

## Agenda

---

9:30am – 9:45am | Introduction, housekeeping items and welcome  
Presented by: CAN Board Members: Kathy Palm & Jess VanKuyk

9:45am – 10:45am | Building an Alliance: Understanding FASD Makes a Difference presentation  
Presented by: Shauna Feine, Senior Training Coordinator

10:45am – 11:25am | Proof Alliance Birth Mother Panel  
Moderated by: Angie Graves, Chemical Health Coordinator  
Panelists include: Carol Peterson & Sara Studniski

11:25am – 11:30 | Overview and wrap up  
Presented by: Shauna Feine, Senior Training Coordinator

---

1



**Our Mission:**

To foster collaborative opportunities to creatively address community needs in Anoka County.

If there is a topic you would like CAN to cover at the next event, please talk to us after or visit our website and send us a message

[www.compassionactionnetworkanoka.org](http://www.compassionactionnetworkanoka.org)

2

## Housekeeping Items

---

- To receive your certificate of attendance, please complete the brief survey following today's event.
- Materials and handouts can be found in the chat box
- All attendees have been placed in listen only mode. However, this is an interactive training. Questions will be addressed at the end of each section as time allows.

---

3

**Anoka County – Children and Family Services**  
*"Meeting People's Needs Through Quality Services"*  
**Plan of Safe Care - Prenatal Substance Exposure Grant:**  
**Prevention, Intervention and Treatment**

**Parent Child Safety Coordinator:** a specialized position to provide direct case management services to pregnant women that are using substances and involved with child welfare. Canvas Health – partner and contracted provider

**Community Education, Training and Public Awareness**  
 Proof Alliance – partner and contracted provider

**Anoka County Plan of Safe Care Collaborative:** formation of a local integrated multi-disciplinary team focused on: prevention and intervention for children (pre-pregnancy – childhood), community integration, prevention and intervention for mothers and families, and local capacity building (integration continuum)

4

## Anoka County Plan of Safe Care Collaborative

**Collaborative Partners:**

- Anoka County – Children and Family Services
- Anoka County Public Health and Environmental Services – Nurse Home Visiting Program
- Allina Health Mercy Hospital Unity Campus Addiction Services
- Allina Health Mercy Hospital Social Worker Services and Mental Health
- Lee Carlson Center
- NorthStar Behavioral Health – Cranberry Acres
- Nystrom and Associates
- PR%F Alliance
- Anoka County Behavioral Health Services
- Alexandra House
- Anoka County Community Corrections - Adult
- Coon Rapids Preschool and Family Place (ECFE) – Anoka Hennepin Schools
- Canvas Health – Parent Child Safety Coordinator
- County Resident/Parent
- Valerie Gustafson, UM LADC Intern/MPS Addictions Counseling and Certified Peer Recovery Specialist
- Head Start - Early Head Start - Anoka County Community Action Program
- Mental Health Resources – Minnesota Alternatives
- Neighborhood Health Source – North Metro Clinic
- Renewed Life Counseling Services
- The Dwelling Place

**Facilitation and Planning Services – contracted provider:**  
 The Improve Group


5



**PR%F Alliance**

Building an Alliance:  
 Understanding Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD)  
 Makes a Difference

6



# PR%F Alliance


Our mission is to prevent fetal alcohol spectrum disorders and to support all impacted throughout Minnesota and beyond.

Our vision is a world in which alcohol is not consumed during pregnancy and people living with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders are identified, supported and valued.

7

### \* Disclosure \*

Proof Alliance acknowledges that not every person who can become pregnant identifies as a woman. We try to use gender-neutral language as often as possible, much of the current research available currently refers only to "women" when discussing the ability to become pregnant. When citing this research, we refer to the language used in the study. In these cases, "woman" refers to someone who was assigned female at birth.




8

### Learning Objectives


- Discover what are fetal alcohol spectrum disorders
- Explore common myths & discuss risk factors
- Discuss the impacts prenatal exposure to alcohol may have on brain
- Learn strategies to support individuals with an FASD
- Hear first-hand experiences from birth mothers raising children with an FASD

9



**True or false?**

FASD is more common than Down Syndrome.



**True or false?**

FASD is more common than autism.




**True or false?**

FASD is the leading cause of intellectual disabilities in the U.S.

10

### Prevalence Study



Research shows as many as 1 in 20 children in the U.S. have an FASD.

© ProofAlliance 2018

11

### What is FASD?

**Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder**

- A group of birth defects that is the result of prenatal alcohol exposure
- Wide range of symptoms including physical, mental, behavioral, & learning disabilities
- Prenatal alcohol exposure affects each person differently & organic brain injury causes inconsistency
- Permanent disability, lasts a lifetime
- All people with FASD can be successful



12

### FASD is Not a Diagnosis

- FAS** fetal alcohol syndrome
- PFAS** partial fetal alcohol syndrome
- ARND** alcohol related neurodevelopmental disorder
- ARBD** alcohol related birth defects
- ND-PAE** neurobehavioral disorder associated with prenatal alcohol exposure (mental illness diagnosis)
- FAE** fetal alcohol effects (outdated term)

13

### Effects of Alcohol during Pregnancy

- Pregnant person drinks alcohol
- Alcohol enters the placenta & passes from maternal blood supply to fetal blood supply
- Fetus excretes alcohol into the amniotic fluid
- Fetus then swallows amniotic fluid
- Alcohol is perpetually reabsorbed by the fetus

14

### Factors of Severity

Factors that impact fetal vulnerability:

- Dosage/BAC
- Resiliency of the fetus
- Mother's health, age, etc.
- Genetics
- Other substance exposure
- Timing of the exposure

Remember:

- PAE does not always result in an FASD
- FASD is not generational
- Manifestations are unique in each individual

15

### Fetus Developmental Timeline

This chart shows vulnerability of the fetus to defects throughout 38 weeks of pregnancy. \* = Most common site of birth defects

Period of the ovum	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 12	Week 14	Week 16	Week 20-24	Week 28
Heart													
CNS													
Eye													
Heart													
Limbs													
Teeth													
External genitalia													
Brain and Spinal Cord													
Arms/Legs													
Eyes													
Teeth													
External Genitalia													
Ear													

16

### Alcohol vs. Other Substances

According to IOM, which of the following substances cause the most serious neurobehavioral effects on a developing fetus?

- Opioids/Heroin
- Crack/Cocaine
- Methamphetamines
- Marijuana
- Alcohol

17

### Impact of Prenatal Exposure

	Alcohol	Tobacco	Opioids	Meth	Cocaine	Marijuana
Growth Deficiency	X	X	X	X	X	X
Behavioral Problems	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cognitive Problems	X	X	X	X	X	X
Motor Deficits	X	X		X		
Developmental Delays	X	X			X	
Facial Anomalies	X	X				
Physical Defects	X	X	X	X	X	

18

## Ending the Stigma

Why do people drink alcohol during pregnancy?



19


## FASD is a Complex Public Health Issue

- Unplanned pregnancy may lead to drinking without the knowledge they are pregnant
- Substance use disorders
- Form of self-medicating or coping mechanism due to external stressors or mental illness
- Binge drinking is generally socially-accepted
- Mixed messages from family, friends, media, etc.
- Doctors implicitly give permission by not discussing alcohol use with their patients or downplaying the risks
- Public still misunderstands risks from drinking and does not recognize the high prevalence of FASD

20

## True or False?

Most people with an FASD have distinct facial features caused by prenatal alcohol exposure.



21

## Inter-hemispheric Fiber Tractography through Corpus Callosum

Fractional anisotropy maps

FASD Control

Anatomical images

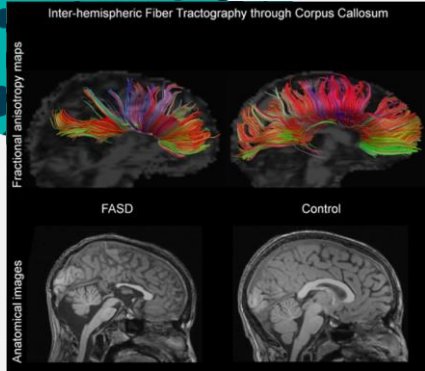


Photo courtesy of Dr. Jeffery Wozniak, University of Minnesota, 2019

22

## What Else Can FASD Look Like?

- Attention deficit disorder
- Autism
- Reactive attachment disorder
- Sensory processing disorder
- Bipolar disorder
- Depression
- Trauma
- Institutionalization
- and more...

It is estimated over 90% of individuals with an FASD have a co-occurring mental health disorder.

23

## Common Neurobehavioral Symptoms

- Ongoing sleeping difficulties
- Poor social skills/lack of boundaries
- Slower information processing
- Learning difficulties (commonly but not limited to math)
- Angry or frustrated often & may take longer to calm
- Extreme under or over-sensitivity to sensory input
- Difficulty following directions or connecting steps
- May be prone to confabulation
- Literal thinkers

24

### Developmental Skills: Case Example

- Physical maturity → 18 years old
- Comprehension → 6 years
- Emotional maturity → 6 years
- Social Skills → 7 years
- Concept of money, time → 8 years
- Reading level → 16 years
- Expressive language → 20 years

25

### What Can You Do?

- Screening & assessment
- Get informed & trained; encourage others in the person's life to get informed as well
- Identify community resources which offer appropriate services for a person with an FASD (Proof Alliance)
- Identify local advocacy groups that can assist with accessing support services (Proof Alliance)
- Read books written by & for parents
- Verify insurance coverage for specialized services such as sensory integration therapy or neuropsychological testing
- **Self-care/respice**

26

### Recognize Strengths

- **Friendly, likable:** May be outgoing & sociable & have little anxiety about strangers
- **Verbal, chatty:** May be very socially interested (but not necessarily socially skilled)
- **Helpful, hard-working:** If you ask, they will do it. They can be very good workers with the right job & training
- **Determined, resilient:** They don't hold grudges & will come back if rejected. Every day is a new day!
- **Want to be liked:** They will do whatever they can to have friends

© Proof Alliance 2018

27

### Principles of an FASD-informed Approach

Research and practice evidence demonstrates that people with FASD do not generally experience success in typical programs, given that most programs are based on the behavioral learning models that assume that individuals have certain capabilities. Consequently, an individual's failure in programs is often attributed to the person themselves rather than to the lack of fit between the person and the program. In this vein, adolescents and adults with FASD are often erroneously perceived as being unmotivated, uncooperative, noncompliant, stupid, lazy, or bad.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4861453/>

Source: Rutman D. Becoming FASD informed: Strengthening practice and programs working with women with FASD. *Substance Abuse: Research and Treatment*. 2016;10(S1):13-20.

28

### Principles of an FASD-informed approach

29

### Paradigm Shift

Instead of perceiving the person as:	To understanding the person as:
Having behaviors	Experiencing symptoms
Won't/defiant	Can't
Refuses to sit still	Under/Over-stimulated
Resisting/doesn't care	Doesn't get it
Lying (Confabulation)	Memory deficits
Doesn't try	Tired of failing

30

## Why We Recommend Screening

- Recognize the brain injury/disability for reduced frustration
- Approaches can be modified
- Prevention of future alcohol exposed pregnancies
- Research shows that earlier individuals can be identified the better the outcomes
- Facial features & growth changes in adolescence make it harder to recognize FAS
- Look for the characteristics and risk factors

31

## Look for Risk Factors

- Biological family history of substance abuse
- Known drug exposure
- Children in foster &/or adoptive care system
- School difficulties starting at a very young age
- Maternal mental illness
- Siblings with an FASD or a related diagnosis
- Multiple diagnoses & meds don't work
- Regions with exceptional high rates of alcohol consumption or known cases of FASD
- Involvement in criminal justice system &/or substance use at a young age

32

## Strategies: Communication

- Provide a range of learning opportunities
  - Visual, kinesthetic, or auditory
- Demonstrate instructions multiple times
- Allow extra time for processing & responding
- Use positive language
- Give alternative options to what is not allowed
- Repeat, repeat, repeat
- Role playing
- Keep conversations short

33

## Strategies: Communication

- Consistency in language
- Avoid sarcasm or idioms
- State the obvious
- Simple, short directives & manageable tasks; break tasks down step by step
- Concrete & specific
- Use the same verbiage when reteaching
- Be consistent with rules & try to limit number
- Check for understanding

34

## Regulation

- Co-regulate Until They Can Self-Regulate
  - Be proactive versus reactive
  - Monitor frustration: Pick your battles
  - Actively listen
- Transition
  - Proactive transition plans are important & can help avoid meltdowns
  - Changes to routine should be communicated as soon as possible (is applicable)
  - Visual timers or personalized countdown may be helpful
  - Redirect when person is having difficulty

35

## People with an FASD say...

- Rapport is key!
- Having one-on-one support
- Having staff who really understand
- Allowed space when upset and time to calm down
- Help me make connections with my peers
- Get to know me!

36



37



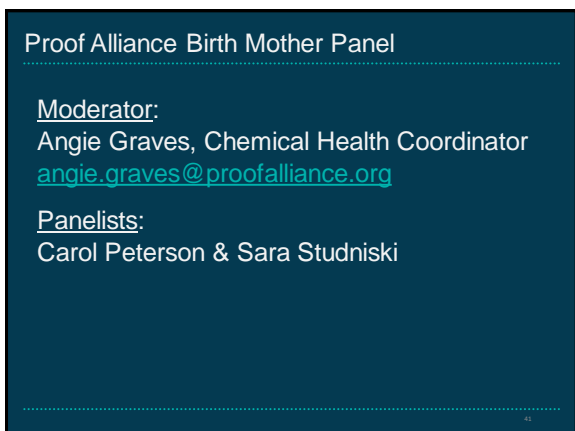
38



39



40



41



42



**PR%F**  
Alliance

**Website:** [www.ProofAlliance.org](http://www.ProofAlliance.org)  
**Email:** [info@ProofAlliance.org](mailto:info@ProofAlliance.org)  
**Phone:** 651.917.2370  
**Address:** 1876 Minnehaha Ave W  
St. Paul, MN 55104

43



**Compassion** Nonprofit • County • Faith  
Action Network

**Our Mission:**

To foster collaborative opportunities to creatively address community needs in Anoka County.

If there is a topic you would like CAN to cover at the next event, please talk to us after or visit our website and send us a message

[www.compassionactionnetworkanoka.org](http://www.compassionactionnetworkanoka.org)

44