchers work to understand and prevent Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder - the leading cause of developmental disability in North America
Tuesday, September 11, 2012 Saskatoon, Saskatchewan  Programme and Registration
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*NeuroDevNet 2012 Brain Development Conference* September 21-23, 2012 Toronto, Ontario  This Conference will include a public forum on FASD “How Much is too Much,” For complete details visit website
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4th Annual Illinois Conference on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder The “Other” Spectrum Disorder Friday, September 28th, 2012 Glen Ellyn, Illinois. This conference will have a focus on the recognition of FASD as the “other” spectrum disorder in relation to the better-understood condition of Autism. Further Information

*Second EUFASD Conference*
The conference website is now open for submission of abstracts for the Second EUFASD Conference, to be held in Barcelona 21 to 24 October 2012. Visit the conference website for further information and early-bird registration.
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*1st Annual MOFAS Statewide FASD Conference Building Brighter Futures: Working Together to Create Change in Minnesota* November 1-2, 2012 Bloomington, Minnesota This conference offers a unique opportunity for professionals, families and caregivers to learn more about the prevention and treatment of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD)  Conference Website
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*The 3rd Health & Wellbeing in Children, Youth and Adults with Developmental Disabilities Challenging Behaviour - The Tip of the Iceberg Main Conference:* November 15 – 16, 2012 Focused Workshops: November 17, 2012 Vancouver, BC, Canada. This conference will provide educational and informative updates on psychiatric, behavioural and complex health components specific to individuals with DD, and showcase best practices in the field. Specifically, the conference will focus on approaches to complex challenging behaviours, contributing medical issues and new developments in medication and behavioural treatment. Programme and Registration
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The 5th International Conference on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, Vancouver 2013

Research: Results and Relevance Integrating Research, Policy, and Promising Practice Around the World will be held in Vancouver from February 27 to March 2, 2013. The conference goal is to highlight international research and promising practice and enhance scientific collaborations around the world. The Call for Abstracts is now open. Deadline for Abstract Submissions: May 31, 2012.

For further information or go to the Conference website (back)
Women’s Health Statewide
Women’s and Children’s Health Network

Wellbeing for Me
Wellbeing for Family

This is a 6 week group for women who are caring for a child/ren with a developmental delay or ongoing illness.

Learn simple strategies and share ideas to reduce stress and increase wellbeing.

- Experience some simple strategies to help deal with stressful situations.
- Learn about parenting practices which support the wellbeing of your child and yourself.
- Learn about resources available to support you and your child’s wellbeing.
- Explore strategies which help to let go of being critical and worrying about your parenting.
- All participants will receive a wellbeing package.

When: 10.00am – 12.30pm for 6 weeks
Tuesdays 14th August – 18th September 2012

Where: Women’s Health Statewide,
64 Pennington Terrace, North Adelaide

Cost: Free

Child care: Free: book WCH crèche 8.00am on day: 8101 6394

For more information or to register please contact:
Toni Holden or Glenda Sudholz on 8239 9600.

Women’s Health Statewide (WHS) provides holistic primary health care services to women who are socially and financially disadvantaged. Services are gender specific and designed to address complex health needs that result from the intersection between violence, mental health and wellbeing.

WHS addresses these issues through a range of strategies including counselling, group work, community development, health promotion, training, education and sector development.