Annual Report
The National Organisation for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
NOFASD Australia 2017

Visit:  www.nofasd.org.au

Sometimes it's good to remind yourself that NONE FOR 9 is your safest choice for pregnancy.
NOFASD Australia
Engaging with the community

NOFASD was particularly active in the period January 2016 to June 2017 on a number of fronts. This included…

Training Community Educators: Train it Forward masterclasses; Train the Trainers workshops; allied health professionals FASD knowledge, skills and awareness workshops.

Outcomes

• Through their participation service providers were then better able to understand the causes of this physical brain condition with behaviours as symptomatic and are better informed and skilled to deliver appropriate interventions and support to individuals and families living with FASDs.
• Through peer education, allied health professionals can share their learning.

Deliver workshops to parents and carers, service providers and school communities aimed at increasing awareness and knowledge of FASD.

Outcomes

• Parents and carers have increased knowledge and understanding to better support individuals in their care, to improve family life and life outcomes, and to prevent carer burnout.
• Service providers are better informed to accommodate the needs of individuals living with FASD and their families, parents and carers in their practice.
• The wider community has access to online FASD information/education modules.
• Website updated regularly.

Workshops were held with the following groups: Early Years Kwinana WA, North Metro TAFE Joondalup WA, South Metro TAFE Armadale WA, Care South NSW, My Place Perth WA, Women’s Health and Family Services Forum WA, Service providers FASD session WA, Notre Dame Uni Fremantle WA, Early Years parents Rockingham WA, West Byford Primary School WA, Anglicare Young Parents Group Leederville WA, Southern Christian College students WA, paediatric staff TAS, Lucas Heights School NSW, Rockdale Primary School NSW, Early Years Network Centrecare Mirrabooka, Midland and Joondalup WA, SANDAS SA, Lifestyle Solutions Parkes NSW, Penrith Mental Health Carers Sydney NSW, Discovery Early Learning Centre Lifestyle Solutions Baulkham Hills NSW, Discovery Early Learning Centre Launceston TAS, Bendigo Health VIC.
Train it Forward
A Masterclass in FASD

The Our Train it Forward (TiF) masterclass was held at Collective Purpose Venues in Sydney. Facilitators Anne Heath, Louise Gray, Robyn Smith worked with service providers and carers.

Our TiF approach is designed for professionals, support workers and others working with individuals with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder or their significant others. Forwarding on our knowledge by providing participants with the skills and resources to become the FASD resource within their organisation.

This training will enable delegates to be the 'go to' person in their organisation for information regarding FASD. After completing this masterclass, delegates will be able to share information and resources in their own workplaces and communities, to enable a better quality of life for those with lived experience of FASD

Program
Session 1: Introduction: • Purpose • Concept and goals • Background of presenters
Session 2: History of FASD • International context • Australian context
Session 3: What does FASD look like today? • What we know about FASD
Session 4: Real stories • Outcomes for affected individuals • What strategies work?
Session 5: Walk around the web site • Website highlights • Videos
Session 6: ‘Smoking and soft cheese’– what role does the community have in alcohol and pregnancy?
Session 7: Where to from here • Distribution of resources • Questions • Evaluations and certificates

All participants reported an increase in general knowledge of FASD after the training. Comments made included…
“Awesome presentations, great information and excellent resources – thanks.”
“Looking forward to some training sessions targeted at health professionals.”
“Thank you for sharing your knowledge and experience. NOFASD is an important cause worth advocating for – thanks for a great day.”
Staff Training Session Report
Providing information to clients

Location: Teleconference. Facilitators: Sue Miers, Robyn Smith.

Aim: To provide information to enable staff to take phone calls from clients and provide them with correct up to date information on FASD and referrals to relevant services.

Program:
• Guiding principles of the telephone/email service
• Background
• Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder research information
• What sorts of calls does the helpline receive?
• Where to refer for drug and alcohol use
• Information on NDIS

Session was followed up with written notes of the meeting and further webinars and referrals regarding FASD. We also provided contact details of parents and carers who are happy to give support.

Early years network

Early Years Network meetings, were held at Centrecare Mirrabooka, Midland and Joondalup in WA, SANDAS SA, Lifestyle Solutions Parkes, Penrith Mental Health Carers – Sydney in NSW.

Service provider feedback was very encouraging…comments from evaluations included…
• “An excellent introduction to FASD. I still have a lot to learn!”
• “Presenter appeared very passionate & knowledgeable re FASD.”
• “Brilliant presentation, great presenter, very informative.”
• “Thank you – it was a great refresher for me.”
• “Very valuable and will give me new strategies with at least two of my current clients.”
• “It was a great talk with a lot of new information that explained FASD really well.”
• “Great workshop – very interesting and well presented. Excellent knowledge and class interaction thank you.”
• “Informative easy to understand presentation.”
• “Very personable facilitator, great rapport.”
• “Great presentation, very informative and knowledgeable. I found it a stimulating topic well delivered.”
• “It was very interesting and information was new and up to date. I learnt a lot.”
• “I found the presentation very useful and really beneficial to my work role. I feel I have a much better understanding of FASD and ways to support my clients.”
• “This workshop made me feel like I need to get out there and inform friends/family/work colleagues & people we support about FASD.”
Parent /Carer Support and Advice
Information Session

Collective Purpose Venues, Sydney. Facilitators: Mary, Brian and Cathy

Resources presented:
 Trying Differently Rather Than Harder – second edition by Diane V Malbin
 Making Sense of the MADNESS – An FASD survival guide by Jeff Noble
 Parenting a child with a disability by Dr Mary Mather

Mary overviewed her lived experience with several children in her care who had FASD. In one case the child was formally diagnosed. Mary drew attention to the existence of high levels of intelligence yet FASD was still a contributor to behaviours which were very difficult to manage. Mary commented that an autism diagnosis led immediately to helpers and teachers’ aids being made available and that children with FASD were disadvantaged by the current arrangements which do make provision for, or even recognise children with FASD. Useful strategies were overviewed included the use of routines, separate mealtimes and extra sleep. Other strategies included ensuring homework was not expected by classroom teachers. Discussion was held about other simple strategies like the use of a small extra birthday cake at a family birthday to reduce the possibility of a meltdown. Considering texture, sound and other sensory issues has a positive impact for children with FASD. Animal assisted therapies are frequently highlighted as being successful. The additional presenters were caring for a sibling group of three and the behaviours of the children were challenging. The oldest child had been excluded from school in one state and was likely to be permanently excluded from a relatively new school placement. This family had come across resistance to diagnose the children because of the misinformed notion that this would label the children. Many people advise that they have received a similar lack of support when seeking to address the issues of children with FASD. In the case of these children a dentist had first diagnosed them based on the malformation of their jaws.

Comments: Attendees found the format and content valuable and the free exchange of information and questioning opportunities enhanced their knowledge of lived – experience with FASD. All participants reported an increase in general knowledge of FASD after the training and said they would recommend this workshop to others.
Webinars reaching far and wide

Links to NOFASD Webinars
For Teachers and Educators
Understanding the learning challenges of chilidng living with FASD

For Parents and Carers
A snapshot of FASD

Bust the Myths of FASD
FASD Myths Exposed

“Just wanted to let you know I had a call last night from a lady who is really going through a very worrying and bad time at the moment. She has an 11-year-old foster son who has an extremely high IQ with no executive functioning. She is currently on a holiday which had been planned for a long time in Kakadu. It is due to your webinar that she said she really enjoyed and decided to get in touch. Just goes to show how far and wide this can go… she was in Kakadu.” (Staff communication)
Some of the NOFASD team
TOP: NOFASD TEAM AT STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING IN HOBART JUNE 2017

TEAM PHOTOS PAGE SEVEN
TOP LEFT: SUE MIERS (FOUNDER NOFASD AUSTRALIA), LOUISE GRAY (EXECUTIVE OFFICER) & ANNE HEATH (NATIONAL EDUCATOR & BOARD MEMBER)
TOP RIGHT: TONY MIERS (PUBLIC OFFICER)
MIDDLE LEFT: CHRISTINE BROOKS (BOARD MEMBER)
MIDDLE CENTRE: GABBY RASMUSSEN (COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT SUPPORT OFFICER)
MIDDLE RIGHT: CONNIE MAY (MEDIA OFFICER)
BOTTOM LEFT: CHERYL DEDMAN (BOARD MEMBER)
BOTTOM CENTRE: JESSICA HANNAN (NATIONAL PROJECTS OFFICER)
BOTTOM RIGHT: ANA CLARKE (VOLUNTEER)