

## Australian College of Children and Young People's Nurses (ACCYPN) Response to the Inquiry into Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

ACCYPN supports a national approach to prevention on this issue. The social, community and economic costs have been well documented in the US and Canada. FASD is a lifelong disability that is totally preventable.

### Prevention Strategies

- There needs to be education and health promotion messages regarding safe levels of alcohol consumption. The target groups include:
  - Preconception – women considering getting pregnant should be targeted with health promotion messages regarding the effects of alcohol on the foetus. These messages need to continue through pregnancy. Messages could be distributed through multiple strategies such as social marketing, school health promotion programs and individual contacts with health professionals.
  - Children and young people. From an early age (for example 7 years of age) children are influenced through the formal education process as well as modeling of behavior in the home. Health promotion and prevention messages at an early age has the potential to influence lifelong behavior and health outcomes
  - Men especially in sporting and club environments- men are key role models for a reduction of alcohol consumption in the household and can lead and implement attitude and behavioural changes towards alcohol consumption.

### Intervention needs

There needs to be consistent approach to intervention across the nation.

- The introduction of Antenatal screening for the risk of FASD
- Standardised validated screening tools are required so there is a consistent approach to early identification of FASD.

### Management Issues

- The child with FASD often has a delayed diagnosis and therefore appropriate management. Once diagnosed there is a lack of support services for the child and their carers.

- Support decreases once the child enters the school system. School teachers and other staff have no education or support on how to manage children with FASD
  - The availability of health professionals such as psychologists in the education system would reduce the stress to students with FASD and other students. The role of these health professionals would be to support teachers on how to manage children with FASD. This would enable capacity building within the education system on the management of children and young people with FASD
  - Case management of children with FASD would support parents and carers to navigate the health and education systems.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.

Yours Sincerely



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