

## FASD: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Prevention

### Can Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) be prevented?

Yes! FASD is **100%** preventable if a woman does not drink while she is pregnant.

### What are the suggested prevention techniques?

- Primary Prevention – Actions that prevent a health problem before it occurs. In regards to FASD, this includes informing the public, particularly young people, about the dangers of drinking during pregnancy.
- Secondary Prevention – Actions that identify persons at risk. Strategies include screening and early intervention programs and services for pregnant women and women of childbearing age who may be at risk for having a child with FASD.
- Tertiary Prevention – Actions that prevent recurrence of the condition through treatment and attempts to lessen the cognitive, behavioral, and social impact of FASD. Strategies include diagnosis and programs designed specifically for children with FASD and their caregivers, as well as treatment for women and their partners who already have one child with FASD and plan to have more children.

### What are some positive things one can do to help a pregnant loved-one stay healthy and away from alcohol?

- Keep stress to a minimum – studies show that when a woman reports high stress during her pregnancy, her baby is more likely to be born with health problems.
- Communicate, be patient and supportive – A woman may be physically uncomfortable and is subject to hormonal changes that can affect her moods. An understanding attitude can make a big difference.
- Promote good nutrition – set an example by eating healthy. Encourage the pregnant woman to eat balanced meals and to take a multivitamin containing folic acid during the early months of pregnancy.
- Promote a healthy lifestyle - set an example by avoiding cigarettes, alcohol and other drugs. Encourage the pregnant woman to also avoid them.

*All efforts should be family-centered and culturally sensitive to address the pregnant woman as well as her partner and family in the context of their community; and comprehensive, to draw on all services appropriate to the often complex social, economic and emotional needs of these women.*