

International FASD Awareness
Day/Month
Information Pack



FASD Awareness Day

Around the world, the month of September has been identified as FASD month – the ninth month of the year to raise awareness about FASD and the importance of alcohol free pregnancies for the nine months of pregnancy. Typically, events are centred around the 9th day of the 9th month. There is no known safe amount of alcohol which can be consumed during pregnancy and the National Health and Medical Research Council, Australia (NHMRC). The Australian Government Department of Health and other affiliated medical bodies all advise that no alcohol is the safest choice.

FASD Awareness Day began in 1999, initiated by Bonnie Buxton, Brian Philcox, and Teresa Kellerman. The first FASD Awareness Day attracted attention from countries around the world including: Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Italy, Germany, Sweden, United States of America and Canada.

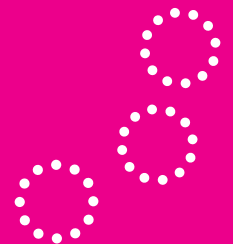
Community events to mark FASD Awareness Day now take place around the world providing opportunities for communities to raise awareness about FASD, to pause, to reflect and consider the benefits of an alcohol-free pregnancy and to share this prevention message around the world.

Each year increasing numbers of agencies around Australia acknowledge FASD Day to highlight concerns about alcohol exposed pregnancies, to raise awareness of FASD and to underline that alcohol in pregnancy is a whole of community concern and not solely a women's issue.

The National Health and Medical Research Council Advises:

- To prevent harm from alcohol to their unborn baby women who are pregnant or planning pregnancy should not drink alcohol
- For women who are breastfeeding, not drinking alcohol is safest for their baby

The 9th day of the 9th month



In the past



In the past these activities have included:

- Individual pledges not to drink for the day
- NOFASD held a free webinar on FASD
- Engaged with local liquor shops and pharmacies and displayed wobblers banners, alcohol and pregnancy posters were displayed behind toilet doors at restaurants, pubs, hotels and GP clinics in a country town
- Mocktail sundowner
- Breakfast and a Pregnant Pause at 9:09
- A FASD Policy and Research Forum was held; Awareness was raised by an organisation walking with FASD awareness banners
- FASD support group raised awareness by hosting a morning tea
- An in-service training event for staff around working with people who have FASD and a number of awareness raising workshops at playgroups
- A free BBQ lunch, bouncy castle, face painting and stalls featuring alcohol and FASD awareness activities
- A community event to educate people about the impact of drinking when pregnant
- Information flower cart about alcohol and pregnancy handing out herbal tea and tea recipes
- Flash mob of pregnant men and women pausing at 9 minutes past the 9/09/09
- Nine year old girl living with FASD organised a fete with proceeds going to NOFASD
- Coffee and play morning for parent/carers and their children

NOFASD hosted a photographic competition for the best pet photo with red shoes.

A carer knitted red shoe key ring chains as a fundraiser and donated the proceeds to NOFASD

Free BBQ in central Australia



FASD knots were made and handed out.

The original FAS knot was designed by Bonnie Buxton and Brian Philcox, Canada.



The knot symbolizes many things:

- The circle symbolizes the womb, the baby's head, the human brain and the world.
- The cord refers to the umbilical cord, and the cord that joins us all together in caring.
- The reef knot cannot be broken or snapped, the more you pull, the tighter the bond.
- The frayed ends represent the damaged nervous system which cannot be repaired.

Red Shoes Rock

The Red Shoes Rock movement was started in 2013 by RJ Formanek, an educator and advocate living with FASD. He decided to wear red shoes to stand out, be noticed and have fun starting conversations about FASD and his hidden disability. Now a global movement, people wear red shoes to show support for those with FASD and their families, and to start the conversation about the importance of supporting alcohol-free pregnancies.

Don Pentz, an artist and friend of NOFASD Australia, created and donated these beautiful animal images, providing an Australian theme for the Red Shoes Rock movement. Bookmarks, fridge magnets, brochures and t-shirts are available to anyone who plans to host an event for FASD Awareness in September.



How to be involved in FASD Awareness

Hold an event and do a press release; consider -

- Serving mocktails and cupcakes
- Morning tea at 9.09am on the 9th day of the 9th month
- Invite a local elected representative or personality to attend your event
- Have a mocktail recipe and design competition
- Hold an event and screen a short FASD information video for example, '[Professor Elizabeth Elliott, Westmead Childrens Hospital or Eight Magic Keys of Success to assist with interventions and strategies for children \(and adults\) living with FASD](#)'
- Prepare a facts sheet about alcohol and pregnancy and distribute it amongst your stakeholders (Template available)
- Use the social media messages to raise awareness of this topic in September, particularly on and around September 9. Use the hashtag #FASDMonth and #FASDay
- Order free resources from NOFASD to use for your event
- Stage a 9 day countdown to the 9th day of the 9th month
- Create an alcohol-free event for everyone – not just women who are pregnant, planning or could be
- Have a t-shirt design competition
- Download posters, fliers, fact sheets, or a PowerPoint presentation from www.nofasd.org.au
- Become involved in the Red Shoes Rock campaign – www.redshoesrock.com
This could include wearing red shoes in public, starting conversations about FASD, and posting photos of yourself or your friends in red shoes with #RedShoesRock #FASDay

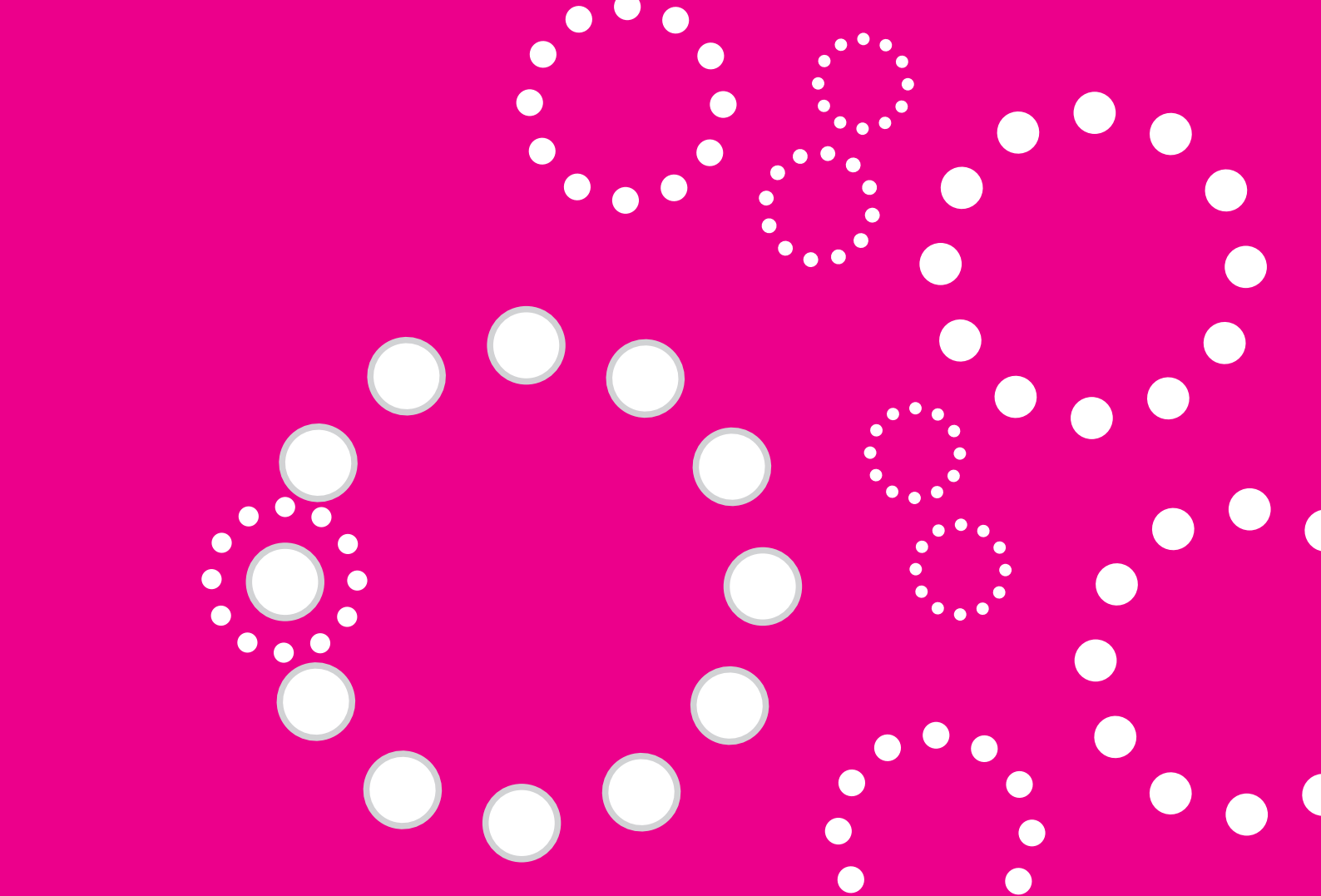


Social Media Campaigns

The following hashtags are less than 140 characters and therefore suitable for use with Twitter. For greater exposure and awareness-raising they can be used across multiple social media platforms.



- No amount of alcohol use is known to be safe for a developing baby before birth. #FASDay
- Alcohol use during pregnancy can also lead to miscarriage, stillbirth, & SIDS. #FASDay
- Prenatal alcohol exposure is associated with a range of lifelong physical, behavioural, and intellectual disabilities. #FASDay
- The best advice is to stop drinking alcohol when you start trying to get pregnant. #FASDay
- A developing baby is exposed to the same concentration of alcohol as the mother during pregnancy. #FASDay
- Baby's brain, body, & organs are developing throughout pregnancy & can be affected by alcohol at any time. #FASDay
- Alcohol exposure is unsafe for developing babies at every stage of pregnancy. #FASDay
- Exposure to alcohol from all types of beverages, including light beer and wine, is unsafe for babies at every stage of pregnancy. #FASDay
- FASDs are completely preventable if a developing baby is not exposed to alcohol before birth. #FASDay
- Diagnosis and intervention early can help people reach their full potential. #FASDay
- Alcohol screening & counselling is recommended for all adults, incl. pregnant women. #FASDay
- If you become pregnant, stop drinking alcohol. Every day matters. The sooner you stop drinking, the better for your baby. #FASDay
- If you need help stopping, talk to your doctor, contact an addiction specialist or contact Alcoholics Anonymous. #FASDay
- Make a plan for a healthy baby --don't drink any alcohol if you are pregnant or could become pregnant. #FASDay



National Organisation for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders
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